

2017-J1794

Senate Resolution No. 1794

BY: Senator MONTGOMERY

COMMEMORATING the 100th Anniversary of Cornerstone Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York, to be celebrated on November 4, 2017

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 this 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 takes pleasure in commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Cornerstone Baptist Church of Brooklyn, New York, to be celebrated at a Banquet "A Season of Even Greater Things" John 14:12 on Saturday, November 4, 2017, at El Caribe Country Club Catering in Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, During World War I, a few Christian soldiers decided to begin a church amidst the constant chaos around them; they gathered their neighbors, and held their first meeting at 933 DeKalb Avenue, Brooklyn, in the home of Mrs. M. Freeman; this group continued to worship together, and on September 10, 1917, the Cornerstone Baptist Church was officially organized and dedicated to the service of God with

founder, Reverend William H. Rodman serving as the first Pastor; and

WHEREAS, On May 3, 1920, a meeting was held to organize this body into a permanent church; the six Baptist Churches which formed the Recognition Council, officially recognized Cornerstone Baptist Church on June 9, 1920; and

WHEREAS, After several pastors, Reverend Thomas Willis Fentress was called to lead the Church in June of 1929; under his guidance, the Cornerstone Baptist Church moved to 688 DeKalb Avenue, and in 1932, the Church moved to its first edifice at Gates Avenue and Irving Place, where it grew to be one of Brooklyn's largest congregations; and

WHEREAS, Under the next Pastor, Reverend Dr. Sandy Frederick Ray, the Church continued to thrive; on December 28, 1944, a contract was signed for the Lewis Avenue Congregational Church Parish which would accommodate the growing flock; on June 10, 1945, the march from the old church to the new took place under a "Shower of Blessings"; and

WHEREAS, Throughout Pastor Sandy Frederick Ray's tenure, the Cornerstone Baptist Church purchased several new buildings including the church parsonage at 1281 President Street, and the Cornerstone Educational Center, which was completed, dedicated and opened to the public for the first time on May 29, 1966; and

WHEREAS, During the period from May of 1979 to November of 1981, Reverend Henry G. Scott, served with distinction as Minister-In-Charge; on November 14, 1981, the Cornerstone Baptist Church family held an election and unanimously elected the Reverend Dr. Harry Starks Wright, a

Pastor, Dean and College President, to the Pastorate of Cornerstone Baptist Church; a title he held until his retirement on August 3, 2003;

and

WHEREAS, Today, Reverend Lawrence E. Aker, III serves as Senior Pastor of the Cornerstone Church, where he always displays the highest standards of personal and professional integrity and dedication; and

WHEREAS, From its humble beginnings in 1917, the magnificent Cornerstone Baptist Church has grown from a few members to a faithful congregation of approximately 1,500 members today; the Church is comprised of people who truly love God and each other; each and every parishioner strives to warmly welcome visitors to their sanctuary; and

WHEREAS, Members of the Church have the opportunity to serve on 65 Boards of Directors of various committees, or join numerous clubs and organizations where they can expand their talents and indulge their special interests; and

WHEREAS, Children attend Sunday School and a month long Vacation Bible School during the summer, which is free to the public; and

WHEREAS, The Cornerstone 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 Cornerstone Baptist Church to be observed on November 4, 2017, fully confident that this commemoration reflects the belief in those values which enhance the dignity and

purpose of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Reverend Lawrence E. Aker, III, Senior Pastor, Cornerstone Baptist Church.