



A Resolution in Honor of the Ministry of Esther K. Preston, Clerk of Session

WHEREAS the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) requires the Session of each church to elect a clerk who shall “record the transactions of the Session, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, maintain any required registers, preserve its records and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church,” and

WHEREAS, Highland Presbyterian Church first elected Esther Preston to serve as Clerk in 1985 and she served in that position with only two short breaks (the last one being over 20 years ago) until she decided “to retire with love and memories” effective December 31, 2021, and

WHEREAS, in the course of gracefully and wonderfully fulfilling her duties for 32 years, Esther Preston attended, prepared, and filed the minutes for an estimated 600 meetings of the Session, for an estimated 100 Congregational meetings, and for 32 annual meetings of the non-profit corporation, and ensured that all such records were properly stored and/or archived, and

WHEREAS, as Clerk of Session, Esther Preston prepared 32 Annual Statistical Reports, presented them to the congregation at its annual meeting, and submitted them to the General Assembly, submitted minutes and other paperwork as required to the Presbytery, reviewed all minutes from Deacon meetings that have been submitted to her, and not only complied with the reporting requirements of the church, but been repeatedly cited for exemplary performance of her duties and lauded for producing minutes that not only summarize the actions taken by the Session but also capture the efforts of Highland to seek the will of Christ as decisions were contemplated and made, and

WHEREAS, even while exceeding the performance expected of someone undertaking the constitutional duties of Clerk, Esther Preston was always available and willing to assume additional responsibilities related to her service as Clerk such as assisting with innumerable baptisms, helping the Ministers with communion and Session agenda preparation, serving as a friend and offering personal support and counsel to the Ministers and Staff, and becoming one of Highland’s *de facto* Church historians, and

WHEREAS, in addition to her service as Clerk and those related responsibilities, Esther Preston served Highland tirelessly in other capacities including completing seven terms as an active Elder, serving on and chairing several committees, including Membership, Worship, Nominating and Strengthening of the Church, regularly serving in countless benevolent capacities from Habitat for Humanity builds to food service at the overflow shelter, serving as a commissioner to the General Assembly and numerous Presbytery meetings, serving on two Pastor Nominating Committees and beyond her service as Elder, she and her family provided innumerable hours at the church undertaking improvements to the property and working to enhance the worship experience, not the least of which included providing luminaries for the Christmas Eve Services, and

WHEREAS, the Session recognizes that this impressive listing of accomplishments fails to adequately describe the love Esther Preston has shown for Highland and its members, shown by her uncanny ability to remember the names of and warmly greet hundreds of visitors and new members who have joined the church during her tenure, by her radiant smile and comforting presence in worship and meetings, by her friendly, respectful and positive interaction with staff and congregation without ever compromising her steadfast adherence to presbyterian polity, and by her special love that makes all who know her understand that she is their special friend.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Session of Highland Presbyterian Church, for itself and on behalf of the congregation, hereby expresses its utmost love and heartfelt appreciation to Esther Preston for her service to this church and this denomination as its Clerk of Session and so much more.

This the 30th day of January, 2022.

The Rev. Dr. J. S. Randolph Harris, Pastor

Mr. John H. Bain, Clerk of Session