

2018 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 34

Offered January 25, 2018

*Celebrating the life of the Reverend Gregory S. Ryan.*

Patron—Jones, S.C.

WHEREAS, the Reverend Gregory S. Ryan, a dedicated and respected pastor who provided spiritual leadership at Suffolk's Oakland Christian United Church of Christ, died on May 31, 2017; and

WHEREAS, born in Denver, Colorado, Reverend Ryan began his career as a Catholic priest in Florida, but left the priesthood in 1996 after falling in love with his wife, Theresa; after joining a United Church of Christ in Tampa, Florida, in 2009, he answered the call to become a minister once again; and

WHEREAS, in 2013, Reverend Ryan moved to Suffolk and took over as head pastor at Oakland Christian United Church of Christ, quickly winning over the congregation with his kindness, warmth, and engaging personality; as a music lover, he took care to ensure the church's music program was lively and uplifting; and

WHEREAS, as pastor at Oakland Christian United Church of Christ, Reverend Ryan placed special emphasis on community engagement and public service programs such as the Suffolk Night Stay Program, which encourages churches to house and feed the homeless overnight during the winter, and the Fourth Friday dinner club, which allows congregants to enjoy a meal with members of the community; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure with Oakland Christian United Church of Christ, Reverend Ryan touched many lives with his calm, caring demeanor; through his efforts to help others, he embodied the United Church of Christ's creed of "whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here"; and

WHEREAS, when not working with his church family, Reverend Ryan was happiest while playing golf or running; he often participated in running clubs, and competed in two marathons as well as several half marathons; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Ryan will be fondly remembered and dearly missed by his wife of 19 years, Theresa; stepdaughters, Justine and Kate; and countless other family members, friends, and Suffolk residents; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Delegates hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Reverend Gregory S. Ryan, a devoted spiritual counselor and community leader; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Reverend Gregory S. Ryan as an expression of the House of Delegates' respect for his memory.

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