

BY: Senator COMRIE

COMMEMORATING the 100th Anniversary of Victoria Congregational Church of Briarwood, New York, to be celebrated on June 18, 2017

WHEREAS, Religious institutions, and the many spiritual, social and educational benefits they confer, play a vital role in the development of the moral fabric of a responsible citizenry; and

WHEREAS, It is the tradition of this State and this Nation to pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body takes pleasure in commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Victoria Congregational Church of Briarwood, New York, to be feted at a Celebration Mass on Sunday, June 18, 2017; and

WHEREAS, Victoria Congregational Church prides itself as one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse United Churches of Christ in the New York Metropolitan Association of the New York Conference of the United Church of Christ; the congregation includes persons from Columbia, China, Ecuador, England, Finland, Guyana, Germany, Haiti, India, Italy, Jamaica, Korea, Lithuania, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, the Philippines, Poland, Puerto Rico, Russia, St. Croix, Scotland, Sweden and Trinidad, along with persons of African American descent; and

WHEREAS, Beginning as the Victoria Congregational Sunday School on January 16, 1916, a vote was taken among the Sunday School and its 45 members to become the Victoria Congregational Church on June 17, 1917; and

WHEREAS, Under the management of Reverend Egbert C. Macklin, a graduate of Union Theological Seminary, the church structure was built in 1922 on the corner of Victoria Street and DeGrauw Avenue in Jamaica, New York; it was officially dedicated on March 18, 1923; and

WHEREAS, Throughout the last century, Victoria Congregational Church has provided numerous invaluable benefits for its members, including health and hospital services, family court and developed the adult center while working with community councils, church federations and other institutions; and

WHEREAS, Additionally, the Church became a multi-cultural church while working with the Refugee and Resettlement agency of the United Church of Christ, offering support to those in desperate need from Bosnia, Cuba, Pakistan or elsewhere; and

WHEREAS, In 2006, Reverend Mark E. Marsh became the Senior Minister; in this capacity, he initiated numerous renovations of the church, including the restoring of the restrooms, refinishing of the sanctuary wooden floors, replacement of the sanctuary carpet, retiling the stairs

from the sanctuary to the fellowship hall and adding chairlifts to make the fellowship area more accessible; he also led the congregation in participation of the New Sanctuary Movement of New York City; and

WHEREAS, Victoria Congregational Church stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades while retaining that spiritual resolve which characterizes its past; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to take note of enduring religious institutions and to bring such institutions to the attention of the people of this Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the Victoria Congregational Church to be observed on June 18, 2017, fully confident that this commemoration reflects the belief in those values which enhance the dignity and purpose of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Reverend Mark E. Marsh, Pastor, Victoria Congregational Church, Briarwood, New York.