



# PROCLAMATION

## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

### **Black History Month** February 2024

- WHEREAS:** Every year during the month of February, our nation comes together to celebrate **Black History Month** as we honor and reflect upon Black achievements, stories, and matters that comprise American history. Although Black history should be celebrated every day, this month reminds us of the critical role Black Americans have held and will continue to hold in the past, present, and future of our country; and
- WHEREAS:** There are an immeasurable number of Black activists, scholars, healthcare providers, authors, politicians, athletes, and leaders who have made tremendous and everlasting impacts on society, despite the unjust challenges they have faced. Middletown Township is grateful for all Black Americans and how they have paved the way for a better world and would like to acknowledge some of our residents and local organizations who have made strides in our own community; and
- WHEREAS:** Clinton P. Heath, a freed slave who moved to Middletown in 1885, co-founded the Red Hill African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in the 1890s, which is now named Clinton Chapel AME Zion Church in honor of his legacy. After the church was purposely set aflame in 1966, Clinton's daughter, Bertha, worked alongside the community to rebuild the church and dedicate a wing to her parents. The Heath Wing can be found at the Tatum Park Activity Center; and
- WHEREAS:** Nonprofit Friends of Cedar View pay homage to Middletown's past in present day. Cedar View Cemetery is the final resting place of Black Civil War veterans buried there. Cedar View Cemetery was sold in 1850 to 14 African American men by former slaveholder John Crawford to be used as a burial ground. The cemetery was overgrown and neglected up until November 2015, when it was finally restored. Friends of Cedar View is a group of family descendants, historians, and citizens who have made it their mission to preserve the cemetery and its history; and
- WHEREAS:** Middletown Township wholeheartedly condemns all forms of racism and hate, and vows to work toward creating an inclusive community that celebrates diversity. We follow the guiding principle that when the rights of one individual is threatened, the rights of all people are threatened. Now,
- THEREFORE:** I, Mayor Tony Perry and the Middletown Township Committee, do hereby recognize February 2024, and every February going forward, as **Black History Month** in the Township of Middletown. We encourage the community to join us in celebrating Black accomplishments, uplifting Black voices, and honoring Black history.

*Given, under my hand and the Great Seal of the Township of Middletown,  
this fifth day of February in the year two thousand twenty-four*

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Mayor Tony Perry