

WHEREAS, the Coral Gables Congregational Church was organized in 1923 and initially met at a parsonage on Columbus Boulevard that was donated by Coral Gables Founder George Merrick. He hired the famed Pittsburgh architectural firm Kiehnel & Elliott to design the elaborate Spanish-style edifice which includes a grand Baroque entranceway and a graceful Spanish “Bell Tower,” reputed to be patterned after a church in Seville, Spain; and

WHEREAS, after its completion in 1925, the church embarked on community involvement through civic service, faithful worship, Christian education, and promotion of music and the arts. Its justice work has been around issues of accessibility, civil liberties, hunger, living wages, farm workers, immigration, racism, homophobia, xenophobia, and voter registration. The Church’s compassion has been extended far beyond its walls to Haiti, Guatemala, and Peru; and

WHEREAS, as the first church of Coral Gables and the first public building constructed in the city, the building was used for City Council meetings until City Hall was completed. In early years, the University of Miami held graduation exercises in the sanctuary; and

WHEREAS, today, the church has the distinction of being the first church in the State of Florida to be designated a National Registered Building by the National Register of Historic places. It was so designated in 1978; and

WHEREAS, now in its 100th year, Coral Gables Congregational United Church of Christ has built a reputation for an unparalleled commitment to progressive social action and justice. It is known for its Community Arts Program Summer Concert Series and Conservatory, the Early Childhood Center, the Fair-Trade Marketplace, vibrant and engaging worship, its outreach into the community, and for a congregation which loves to dance.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, VINCE LAGO, as Mayor of the City of Coral Gables, along with the members with of our City Commission, do hereby proclaim December 16, 2023 as

“CORAL GABLES CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST DAY”

IN OBSERVANCE THEREOF, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Coral Gables Congregational United Church of Christ family, and for their selfless dedication to our community on this momentous occasion and wish them much continued success.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of Coral Gables to be affixed on this twelfth day of December, A.D., 2023.

Vince Lago
Mayor

Rhonda Anderson
Vice Mayor

Melissa Castro
Commissioner

Ariel Fernandez
Commissioner

Kirk R. Menendez
Commissioner