

Senate Resolution No. 1432

**BY:** Senator PARKER

**COMMENDING** Joppa Lodge No. 55 upon the occasion of its Black History Month Program to be held Saturday, February 28, 2026

**WHEREAS,** It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and commend those venerable fraternal institutions whose enduring commitment to faith, service, education, and cultural uplift has strengthened communities and preserved the legacy of African American history and achievement; and

**WHEREAS,** Attendant to such concern, and In full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Joppa Lodge No. 55, under the jurisdiction of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of the State of New York, upon the occasion of hosting its Black History Month Program on Saturday, February 28, 2026, an observance dedicated to reflection, remembrance, and the celebration of resilience, excellence, and progress; and

**WHEREAS,** Since its establishment in 1920, Joppa Lodge No. 55 has remained steadfast in its mission to enhance and strengthen the character of men through fellowship, philanthropy, and the continual search for truth, upholding the timeless Masonic principles of Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth while fostering lifelong fraternal bonds and meaningful community impact; and

**WHEREAS,** Through its consistent engagement in civic, charitable, and educational initiatives, Joppa Lodge No. 55 has served as a beacon of moral leadership and service, contributing to the betterment of its community and exemplifying the highest ideals of Prince Hall Freemasonry; and

**WHEREAS,** The Lodge continues to advance its historic mission under the leadership of Worshipful Master Lino A. Solis II, whose message of optimism, unity, and perseverance reflects a deep reliance upon faith, and a resolute commitment to guiding the brethren forward with purpose, compassion, and renewed hope; and

**WHEREAS,** The Black History Month Program serves as a meaningful forum for education and cultural expression, featuring spoken word and musical performances that honor the African American experience while uplifting voices that inspire reflection, healing, and collective progress; and

**WHEREAS,** This year's program is further distinguished by the selection of Rev. Dr. Derrick Shahem Johnson Sr. as keynote speaker, a native of Harlem whose life's work embodies the intersection of artistic excellence, spiritual leadership, and community advocacy; and

**WHEREAS,** Rev. Dr. Derrick Shahem Johnson Sr. is an accomplished photographer, minister, educator, and community leader whose

professional journey includes distinguished service in the arts, higher education, mentorship, and public service, as well as a profound commitment to social justice and youth empowerment; and

**WHEREAS,** Answering a call to ministry, Rev. Dr. Johnson earned both a Master of Divinity and a Doctor of Ministry from the New York Theological Seminary, was ordained at Metropolitan Baptist Church in Harlem, and is the founder and pastor of The Black Liberation Church, through which he continues to provide spiritual leadership rooted in liberation, service, and compassion; and

**WHEREAS,** In addition to his ministerial calling, Rev. Dr. Johnson has served as a mentor, life coach, chaplain, and civic leader, offering guidance to young men, veterans, and families, while remaining an active member of Joppa Lodge No. 55, where his Masonic service reflects the values of faith, discipline, and brotherhood; and

**WHEREAS,** The Black History Month Program of Joppa Lodge No. 55 stands as a testament to the Lodge's enduring commitment to honoring the past, educating the present, and inspiring the future through faith, culture, and service; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Joppa Lodge No. 55 upon the occasion of its Black History Month Program, to be held Saturday, February 28, 2026, and to extend sincere appreciation to Worshipful Master Lino A. Solis II, the officers, members, and supporters of the Lodge for their continued dedication to faith, fraternity, cultural enrichment, and community uplift; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That this Legislative Body recognize Rev. Dr. Derrick Shahem Johnson Sr. for his distinguished service as keynote speaker and for his exemplary contributions to ministry, the arts, mentorship, and community leadership; and be it further

**RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Joppa Lodge No. 55 and Rev. Dr. Derrick Shahem Johnson Sr., in recognition of their enduring commitment to preserving history, uplifting culture, and advancing the principles of service, truth, and brotherhood.