

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 733

By Crowe

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Dr. Earle P. Barron, Jr.,  
for his lifetime of achievements.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are pleased to specially recognize and honor those venerable individuals who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Earle P. Barron, Jr., is one such estimable individual who evinces the greatest integrity in all his endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Earle Partlow Barron, Jr., was born in Rock Hill, South Carolina, on April 24, 1928, to Sarah Patrick and Earle Barron, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, the young Earle Barron started kindergarten at Winthrop Training School and finished high school at the age of seventeen, graduating as the valedictorian of his class; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 1945, Dr. Barron entered the Citadel. He completed his freshman year and then enlisted in the United States Army; and

WHEREAS, from 1946 to 1947, he served in the occupation forces in Korea and was stationed at Seoul and Headquarters Co., under General John R. Hodge; while in Korea, he visited the Presbyterian mission compound of Joe and Annis Hopper, his father's sister and brother-in-law, in Moko; and

WHEREAS, upon his discharge from the Army, Dr. Earle Barron attended Erskine College, which his parents, sister, and many relatives had attended; during his tenure at Erskine, he attended the University of Chicago one summer for training as the YMCA president; served his classmates as president of the junior class; and gained recognition as a member of the Garnet Circle; and

WHEREAS, upon graduating cum laude and second in his class, Dr. Barron entered Erskine Theological Seminary; while at the seminary for three summers, he helped found the Sherwood Forest Associate Reformed Presbyterian (ARP) Church in Columbia, South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, in 1952, during his senior year at the seminary, Dr. Earle Barron, Jr., married Mona Blakely, a sophomore at Erskine; a bright and attractive young woman, she finished her work at Erskine, Presbyterian College, and the University of South Carolina in three years; and

WHEREAS, the Rotary Club awarded Dr. Barron a fellowship to the University of Glasgow, Scotland, Trinity College; during his time in Scotland, he played basketball for the University and competed against the universities of London, Edinburgh, Cambridge, and St. Andrews; he was awarded the school half blue by his teammates; and

WHEREAS, upon their return home from Europe via the *Queen Mary*, the Barrons moved to Columbia, South Carolina, where Dr. Barron continued to work at Sherwood Forest; the couple's first daughter, Margaret Blakely, was born in Clinton, South Carolina, in 1954; and

WHEREAS, when an opportunity to teach Bible at Westminster Schools arose, Dr. Barron resigned from Sherwood Forest and moved his family to Atlanta; during his tenure at Westminster Schools, his second daughter, Sarah Elizabeth, was born in 1956; for two years, Dr. Barron taught at the school, as he pursued a Master of Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary and Emory University; and

WHEREAS, just before Christmas of 1957, Dr. Earle Barron and his growing family moved to Crowders Creek Church in Gaston County, North Carolina; while there, he led the erection of a new church building, became active in Synod work, and served as chairman of the board of Christian education and director of church school; and

WHEREAS, he then resigned from Crowders Creek to attend Boston University, School of Theology, to pursue a doctorate degree and undergo clinical training at Boston State

Hospital; although he left theology school before completing his doctorate and returned to Crowders Creek, he did earn a Doctor of Ministry in 1985; and

WHEREAS, in 1964, Dr. Earle Barron left the ARPs and joined with Little Joe's Presbyterian Church, a member of the Presbyterian Church USA denomination, in Barium Springs, North Carolina, where he served as minister to the children's home and the community; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, Dr. Barron accepted a call to Erwin Presbyterian Church UPUSA; that same year, his third daughter, Catherine Anne, was born in January; while at Erwin, he served on many committees of Presbytery and was elected moderator of Holston Presbytery at the time of the US-UPUSA reunion; and

WHEREAS, in 1986, Dr. Earle Barron accepted the call to become pastor of Greenwich Presbyterian, USA, near Manassas, Virginia; during his twelve-year tenure, the church prospered greatly, and its attendance increased by ten percent each year; thanks to his capable leadership, the church continued to flourish after he left and constructed a new complex in 2014; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Barron began writing for publication while in Erwin; he eventually published a history of the Civil War in the area, *Ewell's March Home*, and later published a book on hiking along the trails of the mountains around Erwin, *Presence Lingers*; and

WHEREAS, in 1999, at the age of 71, Dr. Earle Barron began to consider retirement, and he and his wife bought a house in Johnson City, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, within a few months of retirement, Dr. Barron began a series of church interims, first going to a three-church field near Abingdon, Virginia, and then to Central Presbyterian Church in Bristol; he went up to Wytheville for a few months, before doing a five-church interim called the "South West Virginia Parish," where he served as parish minister; he went next to Salem Presbyterian Church at Limestone, Tennessee, for two years; Rogersville, Tennessee; and finally Keystone in Johnson City as a supply; and

WHEREAS, as a servant of God, Dr. Earle Barron preached analogically, using Bible stories and narratives, and developed a warm style in which he was able to present his

message without notes; he also excelled in his children's sermons, using objects of interest and much expression; and

WHEREAS, for the majority of his life, Dr. Barron has battled serious allergies, which cause him to suffer from a hyperreactive system and many sensitivities; with his training, research, and practice, he wrote a paper entitled "Allergy and Spirituality," which was published in the *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling* in 2011; he had previously published two other articles in the same journal; and

WHEREAS, possessed with a dry wit readily apparent in his sermons, Dr. Earle Barron has long enjoyed repartee, and, in the early days, he would spend hours parlaying with his friends; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Barron took his Christian pilgrimage seriously; at first, he was a typical, traditional ARP, which left him with a lack of assurance about his relationship to God and caused him some anxiety; with a conversion experience in the Army, he became more evangelistic, although he never thought he made a good evangelist; and

WHEREAS, all along, he believed something was missing, and the Pastoral Clinical Movement filled in the gap; while this greatly helped him, and through him others, he decided that it had become too psychological; he then experienced a very positive, charismatic experience that warmed up his relationship to God; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Earle Barron then became interested in, studied, and practiced contemplative spirituality for a number of years, and he came to appreciate the spiritual side of this relationship to nature; and

WHEREAS, he developed the spiritual significance of his relationship in his book *Presence Lingers*; as he became more involved in his alternative therapies, he saw a relationship between energy and spirituality; by his eighties, he seemed to integrate these various phases; and

WHEREAS, throughout the years, Dr. Barron has always remained a Presbyterian, and he has appreciated his opportunity to question doctrines and experiences in the USA Church; in the spiritual and health realms, some have considered him to be a pioneer, with one person

describing him as "always on the cutting edge"; one of his major goals in life has been to understand and practice that "spiritual" included all of life in all relationships; and

WHEREAS, a family man of the highest order, Earle Barron deeply loves his family, his wife, Mona; daughters, Margaret, Sarah, and Catherine; in-laws, Dwight Covington, Rusty Crowe, and Ron Ramey; grandchildren, Katie and husband Jordy Broyles, John Barron Crowe, Matthew Covington and wife Susan, Patrick Covington and wife Louise, and Andrew Covington; and great-grandchildren, Gus and Annie Covington; and

WHEREAS, he has proudly watched his children grow and develop, become adults, choose mates, and have their own children; and

WHEREAS, while sometimes the pilgrimage has proved difficult, Dr. Earle Barron has always thanked God for his grace and rejoiced in and sought to focus on the mystery and beauty of life; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor Dr. Earle P. Barron, Jr., for his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.