

2018 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 572

Commending Third Baptist Church.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, May 30, 2018

WHEREAS, Third Baptist Church in Alexandria received a historical marker from the Department of Historic Resources in 2018; and

WHEREAS, Third Baptist Church traces its roots to the Civil War, when Alexandria, occupied by Union troops in 1861, attracted many African Americans escaping slavery; and

WHEREAS, a small consecrated group of former slaves who had settled near the Potomac Riverfront in Alexandria began a chain of prayer meetings in their newly built log cabins, for which they had cut timbers to erect; with numbers increasing, the group realized they needed a much larger and more public gathering place for prayer and worship; in January 1864, the group of former slaves organized the Third Freedmen's Baptist Church, later called the Third Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, the first minister of Third Baptist Church was the Reverend George Washington Parker (ca. 1832 - 1873), who had been free before the Civil War and who had worked with the Reverend Clement Robinson to start the First Select Colored School in Alexandria in 1862; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Parker set out on a missionary journey to Philadelphia where he also secured financial assistance for Third Baptist Church from the American Baptist Missionary Society; upon Reverend Parker's return to Alexandria, a group of former slaves purchased an old frame structure at Princess and North Patrick Streets; and

WHEREAS, this old frame building was blown from its foundation and was rebuilt with a brick structure by the congregation of Third Baptist Church in 1865; and

WHEREAS, in 1870, Third Baptist Church's Reverend Parker, a local Republican Party leader, was the first African American member to be elected to the Alexandria Common Council; and

WHEREAS, Third Baptist Church built its current Romanesque Revival sanctuary in the 1890s; and

WHEREAS, Third Baptist Church has continued to serve the spiritual needs of the community for more than 150 years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Third Baptist Church hereby be commended on receiving a historical marker from the Department of Historic Resources; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Third Baptist Church as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for its storied history and its contributions to Alexandria's African American community.

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