

2023 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 490

Commending Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 24, 2023

WHEREAS, for more than 130 years, Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church has provided opportunities for joyful worship, wise spiritual guidance, and generous community outreach to the residents of Newport News; and

WHEREAS, Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church traces its roots to the late 1800s, when two local residents, Mr. and Mrs. Archie McEachin began hosting a Sunday school class in their home; the class grew in popularity, and the couple worked with Mr. and Mrs. George Banks, Carrie Fields, Ida Parker, and the Reverend H. H. Boone to formally organize the group and petition for membership in the Presbytery of Southern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend J. C. Harris of the Presbytery of Southern Virginia arrived in Newport News in October 1892 and organized the group as Antioch Presbyterian Church; he served as the pulpit supply pastor until the Reverend G. T. Jones became the church's first full-time pastor in 1898; and

WHEREAS, in 1902, Antioch Presbyterian Church changed its name to Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church to honor the memory of an individual whose widow had made a sizable contribution that helped the church construct its building; and

WHEREAS, Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church held worship services at its location in the 600 block of 24th Street, then moved to the corner of 24th Street and Marshall Avenue in 1921, and finally relocated to its current location on 25th Street in 1991; and

WHEREAS, in the 1950s and the 1960s, Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church inspired its members to participate in the civil rights movement, and the congregation grew to become the second largest in the Presbytery of Southern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, in the following years, Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church remained an active part of the Presbyterian Church at regional and national levels, while invigorating its ministries to better serve and support members of the local community in need; and

WHEREAS, members of Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church have gone on to achieve success in a wide range of professions, including education, law, medicine, government service, the military, and community leadership, inspiring others through the values they cultivated at their home church; and

WHEREAS, Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church has had many notable members of its congregation, including George Austin, the first Black chief of police in Newport News; Jessie Rattley, the first woman and the first Black person to be elected mayor of Newport News; Katherine Johnson, a trailblazing mathematician who played an important role in the nation's space program; and Hazel O'Leary, the first woman and the first Black person to serve as United States Secretary of Energy; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of its current pastor, the Reverend Dr. Brian J. Wells, the Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church congregation continues to grow in faith and number; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church hereby be commended on the occasion of its 130th anniversary in 2022; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Carver Memorial Presbyterian Church as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the church's long history and contributions to the Newport News community.

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