

CITY OF FRESNO

Office of Council President Annalisa Perea

WHEREAS, First Congregational Church of Fresno, in its move to the Fresno High School Neighborhood 75 years ago, has become an iconic landmark known as “Big Red Church” and an integral part of the Tower District, embodying the inclusive values of the community by offering a welcoming space for gathering, collaborating, and celebrating, while maintaining its steadfast commitment to investing in Fresno’s vibrant urban core and resisting suburban sprawl; and

WHEREAS, the Big Red Church has prioritized the growth and development of youth and children through initiatives such as its Kidmmunity music camp, sponsorship of a nationally recognized Boy Scout Troop, and support for educational opportunities like English lessons for refugee parents and daycare for teen mothers; and

WHEREAS, the Big Red Church has demonstrated a deep commitment to music and the arts, both within Sunday worship services and beyond, through its investment in the renowned Casavant Pipe Organ, exceptional music programs in worship, and by showcasing the congregation’s musical talents alongside performances by esteemed outside musical groups, fostering a legacy of artistic and spiritual inspiration; and

WHEREAS, the Big Red Church has fostered interfaith relationships through collaborations with faith communities of multiple religions, founding roles in organizations such as Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries and Faith in the Valley, and by opening its doors to community groups, strengthening Fresno’s social fabric through partnership and service; and

WHEREAS, this Fresno landmark has been a trailblazer in social justice, championing civil rights and LGBTQ+ rights through historic actions, including marching with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1965 to becoming an Open and Affirming congregation in 1995. Its partnerships with local advocacy organizations have provided essential services such as free food programs, ensuring support for all Fresno residents regardless of identity; and

WHEREAS, for 75 years, First Congregational Church of Fresno is not only a cornerstone of the Historic Fresno High neighborhood, the Tower District, and Council District One, but it also plays a pivotal role in the broader City of Fresno. It has been a beacon of inclusivity, a gathering place for diverse individuals, and a leader in community events. With a rich legacy of service, outreach, and advocacy, the church fosters unity and belonging among all Fresno residents. As it looks to the future, the church remains committed to enriching the community, ensuring that its doors remain open to all, providing support, and nurturing the well-being and growth of future generations.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, Council President Annalisa Perea, Mayor Jerry P. Dyer, and the Fresno City Councilmembers, do hereby proclaim Wednesday, December 18, 2024, as:

“The Big Red Church Day”

in the City of Fresno.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and affixed the seal of the County of Fresno, California, this 18th day of December in the Year Two Thousand and Twenty-Four.

JERRY P. DYER, Honorable Mayor

ANNALISA PEREA, Council President, District 1

MIKE KARBASSI, Council Vice President, District 2

MIGUEL ARIAS, Councilmember, District 3

TYLER MAXWELL, Councilmember, District 4

LUIS CHAVEZ, Councilmember, District 5

GARRY BREDEFELD, Councilmember, District 6

NELSON ESPARZA, Councilmember, District 7