

BY: Senator PARKER

MOURNING the death of Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu, internationally known peacemaker, renowned religious leader, Nobel Peace laureate and devoted member of his community

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to bring full recognition and just tribute to those men and women of religious commitment who accept the responsibility of moral leadership and render the wisdom of human understanding; and

WHEREAS, It is with profound intent that this Legislative Body is moved to pay homage to a man of indomitable faith and dedication whose purposeful life and accomplishments will forever stand as a paradigm and inspiration for others; and

WHEREAS, Desmond Mpilo Tutu, a South African Anglican Bishop and Theologian known for his work as an advocate for human rights, died on Sunday, December 26, 2021, at the age of 90; and

WHEREAS, A consistent voice for nonviolent social change, Desmond Tutu was a leader in the movement to overthrow apartheid, South Africa's brutal system of racial segregation; and

WHEREAS, Born of mixed Xhosa and Motswana heritage to a poor family in Klerksdorp, South Africa in 1931, Desmond Tutu grew up under racist laws imposed over centuries of colonialism; as a college student in the early 1950s, he met Nelson Mandela and trained as a teacher before marrying Nomalizo Leah Shenxane in 1955, with whom he had four children; and

WHEREAS, Ordained as an Anglican priest in 1960, Desmond Tutu moved to the United Kingdom to study theology at King's College London in 1962; four years later, he returned to Africa, teaching at the Federal Theological Seminary and then the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland; and

WHEREAS, In 1972, Desmond Tutu became the Theological Education Fund's Director for Africa, a position based in London but necessitating regular tours of the African continent; he went on to serve as Dean of St Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg before becoming Bishop of Lesotho; and

WHEREAS, Desmond Tutu rapidly rose in the clergy and took charge of the South African Council of Churches from 1978 to 1985, transforming it into a major human rights organization stressing non-violent protest and foreign economic pressure to bring about universal suffrage; furthermore, he mobilized domestic and international opposition to apartheid, including an international economic boycott of South Africa; and

WHEREAS, After serving as Bishop of Johannesburg, in 1986, Desmond Tutu became the Archbishop of Cape Town, the most senior position in southern Africa's Anglican hierarchy; in this capacity, he emphasized a consensus-building model of leadership and oversaw the introduction of female priests; that same year, he became President of the All Africa Conference of Churches and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize; and

WHEREAS, In 1990, Desmond Tutu and the recently free Nelson Mandela led negotiations to end apartheid and introduce multi-racial democracy; and

WHEREAS, After the historic victory and election of Nelson Mandela as South Africa's first Black president in 1994, Desmond Tutu led the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, pursuing restorative justice rather than retribution; and

WHEREAS, Following apartheid's fall, Desmond Tutu began tirelessly demonstrating and speaking out around the world for justice, peace, women's equality and gay rights; he retired from public life in 2010; and

WHEREAS, Desmond Tutu's life was dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of human dignity; this resolute gentleman's finest legacy of greater social justice for all was truly reflected in his devotion to serve and respect others, and in his steadfast love for all humanity; and

WHEREAS, Desmond Tutu selflessly fought the evils of racism during the most terrible days of apartheid; he inspired an entire nation with his words and his courage, truly reviving the people's hope during the darkest of times; and

WHEREAS, An apostle of peace, Desmond Tutu fought unrelentingly for the civil rights of all people around the globe, and taught us that through non-violence, courage displaces fear, love transforms hate, acceptance dissipates prejudice and mutual regard cancels enmity; and

WHEREAS, Desmond Tutu's monumental legacy will continue to shine forth as a beacon of hope for all those who aspire to create a just and peaceful world; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to mourn the death of Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu, and to express its deepest condolences to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the family of Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu.