

2022 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 681

Commending Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church.

Agreed to by the Senate, September 7, 2022

WHEREAS, for 250 years, Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church has provided wise spiritual leadership, generous outreach, and opportunities for joyful worship to the members of the Abingdon community; and

WHEREAS, established in 1772, Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church has served generations of local residents and predates the formation of both Washington County and the Town of Abingdon by several years; and

WHEREAS, Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church held its first services in a log structure located in Sinking Spring Cemetery with the Reverend Charles Cummings as its first minister; the congregation erected a new building in 1783, then built a new church on Main Street in 1832, which is now the Barter Theatre; and

WHEREAS, Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church moved to a new building at the corner of Main Street and Pecan Street in the early 1850s, then completed its fifth and current sanctuary in the early 1890s; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church has benefited from the exceptional leadership of numerous pastors, including the Reverend Dr. Richard Taylor, who led the congregation from 1963 to 1979 and worked with community members to carve the church's unique display of wooden doors with intricate designs representing each of the 12 apostles; and

WHEREAS, in 1969, the Reverend Dodie Rossell was ordained as the first female pastor of Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church, becoming one of the first female pastors in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church recently uncovered a trove of old photographs, handwritten sermons, Bibles, and other artifacts and organized a series of panel exhibits in the entrance hallway, allowing members of the public to better understand the church's heritage and contextualize its role in the community; and

WHEREAS, Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church has commemorated its milestone anniversary with a series of events, including an open house during the Virginia Highlands Festival and a special homecoming service on August 14, 2022, with the theme "Reflecting the Past, Lighting the Future"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church hereby be commended on the occasion of its 250th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Reverend Kevin Campbell, pastor of Sinking Spring Presbyterian Church, as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the church's rich history and contributions to the community.

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