

## 2015-J6342

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the First Shiloh Baptist Church

WHEREAS, Religious institutions, and the many spiritual, social and educational benefits they confer, play a vital role in the development of the moral fabric of a responsible citizenry; and

WHEREAS, It is the tradition of this State and Nation to pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the First Shiloh Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, The First Shiloh Baptist Church was established in the Elliott District, also known as the Fifth Ward, on October 1st, 1916; the church originated from an assembly of 12 people who met for prayer meetings in the home of Hattie Causey at 25 Union Street; and

WHEREAS, The first Pastor, Reverend Fredrick Edmunds, successfully increased membership, and in November of 1917, the church was formally incorporated as the First Shiloh Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, In November of the following year, the congregation called on the Reverend Elijah J. Echols, who accepted the invitation and served as Pastor of the First Shiloh Baptist Church for more than 40 years; and

WHEREAS, During Reverend Elijah J. Echols' time at the First Shiloh Baptist Church, the congregation moved to Cedar Street in May of 1921, which served as the home of the congregation for the next 45 years; the Reverend also ordained numerous ministers during his service, all of whom were instrumental in the success of the church; and

WHEREAS, After the passing of Reverend Echols, Sr., his son, Reverend Echols, Jr., was elected as pastor of the First Shiloh Baptist Church; he was formally installed in March of 1962; during the Reverend's time

as pastor, on August 9, 1964, the church broke ground on its current residence; and

WHEREAS, After 22 years of steadfast and unwavering service to his church, Reverend Echols, Jr. passed away on March 30, 1984, leaving behind a legacy of a nationally recognized church with 27 boards, clubs, and auxiliaries; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Timothy Careathers served as the fourth pastor of the First Shiloh Baptist Church for a year and a half before Reverend Leslie D. Braxton was elected on June 17, 1988; under her leadership, five people were ordained and licensed to gospel ministry; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, during this time the First Shiloh Housing Development Corporation came to fruition, as well as the First Shiloh Christian High School, which opened in 1998, as the first Afro-Centric Comprehensive Christian High School in Buffalo; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Artis McKinley Royal was then elected as the sixth pastor of the First Shiloh Baptist Church in December of 2000; he was instrumental in implementing new church mission and vision statements, setting the tone for enhancing and creating new ministries; and

WHEREAS, The seventh and current pastor of the First Shiloh Baptist Church, Reverend Jonathan R. Staples, accepted the congregation's call in October of 2006; he holds a bachelor's degree from Stanford University, as well as a Masters of Divinity from Princeton; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous direction of Pastor Jonathan R. Staples, new ministries have been initiated, a van has been purchased, and several building improvement projects have been successful; additionally, four people have been ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, as well as four new Deacons and three Deaconesses; and

WHEREAS, The First Shiloh 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 commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the First Shiloh Baptist Church; and be it further RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Reverend Jonathan R. Staples, the First Shiloh Baptist Church, Buffalo, New York.