

In Memoriam



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa takes pride in recognizing those individuals whose commitment and dedication have made a lasting impact on our community and its citizens. One of these individuals was **Reverend Dr. Cleo Phillip (C.P.) Epps**, a well-respected and beloved Tampa, Florida Pastor and Spiritual Leader who passed away on Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at age 96; and

WHEREAS, born on May 23, 1924 in Jacksonville, Florida to the late Ezekiel Epps, Sr. and Annie Lee Oliver, Dr. Epps served his country in the United States Navy, and following his honorable discharge from military service, he worked for the State of Florida and thereafter made Tampa, Florida his home where he became a minister in 1958 at Oak Hill Missionary Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, in 1959, Dr. Epps was ordained as a Minister of the Gospel, and he became Pastor of Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church where he devotedly served for fifty-two years before retiring in 2011, and during his tenure it prospered and he grew the membership from sixteen to nearly two thousand, and it relocated to its current location on East Cayuga Drive where the beautiful church was created and its Welcome Center continues to invite the community to enter and be a part of its mission, and receive spiritual guidance and fellowship; and

WHEREAS, a new education building was dedicated on November 19, 2006, and it was named the *Dr. C.P. Epps Education Building* to pay tribute to Dr. Epps for all that he had accomplished for Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church and its member and for his efforts in its success, and the City of Tampa named an honorary street, *Rev. Dr. C.P. Epps Drive* in recognition of his contributions to our community; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Epps received his Honorary Doctorate of Divinity Degree from Florida Theological Seminary, and he served as a spiritual leader in many capacities including as Vice President and President of Congress Number Four, Elder Statesman for the Progressive Missionary and Education State Convention of Florida, as Moderator of the First South Florida District Association, he was a mentor to many Ministers in his dedication to training, ordaining and licensing them, and he was instrumental in Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church's participation in former Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn's Inauguration Ceremony in 2011; and

WHEREAS, a visionary, mentor, friend, and inspiration to all who knew him, he will be forever remembered as a man who led his life committed to his faith and church, his generosity and kindness, and his belief "*that strong faith is the road to a blessed life*," and especially for his deep love of his cherished family. Although we are grieved at the loss of this outstanding citizen, his legacy will continue to live on through the improvements he brought to our city and in all those whose lives he has touched.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby urge all citizens to join me in publicly expressing sorrow and heartfelt appreciation to the Reverend Dr. Cleo Phillip Epps Family, son Curtis, daughters Cynthia, Gloria and Marian, Grandchildren, other family members, and the congregation of Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their many cherished memories and the impact of his life on our community.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 23rd day of October 2020.



Mayor