

Senate Resolution No. 1984

BY: Senator THOMAS

COMMEMORATING the 125th Anniversary of The
Lutheran Church of the Epiphany

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 Nation to pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 125th Anniversary of The Lutheran Church of the Epiphany on October 26, 2023; and

WHEREAS, On February 7, 1897, the congregation was officially organized, a constitution adopted, and a Church Council of six men was elected; later that month a call was made to Reverend Paul Baehnisch to serve as the congregation's first pastor; and

WHEREAS, The church was incorporated on October 26, 1898, as the German Evangelical Lutheran Epiphany Church, and the congregation voted to change the name to The Lutheran Church of the Epiphany in 1918; and

WHEREAS, The first church structure, an eight-room parsonage and Sunday School building were dedicated on June 27, 1907; the ground was broken for the current location of The Lutheran Church of the Epiphany on July 19, 1931, and the cornerstone was laid on October 4, 1931; the building was ultimately dedicated on June 4, 1932; and

WHEREAS, Starting out, church services were held in German, with English services being permitted occasionally; this changed by the year 1913 when weekly services and Sunday School instruction became more regularly done in English, with German services becoming less frequent, but still present to a degree; and

WHEREAS, During the early part of the twentieth century, Hempstead Village was a town amidst farms and the social and commercial center of Nassau County, and Epiphany was the only Lutheran church for miles in any direction; the congregation flourished even as surrounding areas became more populated and new Lutheran churches were started in neighboring communities, with membership peaking in the early 1960s; and

WHEREAS, The demographic, social, and cultural changes of the subsequent decades are reflected in the faces and worship services of Epiphany's current parishioners; African American families were welcomed into the congregation beginning in 1955, and, by 2003, the church's congregation included Iglesia Luterana de la Epifania, a Hispanic congregation that worships weekly and conducts services in Spanish;

joint bilingual services are held for special services throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Church of the Epiphany stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades while retaining a 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 125th Anniversary of The Lutheran Church of the Epiphany; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to The Lutheran Church of the Epiphany of Hempstead, New York.