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Title: WHEREAS, Reverend Dr. Samuel Wilbert Williams, Jr. was born in Glen Rogers, West Virginia on June 16, 1931. He pastored various churches in W. Virginia for 12 years prior to arriving in Pittsburgh in 1966, where he pastored New Zion Baptist Church for 52 years; and,

Sponsors: Theresa Kail-Smith, All Members

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WHEREAS, Reverend Dr. Samuel Wilbert Williams, Jr. was born in Glen Rogers, West Virginia on June 16, 1931. He pastored various churches in W. Virginia for 12 years prior to arriving in Pittsburgh in 1966, where he pastored New Zion Baptist Church for 52 years; and,

WHEREAS, in 1969, he led the church, originally on Manhattan Street, in a renovation program completely remodeling the sanctuary and again, ten years later, which included a totally new sanctuary with new pews, choir lofts, pulpit and a communion table. His final renovation programs were to maintain and improve the New Zion Church building on the North Side; and,

WHEREAS, Rev. Williams was the founder/owner of the North Avenue Family Store, later adding the Perrysville Family Store and a restaurant building on Perrysville Ave. He blessed his employees and customers, often times giving credit for groceries, never requiring payment on their account and he even paid some of their gas bills. He would even give products from his store to those whom he caught stealing from him; and,

WHEREAS, he gave away more produce than he kept from his own garden in Chartiers City, and residents still talk about his generosity years ago when they were children. His “bucket list” included converting the land into a flower garden for the community; and,

WHEREAS, Rev. Williams was instrumental in getting North Side gangs to meet and discuss their similarities and their differences, hoping to establish a more peaceful situation in Manchester. He even received an award from the Victory Baptist Church for his reconciliatory work with North Side gangs; and,

WHEREAS, his engaging personality and genuine caring helped to alter the lives of countless young people by leading them to join the New Zion Drama Club, the Young Angelics Choir, and the Baptist Youth Fellowship. He enriched the days of students when he drove the school bus for the City of Pittsburgh Board of Education;

and,

WHEREAS, Rev. Williams often visited the sick, whether they were members of his congregation or not, and also enjoyed educating his congregation and others in social economic issues and politics, including being one of the strong supporters who participated in the building of the Pittsburgh Obama Presidential Campaign; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby honor the memory of Reverend Dr. Samuel Wilbert Williams, Jr., who has been a spiritual father to many in the community, even non-church goers and has been referred to by many ministers as the "Leaders' leader"; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare, Friday, August 27, 2021, to be "***Reverend Dr. Samuel Wilbert Williams Jr. Day***" in the City of Pittsburgh.