

COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION AND AGRICULTURE

06/20/2019-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR

05/31/2019-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY

**BILL NO. 33-0079**

**Thirty-Third Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**May 14, 2019**

A Resolution honoring and commending Thelma Ruby Sharder Youngblood for her outstanding service and contributions to the Lutheran Church of the Virgin Islands and the Virgin Islands community

---

**PROPOSED BY:** Senators: Myron D. Jackson, Alicia V. Barnes and Oakland Benta  
Co-Sponsors: Donna Frett-Gregory, Allison L. DeGazon,  
Javan E. James, Sr., and Steven D. Payne, Sr.

---

1       **WHEREAS**, as a child growing up on the island of St. Croix, Thelma Ruby Sharder  
2       Youngblood (hereinafter, Thelma Youngblood) was an active member of the Lord God of  
3       Sabaoth Lutheran Church in Christiansted, St. Croix, involved in Sunday School, youth groups,  
4       and visitation to the sick, thereby developing her inspiration to enter the church ministry;

5       **WHEREAS**, Thelma Youngblood is a graduate of the Christiansted High School on the  
6       island of St. Croix, the mother of two children and a stepson, Robert Youngblood, Allen  
7       Youngblood, Jr., and Paul Youngblood, and grandmother to ten and great grandmother to eight;

1       **WHEREAS**, after graduation Thelma Youngblood attended Temple University in  
2 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for her freshman year of college;

3       **WHEREAS**, after her freshman year of college, Thelma Youngblood left Temple  
4 University to enter Philadelphia Motherhouse School to be trained as a Lutheran Deaconess;

5       **WHEREAS**, Thelma Youngblood's training at the Motherland School lasted four years  
6 and included seminary work and an internship;

7       **WHEREAS**, Thelma Youngblood's internship was completed under the guidance of Dr.  
8 Robin Skyles of St. James Church on the south side of Chicago, Illinois;

9       **WHEREAS**, upon completion of her internship, Thelma Youngblood was consecrated as  
10 the first black American-born fully trained Lutheran Deaconess;

11       **WHEREAS**, Thelma Youngblood then attended Wagner College in Staten Island, New  
12 York and received a Bachelor of Arts in Social Group Work and Psychology;

13       **WHEREAS**, after graduation from Wagner College, Thelma Youngblood was assigned to  
14 work at Haverford Center in Philadelphia as a social group worker;

15       **WHEREAS**, Thelma Youngblood met her future husband Pastor Allen Youngblood while  
16 volunteering at his church;

17       **WHEREAS**, Pastor Allen Youngblood is credited with developing and constructing the  
18 first Black Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) congregation, in the state of  
19 Pennsylvania;

20       **WHEREAS**, Thelma Youngblood became her husband's parish worker and helper, and  
21 together they organized and built the first Black ELCA congregation in Cleveland, Ohio and later  
22 built another ELCA in Toledo, Ohio;

23       **WHEREAS**, in 1972 Thelma Youngblood returned to the island of St. Croix when her  
24 husband was called to serve as a Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Frederiksted;

1       **WHEREAS**, after the untimely and sudden death of her husband in 1973, Thelma  
2 Youngblood began her teaching career with the Virgin Islands Department of Education and held  
3 various positions including Reading-Language Resource Teacher and Adult Education Teacher;

4       **WHEREAS**, Thelma Youngblood subsequently retired in 1990;

5       **WHEREAS**, Thelma Youngblood joined the Kingshill Lutheran Church in 1975, providing  
6 services as a volunteer and coordinator;

7       **WHEREAS**, starting in 1978, Thelma Youngblood served as administrator for Kingshill  
8 Lutheran Church whenever the church was without a minister, coordinating church services, the  
9 church council, the education task force, programs for youth enhancement, and pastoral visitation  
10 to the sick and homebound;

11       **WHEREAS**, on June 8, 1990, Bishop Rafael Malpica-Padilla honored Thelma  
12 Youngblood at the Synod Assembly Banquet on St. Croix for her service to the church;

13       **WHEREAS**, on June 12, 1997, at the Synod Assembly Banquet in St. Thomas, Bishop  
14 Francisco Sosa recognized Thelma Youngblood for her love of and service to the church;

15       **WHEREAS**, beginning in November of 1998, Thelma Youngblood welcomed and worked  
16 as a team with guest Pastor Dr. Elizeo Perez from Puerto Rico;

17       **WHEREAS**, on November 10, 2002, Thelma Youngblood was honored by Alpha Kappa  
18 Alpha Sorority, Inc. for her spiritual involvement in the community;

19       **WHEREAS**, on June 20, 2003, in recognition of her service to the Kingshill congregation,  
20 Thelma Youngblood was appointed Lay Pastor of the Kingshill Lutheran Church;

21       **WHEREAS**, on September 17, 2006, Thelma Youngblood was officially ordained as the  
22 Pastor in Kingshill Lutheran Church on the island of St. Croix, and was the first female ordained  
23 Pastor in the Lutheran Church of the Virgin Islands; and

**SECTION 1.** The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, honors and commends Pastor Thelma R. S. Youngblood for her outstanding service and contributions to the Lutheran Church of the Virgin Islands and the Virgin Islands community.

12 Bill Summary

16 **BR19-0417/May 8, 2019/EEM**

17 S:\AMENDS\33rd Legislature\33RD LEGISLATURE\MYRON D. JACKSON\Amend 33-  
18 295\33-295 Jackson.doc