

BY: M. of A. Cunningham

COMMENDING First Baptist Church of Crown Heights
upon the occasion of hosting its Founder's Day
Celebration on May 1, 2022

WHEREAS, A great state is only as great as those individuals or organizations who perform exemplary service on behalf of their community, whether through unique achievement in professional or other endeavors, or simply through a lifetime of good citizenship; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend First Baptist Church of Crown Heights upon the occasion of hosting its Founder's Day Celebration on Sunday, May 1, 2022; and

WHEREAS, The First Baptist Church of Crown Heights was originally organized in 1953, as the First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, by a small group of Christian workers including a young man eager to preach, but not yet ordained; and

WHEREAS, One of the first acts of this founding church was to duly ordain the Reverend Clarence Norman, a multifaceted and caring individual with extensive training and commitment in areas that affect the community, as pastor; throughout his 62 years of leadership, the Church grew from its humble beginnings to a congregation of more than 2,000; and

WHEREAS, In addition to his role as Pastor, Reverend Clarence Norman served as Chaplain for the Center for Nursing & Rehabilitation and the New York State Division of Parole, Chairman of the Advisory Board for the Center of Law & Social Justice of Medgar Evers College, Chairman of the Orange Housing Authority in New Jersey, and Chairman of 1st Baptist Church of C.H. Housing & Development Corporation; and

WHEREAS, In 1987, Reverend Clarence Norman founded the Local Development Corporation of Crown Heights; through this vital organization, he helped develop more than 800 units of housing for senior citizens and low-income families, and 21 buildings including David Chavis Apartments, the Albany Residence and St. John's Apartments; and

WHEREAS, Born on April 30, 1930, in Goldsboro, North Carolina, Clarence Norman earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Bloomfield College in 1959, his Master of Divinity in 1964, and his Doctor of Religion in 1971 from Howard University; he also attended St. John's University for graduate study in Public School Administration and was awarded a state certificate as Principal of Secondary School in 1969; and

WHEREAS, For his steadfast and unremitting commitment to his church and community, Reverend Clarence Norman was the recipient of numerous awards and accolades including the 1969-1970 Paris Ministry Fellowship

by the Fund for Theological Education, the 1st Annual Ecumenical Award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews, a certificate as Accredited Resident Manager by the Institute of R/E Management, and in June of 2002, he was named a Great Black Father by **Ebony Magazine**; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Clarence Norman passed away on July 8, 2015, at the age of 85, leaving behind his loving wife, Ellen, and their five children; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when individuals and organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend First Baptist Church of Crown Heights upon the occasion of hosting its Founder's Day Celebration on May 1, 2022; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to First Baptist Church of Crown Heights and the family of The Reverence Clarence Norman.