

INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE FOR THE 2009 BUILDERS BALL

William L. Nusbaum

We are gathered here this evening, joined by a common bond. Both colleagues and competitors, we are united in our commitment to repair the world, bringing to bear our respective talents to provide quality housing for all incomes; to promote excellence, professionalism and civility among our ranks; and to support and enhance our beloved Hampton Roads community through charitable projects. We are also united by our common struggles in these unprecedented times, as we strive to preserve our businesses, to keep our trusted and valued employees on our payrolls, and in some cases, even to stay employed ourselves. As we head into the holiday season, besieged by the challenging economic news, let us not forget that while Thanksgiving only comes once a year, giving thanks is always in season, and there is still much for which we must be grateful.

Even as we struggle, let us not forget that we are still fortunate on so many levels – the love of our families, the warmth of our homes, the

food in our pantries, the comfort of our friends, and the support of our colleagues.

So, God, we ask Your blessing on the Tidewater Builders Association and all those assembled in its honor here this evening, as well as on those TBA members not able to join us tonight. Bless especially the Association's lay and professional leaders, on whom the mantle of leadership rests especially heavy in these challenging times:

- Our outgoing Association President Pete Kotarides, together with his family, who have sacrificed so much in support of his leadership;
- His successor, Bill Halprin and his family, as he assumes the responsibility of guiding the Association and being its face and voice in our community;
- Our CEO, Channing Pfeiffer, and the hard-working officers, staff and committee members who support him and the Association itself, and all of their friends and family who through their support, make this organization into an instrument of Your will, as we strive together to do our part to perfect Your world.

Finally, we ask your blessing on those who have prepared and who will serve the food that we are about to enjoy this evening, and as well as on the food itself, with the words of the ancient Hebrew blessing:

Baruch atah adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz. Blessed are you, Eternal, our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth. And together we say, Amen.