

## 2011-K138

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commending Reverend Dr. Henry T. Simmons upon the occasion of his 20th Anniversary as Senior Minister of the St. Albans Congregational Church

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

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

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Reverend Dr. Henry T. Simmons upon the occasion of his 20th Anniversary as Senior Minister of the St. Albans Congregational Church to be celebrated at a luncheon on Saturday, March 26, 2011, at the Robert Ross Johnson Family Life Center in St. Albans, New York; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Henry Simmons 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, One of Reverend Henry Simmons' first initiatives as Senior Minister was to add more women to boards that were historically managed by men of the church; and

WHEREAS, Under Reverend Henry Simmons' luminous leadership, the congregation has grown from 400 to 1200 active members who share mutual efforts sponsoring just over 50 ministries for congregants and the community; and

WHEREAS; This devout leader expanded the square footage of the Robert Ross Johnson Family Life Center and increased the usage of the facility with private and public organizations; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Henry Simmons implemented numerous ministries within

the church including the Christian Youth Organization, Because We Care Food Pantry and Clothing Boutique, Enriching our Elders Ministry, Liturgical Dance Ministry, Women's Fellowship, Nehemiah Men's Ministry, and Birthday Fellowship groups; and

WHEREAS, Moreover, Reverend Henry Simmons expanded the offerings for Bible study and reflection, increased the number of church choirs, and increased the church's budget; and

WHEREAS, Despite his busy professional life, he has compiled an impressive record of civic and charitable service, including membership with United Church Ministries for Racial, Social & Economic Justice, UCC; the NY Metro Black Clergy, UCC; the United Black Christians, the Committee to Eliminate Media Offensive to African People, Jamaica, New York; The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.; and the Board of Directors for the Human Resources Center of St. Albans, New York; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Henry Simmons has received many awards and accolades including citations for outstanding ministerial leadership from the Michigan State Legislature, The Detroit City Council, and the New York City Council, and honorary Doctor of Divinity degrees for contributions to racial and social justice from Ursinus College and Houston-Tillotson College; and

WHEREAS, With him throughout have been his loving wife, Gayle, their son, Aaron, daughter-in-law, Tayia, and two grandsons, Christon and

Tyler, all of whom feel privileged to be a part of his life and rejoice in his achievements; and

WHEREAS, In addition to spending time with his family, Reverend Henry Simmons enjoys painting, sketching, playing trumpet/cornet, tennis, reading, and collecting art and musical instruments from the African Diaspora; 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 Reverend Dr. Henry T. Simmons upon the occasion of his 20th Anniversary as Senior Minister of the St. Albans Congregational Church, noting his unrelenting and compassionate faith and his exemplary service to God, man, and his community, and extending to him the heartfelt best wishes for a future of purposeful success and well-being; and be it further

RESOLVED. That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Reverend Dr. Henry T. Simmons.