

BY: Senator COMRIE

COMMENDING Bishop Calvin Rice upon the occasion of his 15th Anniversary as Senior Pastor of New Jerusalem Worship Center on April 18, 2020

WHEREAS, The character and richness of religious and community life in this noble Empire State are nourished and fulfilled through the faithful concern and selfless devotion of those who commit their energies and purpose to the ministry of others; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to bring full recognition and just tribute to individuals who distinguish themselves and the ministry through their unremitting commitment and preeminence of service; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Bishop Calvin Rice upon the occasion of his 15th Anniversary as Senior Pastor of New Jerusalem Worship Center to be celebrated at an event on Saturday, April 18, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Calvin Rice, a native of Union, South Carolina, was educated in the Union County public school system where he graduated in the last segregated class from the historic Sims High School; he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from the College of Staten Island and a Master's degree in Religion from the New York Theological Seminary, and completed his graduate studies at the Postgraduate Center for Mental Health of New York City in conjunction with Hebrew Union Seminary; and

WHEREAS, He has also attended The Catawba Bible College of Rock Hill, South Carolina, and the National Theological Seminary of Baltimore, Maryland, and holds a certificate of study from the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel; and

WHEREAS, On July 14, 2004, Bishop Calvin Rice was overwhelmingly elected to succeed New Jerusalem Worship Center Founder, Reverend James C. Kelly, and began his pastorate on January 2, 2005; since his installation, he has overseen the completion of construction and renovation of the Church's multi-million-dollar edifice; and

WHEREAS, Under Bishop Calvin Rice's luminous leadership, the Church's membership has steadily grown, and as a result, it has increased to two worship services on Sunday morning, instituted a monthly leadership development training series, and expanded ministries which are committed to addressing the immediate needs of the community; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Calvin Rice also serves as the Protestant Chaplain at the South Beach Psychiatric Center in Staten Island, New York; and

WHEREAS, This highly respected religious leader has been actively

involved in many community organizations including Staten Island Communities United (SICU), Baptist Ministers Conference of Greater New York and Vicinity, New York Urban League, American Red Cross, College of Staten Island Advisory Board, American Baptist Churches of Metro New York, the Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, Boy Scouts of America, Sisters of Charity Medical Center, Eastern Baptist Association, New York State Progressive Baptist Convention, PNBC Eastern Region, and Mayor Bloomberg's New York City Economic Development Task Force, as well as Staten Island Borough Presidents Anti-Bias Task Force; and

WHEREAS, In September of 1999, Bishop Calvin Rice formed the Genesis Bible Institute, a school dedicated to the training of ministers and lay people for effective work in ministry, and helped organize and establish two Liberian congregational churches; and

WHEREAS, Moreover, Bishop Calvin Rice published a booklet entitled "This Is My Story," with excerpts and highlights of a unique and successful ministry spanning 23 years along with selected sermons; and

WHEREAS, In 2007, Bishop Calvin Rice helped found Empowered Queens United in Action and Leadership (EQUAL), a citizen's power organization made up of congregations in South East Queens, Sunnyside and Woodside; and

WHEREAS, Along with his many pastoral roles, Bishop Dr. Calvin Rice is a teacher; he opened and currently serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Rochdale Early Advantage Charter School (REACS), which provides an Early College Preparatory program for students from kindergarten through grade five, and served as a professor of expository preaching for two consecutive semesters at the New York School of Divinity; and

WHEREAS, For his steadfast and unrelenting commitment to his community, Bishop Calvin Rice was the recipient of numerous accolades; in 1997, he was inducted into the Staten Island College Hall of Fame and a Staten Island Street was named in his honor; and

WHEREAS, In addition, Bishop Calvin Rice has received nearly 100 plaques and certificates, and proclamations from many notable government officials, and was recognized by the New York Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators for Community and Economic Development for his work while leading the FCBC, New York from 1985 until December 2004; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Calvin Rice has been featured in more than 30 newspaper and magazine articles and Oxford's Who's Who Registry, designated Staten Island co-Chairperson of President Bush's Faith Based Initiative by Congressman Vito Fossella, and was presented with the Living the Dream Award by ABC Television, and the 2012 Vernon M. Dougherty Distinction in Ministry Award; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout have been his wife and First Lady, Willie Mae Rice, who has shown him love and support and rejoices in his many achievements; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Calvin Rice has brought to his ministry an overwhelming spirit of charity and compassion, acting from vision and enlightenment in conducting his administrative and spiritual duties, while always displaying the highest standards of personal and professional integrity and dedication; and

WHEREAS, This distinguished man of God has always given enlightenment, guidance and wisdom to the many entrusted to his care and has administered abundantly and unstintingly to the spiritual and corporal needs of all; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when a person of such noble aims and accomplishments is brought to our attention, it is appropriate to publicly and jubilantly proclaim and commend that individual for the edification of others; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Bishop Calvin Rice upon the occasion of his 15th Anniversary as Senior Pastor of New Jerusalem Worship Center, noting his unremitting and compassionate faith and his exemplary service to God, man, and his community, and extending to him heartfelt best wishes for a future of continued purposeful success and well-being; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Bishop Calvin Rice.