

1 Introduced by Council Member Pittman:
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4 **RESOLUTION 2022-798**

5 A RESOLUTION HONORING AND COMMENDING THE LIFE
6 AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF APOSTLE DR. GENTLE L.
7 GROOVER, SR.; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
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9 **WHEREAS**, Apostle Dr. Gentle L. Groover, Sr., a native of
10 Greenville, Florida, served two years in the U.S. Army and earned an
11 associate's degree from North Florida Junior College before pursuing
12 divinity studies at the University of Alabama. He was later conferred
13 an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the St. Thomas Christian
14 University; and

15 **WHEREAS**, in 1963 Dr. Groover moved to Jacksonville where he
16 established a mission church on the city's Northside that, after
17 several relocations due to a growing congregation, would eventually
18 become the Greater Refuge Temple on Rowe Avenue at Lem Turner Road.
19 In 1983 Pastor Groover was consecrated a Bishop in the Church of Our
20 Lord Jesus Christ, and international denomination with over 1,200
21 churches in the United States and in 22 foreign countries, and in
22 1984 was elected an Apostle and member of the governing body of the
23 church; and

24 **WHEREAS**, Apostle Groover and his sister, Catherine Hester
25 McNair, founded Bridge the Gap in 1981, a program intended to help
26 meet the needs of the residents of the City's Northside. Among the
27 numerous programs sponsored by Bridge the Gap are the annual Law
28 Enforcement and Fire/Rescue Thanksgiving Day, the annual Gift Giving
29 Day providing food, clothing, and toys to families in need during the
30 holiday season, an annual Walk for Wellness co-sponsored with St.
31 Vincent's Medical Center to encourage an active and healthy lifestyle,

1 a Youth Program reinforcing self-esteem and discipline through karate
2 and self-defense classes, and an Adopt a Grandparent program; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Apostle Groover has been active in numerous efforts to
4 improve the Jacksonville community at large, serving on the
5 Springfield Ministerial Alliance and participating in multi-
6 denominational efforts pursuing justice, equity, safety, and quality
7 of life issues. As a result of his decades of service to the community,
8 he was awarded a ceremonial key to the city in 2003 by Mayor John
9 Peyton. In 2018 he established the Gentle and Vivian Groover Endowment
10 for Children's Health, the funds from which assist Baptist Health in
11 the operation of the Ribault High School Medical Clinic; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Groover has carried out his ministry in a variety
13 of ways over the course of six decades, from being an inspirational
14 preacher and counselor to spreading his ministry on radio and
15 television, and from overseeing his denomination's missionary work
16 around the world to organizing deliveries of food, clothing and other
17 necessities to the victims of disasters in the United States such as
18 Hurricanes Hugo, Andrew and Katrina; now therefore

19 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

20 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby honors and commends the
21 life and accomplishments of Apostle Dr. Gentle Groover, Sr. of the
22 Greater Refuge Temple over the course of a long and productive life
23 and wishes him the very best of health and happiness in the years to
24 come. His life of selfless devotion to the care and inspiration of
25 others is a testament to his faith and an example of true servant
26 leadership.

27 **Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
28 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
29 without the Mayor's signature.
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1 Form Approved:

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3 /s/ Mary E. Staffopoulos

4 Office of General Counsel

5 Legislation Prepared By: Jeff Clements, City Council Research

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