



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

## Spiritual Leader Reaps Praise from Senator Murphy

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Yorktown, NY - Reverend Stephany Graham has been a calming presence in communities throughout the country since 1995, providing guidance for at-risk youth and disenfranchised adults. At a ceremony held at Senator Terrence Murphy's District Office on February 26, Reverend Graham, who presides over the congregation at The Peekskill Presbyterian Church in Peekskill, received a proclamation from the Senator for her exemplary work in caring for others.

"Every community should have a strong spiritual presence. Our district is blessed to have Reverend Graham," said Senator Murphy. "She not only feeds the soul but has organized programs to help feed the hungry as well. She has a great deal of empathy and caring for her parishioners and the people she serves."

"Being a minister does not feel like work. It is a calling," said Reverend Graham. "I fell in love with the ministry from the very beginning. Since coming to New York, I have also fallen in love with Peekskill. This is a great area that continues to grow and thrive. I want to thank Senator Murphy for the honor, and look to the challenges that lie ahead."

Reverend Graham has spent her adult life answering the call to help her community. As Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for the Cherry Hill Community Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, Maryland, she created programs that provided educational, recreational and employment opportunities for children at risk. Working in partnership with the Baltimore City Police Department, she established a summer camp program for youth in danger of being incarcerated.

She was Pastor for the Shawnee Presbyterian Church in Louisville, Kentucky from 2001-2009, where she gave weekly sermons, presided at weddings and funerals, baptized new members, taught Bible study, and cared for sick and shut-in members and their families.

As Associate for African-American Leader Development in Louisville, she developed and coordinated the Christian Education Urban Institute, which helped inner city church educators work with disaffected youth and adults. Reverend Graham also initiated a myriad of community-based programs, including the African Heritage Young Adult Network, the African Heritage Biblical Studies Network, the African Heritage Youth Leadership Choir, and the African Heritage Presbyterian Association of Musicians.

Prior to coming to the Peekskill Presbyterian Church in 2012, Reverend Graham served as an Associate for Congregational Leadership for the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. at their international headquarters in Louisville, where she created and facilitated training seminars, workshops, and retreats for the leaders of 11,000 congregations.

In her professional life outside of the clergy, Reverend Graham serves as Commissioner for the Peekskill Housing Authority. Reverend Graham is also proud of her work with the Peekskill Area Pastors Association (PAPA), for which she serves as President. PAPA places special emphasis on social issues, promoting fellowship among religious leaders in specialized ministries, and enabling the leaders to address interfaith issues that will benefit the congregations and communities of the greater Peekskill area.

She is also a member Hudson River Presbytery Commission on Ministry, Peekskill Agencies Together (P.A.T.), National Council of Churches of Christ, and is an Executive Board Member of the Peekskill N.A.A.C.P.

Reverend Graham has a B.S. in World History from Coppin State University Baltimore, Maryland and a Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, New Jersey. She is currently working toward a Doctorate of Ministry Degree at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia.