

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 257

Celebrating the life of the Reverend Dr. Joan S. Parrott.

Agreed to by the Senate, January 10, 2019
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, January 14, 2019

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Joan S. Parrott, a beloved spiritual leader who became the first woman pastor in the 154-year history of First Baptist Church of Hampton, died on August 12, 2018; and

WHEREAS, a native of Newark, New Jersey, Joan Parrott was raised in a devout home and was inspired by her parents and her grandmother to pursue a life of service to others; and

WHEREAS, as a young woman, Joan Parrott developed the Love Unlimited youth ministry at her church, giving more than 100 young people an opportunity to seek guidance on personal issues in a safe, supportive environment; and

WHEREAS, after earning a bachelor's degree from Montclair State University in New Jersey, Joan Parrott worked as executive director of the Lighthouse Community Service homeless shelter, then served as a rural health administrator in Niger as a volunteer for the United States Peace Corps; and

WHEREAS, Joan Parrott answered the call to ministry in the late 1960s and pursued degrees at Union Theological Seminary in New York and United Theological Seminary in Ohio, as well as postgraduate certificates from the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey in Switzerland and Harvard University; and

WHEREAS, Joan Parrott became the first woman ordained as a minister at Bethany Baptist Church in Newark, and she went on to teach and consult with clergy throughout the United States and the world, even receiving two private audiences with Pope John Paul II; and

WHEREAS, Joan Parrott volunteered her wise leadership with American Baptist Churches USA as deputy general secretary for cooperative Christianity and director of the board of International Ministries Missionary Recruitment and Volunteer Services Program; and

WHEREAS, Joan Parrott previously served as executive pastor and interim senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Hampton; she was elected senior pastor on September 29, 2017, and was installed as pastor in March 2018; and

WHEREAS, Joan Parrott used her abiding faith and vast experience in church administration to ably lead First Baptist Church of Hampton, becoming known as the "praying pastor" for her unwavering devotion to the power of prayer; and

WHEREAS, an exemplar of servant leadership, Joan Parrott strove for a life defined by humility, compassion, integrity, and excellence; and

WHEREAS, Joan Parrott will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by numerous family members, friends, and the congregation of First Baptist Church of Hampton; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby note with great sadness the loss of the Reverend Dr. Joan S. Parrott; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the family of the Reverend Dr. Joan S. Parrott as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for her memory.

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