



Text File

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Committee: City Council

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WHEREAS, Dr. Henry Highland Garnet was born into slavery in Chesterville, Maryland on December 23, 1815; and,

WHEREAS, in 1824, his family of 11 secured permission to attend a funeral, from where they all escaped in a covered wagon via Wilmington, Delaware as they were aided by the Quaker and Underground Railroad stationmaster Thomas Garnett; and,

WHEREAS, though the family was split after their escape, at the age of 10, Dr. Garnet's family was able to reunite and move to New York City, where he attended the African Free School from 1826 to 1831; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Garnet's education was interrupted in 1828, as circumstances led him to leave New York and seek employment, to return later in life to the City as he continued his education and became a Presbyterian minister; and,

WHEREAS, as a preacher, Dr. Garnet became known for fighting for emancipation and against the sin of slavery, an abolitionist whose militant approach against slavery influenced and inspired many; and,

WHEREAS, in 1843 he delivered one of his most famous speeches, "A Call to Rebellion", to the National Convention in Buffalo, New York where he urged African Americans to take up arms and free themselves; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Garnet became the first African American to deliver a sermon in the House of Representatives on February 12, 1865; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Garnet pastored several Presbyterian churches, including Liberty Presbyterian Church in Troy, New York, Shiloh Presbyterian Church in New York City, and Fifteenth Street Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC; and,

WHEREAS, upon relocating to Pittsburgh in 1868 to serve as President of Avery College in the Northside, Dr. Garnet became the first organizing pastor of Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church, the oldest African American Presbyterian Church in Allegheny County; and,

WHEREAS, known as the father of African American Presbyterians in Southwestern Pennsylvania, Dr. Garnet was named as Ambassador/Minister to Liberia in 1881 before passing away on February 13, 1882;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare February 16-February 18, 2024 to be "***Henry Highland Garnet Days***" in the City of Pittsburgh.