

2023-J517

Senate Resolution No. 517

BY: Senator GRIFFO

COMMEMORATING the 175th Anniversary of Trinity
Church of Rome, New York

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 custom of this Legislative Body to celebrate the milestones of those enduring places of worship within the State of New York which serves the spiritual needs of our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of Trinity Church of Rome, New York, to be celebrated with a myriad of events on April 15-16, 2023; and

WHEREAS, The history of Trinity Church is rooted in Rome, New York, where the earliest congregation was created in March of 1848; and

WHEREAS, After the construction of a dam in 1804, the building of a grist mill, cotton mill, woolen mill and sawmill brought skilled workers familiar with operating these businesses to Rome; in 1819, the Village was incorporated as a major transportation route for trades between early settlers and Native Americans and was influenced by the development of the Erie Canal; and

WHEREAS, The rapid growth of then Canal Village, populated by German immigrants in the 1800s, led to a need for a holy institution to bring people together; during this time, 22 men, representing some 20 families, first established the early congregation of Trinity Church in March of 1848, under the leadership of Reverend Alexander Wetzel; and

WHEREAS, The people of the newly formed church named themselves the United German Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of Rome, and one year after its inception the forefathers of Trinity Church erected a wood frame building on the northwest corner of South James and Ridge streets on a lot donated by the trustees of the estate of Dominick Lynch, the founder of Rome, New York; and

WHEREAS, The official dedication of the structure, known then as the "Little German Church," took place on October 25, 1851; and

WHEREAS, Between 1851 and 1867, the congregation was independent and secured various pastors to keep worship in the community thriving; by 1893, there were about 85 voting members as the church continued to grow, and in 1927, the congregation decided they needed a church more centrally located to their parishioners and purchased the property at 215 West Court Street from the Welsh Congregational Society; and

WHEREAS, The dedication of the new church was held on Sunday, April 15, 1928, and a morning farewell service for "The Little White Church" was led by Pastor Paul Gabler; and

WHEREAS, In 1928, Trinity Church became a member of the Evangelical and Reformed Church body, then in 1959 Trinity joined United Church of Christ and became Trinity United Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, An addition of five Sunday School rooms, the Zingerline

Memorial Lounge, and a new pastor's office was added in 1959, and in 1990, a council room, nursery, music room, administrative office, and another new pastor's office was added to the building to accommodate the churches growing membership; and

WHEREAS, After faithfully serving Trinity Church for 25 years, Reverend Frank Graichen retired in 2019; just one year later, the church endured the struggles brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Overcoming much adversity, including declining attendance and the closings of churches, Trinity Church installed a new electronic system to allow people to see and hear a service from the safety of their own home; and

WHEREAS, In October of 2022, Trinity Church welcomed Pastor Karen Marshall as their new full-time pastor, and she continues to carry out the mission of this vital institution; and

WHEREAS, The 175th anniversary of Trinity Church is a testament to those who have attended and diligently worked for the church's growth through the years; and

WHEREAS, Today, Trinity Church stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades, while retaining that spiritual resolve which has so characterized its glorious 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 175th Anniversary of Trinity Church of Rome, New York,

confident that this commemoration reflects the belief in those values which enhance the dignity and purpose of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Trinity Church of Rome, New York.