

2024 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 208

Offered March 4, 2024

Commending the Reverend Dr. Raymond R. Roberts.

Patrons—VanValkenburg; Delegate: Willett

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Raymond R. Roberts, an esteemed spiritual leader in Richmond, retired as the pastor of River Road Presbyterian Church after nine years of service to the community; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Roberts began his career in the ministry as pastor of Amherst Presbyterian Church from 1984 to 1993; membership more than doubled during his tenure, and for his last two years as pastor, attendance often exceeded membership; and

WHEREAS, during that time, Raymond Roberts led the Community Revitalization Team for the Town of Amherst and the Amherst County Citizen Advisory Team, which implemented family life education programs; and

WHEREAS, when family life education became a state mandate, the Commonwealth sent out the Amherst County Citizen Advisory Team's statement of values to every school division across the state, and nearly all of them adopted a version of the shared values statement Raymond Roberts led in creating; and

WHEREAS, from 1993 to 1999, Raymond Roberts pursued a doctorate in history and theology from Union Presbyterian Seminary, and from 1998 to 2005, he served as pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, where he again presided over a significant growth in attendance and led the Community Revitalization Team; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Roberts next served as pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Westfield in New Jersey from 2005 to 2015 and served two terms on the board of the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from 2006 to 2010; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Roberts returned to the Commonwealth to pastor River Road Presbyterian Church in 2015; he shepherded the congregation through the COVID-19 pandemic and oversaw significant growth in overall attendance and Sunday school attendance; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Roberts served two terms and was the co-chair of the Advisory Committee for Social Witness Policy of the Presbyterian Church USA General Assembly, and he has authored numerous articles and reviews, along with two books on religion in education and religion and public policy; and

WHEREAS, Raymond Roberts mentored and inspired students as an adjunct professor of ethics at Union Presbyterian Seminary and was a member of the institution's board of trustees from 2020 to 2022; and

WHEREAS, outside of his career, Raymond Roberts has been a member of the Richmond-based band Reckless and Wild since 2005; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Reverend Dr. Raymond R. Roberts on the occasion of his retirement as pastor of River Road Presbyterian Church; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Reverend Dr. Raymond R. Roberts as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for his distinguished career in the ministry and legacy of servant-leadership.

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