

## 2015-J4028

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church upon the occasion of hosting its Annual Black History Luncheon on February 27, 2016

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body, in keeping with its time-honored traditions, to recognize and pay tribute to those events and individuals who foster ethnic pride and enhance the profile of cultural diversity which strengthens the fabric of the communities of New York State; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize these important events which remind us of the rich and diverse heritage of our great State and Nation; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church upon the occasion of hosting its Annual Black History Luncheon on Saturday, February 27, 2016, at the Unitarian Church, Albany, New York, in conjunction with the observance of Black History Month; and

WHEREAS, February has been designated as Black History Month in our Nation to celebrate and recognize the contributions of the Black community; this joyful month-long celebration is held across New York State and America to fittingly note the contributions of African Americans throughout history and in all fields of endeavor; and

WHEREAS, Black History Month is a time to reflect on the struggles and victories of African Americans throughout our country's history and to recognize their numerous valuable contributions to the protection of our democratic society in times of war and in peace; and

WHEREAS, To celebrate this auspicious event, the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, under the luminous leadership of Reverend William Edward

Morgan, will explore the theme, *The Black Church in America - This Far by Faith*; and

WHEREAS, During the decades of slavery in America, slave associations were a constant source of concern to slave owners; for many members of white society, Black religious meetings symbolized the ultimate threat to white existence; and

WHEREAS, Despite this, former slaves established and relied on their church after being emancipated; Africans held fast to their faith in God and found refuge in the church; and

WHEREAS, However, white people were not always willing to accept the slaves' involvement in Christianity; the religious habits of slaves were carefully watched by whites in order to discover information regarding any uprising plans after insurrections such as Nat Turner's in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, Churches have long been the focal point of Black communities, providing the greatest source for religious enrichment and development; and

WHEREAS, The term "The Black Church" is derived from many details of racial and religious lifestyles particular to Black history; this label is actually a misnomer, it implies that all Black churches share or have shared strategies and aspirations for creating cohesive communities; and

WHEREAS, There were actually numerous differences found among Black communities which were reflected within their community churches; Black communities differed from region to region, and were often divided along social lines, comprised of people from various economic backgrounds, and believed in various political opinions; and

WHEREAS, Traditionally, Black communities within the inner cities of the United States have traditionally differed from those in rural areas;

in *THE NEGRO CHURCH IN AMERICA*, sociologist E. Franklin Frazier noted, "Methodist and Baptist denominations were separate church organizations based upon distinctions of color and what were considered standards of

civilized behavior."; and

WHEREAS, C. Eric Lincoln's book THE BLACK CHURCH IN THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE with Lawrence H. Mmaiya, describes the seven major historic Black denominations: "The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church; African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church; Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME, first known as the Colored Christian Episcopal) Church; The National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.; The National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated (NBCA); The Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC); and The Church of God in Christ (COGIC)," as comprising The Black Church; and

WHEREAS, The Convention movement of the Black Baptist Church has undergone several changes since the beginning of the 21st century; individual organizations are still important to Black religious life; and

WHEREAS, In addition, The Black Church is also at a crossroads due to "white flight", systemic resources and gentrification; and

WHEREAS, The Mount Pleasant Baptist Church stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades while retaining that spiritual resolve which characterizes its past; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to take note of enduring religious institutions and to bring such institutions to the attention of the people of this Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church upon the occasion of hosting its Annual Black History Luncheon on February 27, 2016; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Reverend William Edward Morgan, Pastor, Mount Pleasant Baptist Church.