

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE



PROCLAMATION

First Baptist Church West Main Street 160th Anniversary Recognition

WHEREAS the story of First Baptist Church West Main Street of Charlottesville began before the Civil War, when congregants worshipped together under segregated conditions; and

WHEREAS in March 1863, shortly after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation, approximately 800 Black members presented an application to form their own congregation, and their request was granted several months later; and

WHEREAS in 1868 the congregation purchased the Mudwall Building, officially the Delevan Hotel, becoming known as the Delevan Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS the Delevan Baptist Church building was razed in 1876 and the new building completed in 1883, with the congregation becoming known as The First Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS after the Civil War, First Baptist Church was instrumental in holding instruction within its walls, whereby hundreds of formerly enslaved people were educated; and

WHEREAS members have been in the forefront of race relations for nearly a century, instrumental in establishing the local NAACP chapter, integrating patients at the University of Virginia, serving on local boards and commissions, and remaining actively involved in the community;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Charlottesville City Council takes great pleasure in recognizing the 160th anniversary of First Baptist Church West Main Street and the contributions of its members throughout the years in service to Charlottesville and the surrounding communities.

Signed and sealed this 6th day of November 2023.

J. Lloyd Snook, III, Mayor

Attest:

Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council