

BY: Senator PARKER

CELEBRATING Orthodox Christmas on January 7, 2023

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to celebrate Orthodox Christmas on January 7, 2023; and

WHEREAS, Orthodox Christians in the United States celebrate Christmas a little bit later than everyone else, on January 7th; this date falls on December 25th in the Julian Calendar, which existed before the Gregorian Calendar; and

WHEREAS, Furthermore, Orthodox Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, the son of God; this holiday differs from Christmas Day because it does not observe Pagan traditions, such as waiting for gifts from Santa Claus and decorating a tree, and instead focuses on religious customs; and

WHEREAS, While Orthodox Christmas is more widely celebrated in Eastern European countries, Russian, Ukrainian, and Serbian communities in the United States who observed Orthodox Christianity also wait until January 7th to celebrate their Christmas; and

WHEREAS, Christmas falls on a different day in the Orthodox Church because they still observe the traditional Julian calendar, which has the original dates for Christian celebrations before the Gregorian calendar was introduced; this means that, technically, Orthodox churches still observe Christmas on December 25th; and

WHEREAS, Orthodox Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, even though his actual birthdate is unknown; because Orthodox Christmas is celebrated using the old Julian calendar, it is also known as Old Christmas Day; and

WHEREAS, Orthodox Christmas focuses on religious rituals and traditions; it is a time to find peace and unity and heal the soul; as such, they do not observe commercialized tradition such as the exchange of presents or decorating the tree; in addition, many people observe a fast before Orthodox Christmas day and give up things such as meat and dairy; and

WHEREAS, A holiday centered around peace and serenity, Orthodox Christians decorate their table with a white table cloth which symbolizes the cloth Jesus was wrapped in when he was born; some also put candles and straw decorations up to represent the nativity scene; and

WHEREAS, The Orthodox Christmas meal is known as the Holy Supper, and some traditional foods eaten on the day are mushroom soup, porridge, Lenten bread, nuts and dried fruits, cod, biscuits, and honey; and

WHEREAS, Orthodox Churches in the United States hold a special

liturgy, where they light a fire with palms and burn frankincense in honor of the three wise men's gifts to Jesus; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting and proper to give thanks to God by observing Orthodox Christmas in New York State on January 7, 2023, when all may acknowledge our blessings and express gratitude for them, while recognizing the need for strengthening religious and moral values in our State and nation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate Orthodox Christmas on January 7, 2023.