

## 2021 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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### SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 383

Offered February 2, 2021

*Commending the Reverend Deborah Dodson Parsons.*

Patron—Boysko

WHEREAS, the Reverend Deborah Dodson Parsons has ably served the congregation of Leesburg Presbyterian Church as pastor for more than a decade; and

WHEREAS, Deborah Parsons grew up in Lubbock, Texas, and was the youngest of three daughters of the late Max and Orlena Dodson; she began to cultivate her deep faith at a young age as a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Austin College in Texas and Vanderbilt University Divinity School in Tennessee, Deborah Parsons served as a religious studies instructor and college chaplain at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, and she became the first woman to be ordained by Shenandoah Presbytery; and

WHEREAS, Deborah Parsons and her husband, David, later returned to Texas, where she became associate pastor of the University Presbyterian Church in Austin; and

WHEREAS, while raising her daughters, Molly and Libby, Deborah Parsons served in a variety of part-time ministry positions, including director of a Presbyterian resource center, director of campus ministry at St. Philip's College, and parish associate for pastoral care and community life at University Presbyterian Church in San Antonio; and

WHEREAS, as Deborah Parsons' children grew older, she returned to full-time work as an interim pastor for several congregations in and around San Antonio; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, Deborah Parsons was called to serve as pastor of Leesburg Presbyterian Church, and the church has thrived and grown significantly during her tenure; and

WHEREAS, over the course of more than 12 years, Deborah Parsons has welcomed nearly 300 new members into the church, has officiated more than 70 baptisms as well as dozens of weddings and memorial services, and has provided loving pastoral care and comfort to countless people during times of illness and grief; and

WHEREAS, Deborah Parsons has been an active participant and leader in Presbyterian and interfaith clergy networks in Leesburg, Loudoun County, Northern Virginia, and the region served by National Capital Presbytery; and

WHEREAS, Deborah Parsons has organized several mission trips to Cuba, where she forged a supportive relationship between Leesburg Presbyterian Church and a Presbyterian congregation in Guanabacoa; and

WHEREAS, a strong advocate for social justice, Deborah Parsons has helped organize events in support of immigrants and refugees and in opposition to racism; she has spearheaded many initiatives to provide food, clothing, and other assistance to local families and individuals in need; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Reverend Deborah Dodson Parsons for her service as pastor of Leesburg Presbyterian Church; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Reverend Deborah Dodson Parsons as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for her years of spiritual leadership and contributions to the Leesburg community.

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