

150th Anniversary Day Proclamation
Revised from Rev. Dwight
for June 5, 2017 Celebration

WHEREAS, The First Congregational Church was born out of the American Missionary Association's Storrs School, a school for newly freed slaves located on Houston Street near Piedmont Avenue, and

WHEREAS, The First Congregational Church came into existence as a "gathered church" on May 26, 1867 and is the second oldest African American Congregational church in the United States, and

WHEREAS, in 1894, First Congregational Church called its first African American pastor, Dr. Henry Hugh Proctor, a graduate of Fisk University and Yale Divinity School. Under his leadership, the present historic church at 105 Courtland Street was completed, an "Institutional ministry" was launched to serve the less fortunate, and an integrated group of Black and white clergy and civic leaders was created to deal with the deep wounds of the 1906 race riot.

WHEREAS, the First Congregational Church has worshipped in its present sanctuary since 1908, when Booker T. Washington was the guest of honor at the groundbreaking ceremonies for the church building, and

WHEREAS, the Connally fountain was installed at the church in 1909 and was first public water fountain for African Americans in Atlanta and

WHEREAS, the First Congregational Church has been well served for a century and a half by distinguished and gifted pastors and clergy including Reverend John Clarence Wright, Reverend Dr. Homer C. McEwen, Reverend Dr. Marvin L. Morgan, Reverend George Thomas, Reverend Dr. Norman M. Rates, Reverend Dr. Susan D. Newman, and the Reverend Ambassador Andrew Young and

WHEREAS, the First Congregational Church of Atlanta has made immense contributions in social services, pastoral care to downtown Atlanta and the Sweet Auburn district, and progressive national leadership and has begun or strongly supported such vital institutions as the Carrie Steele Pitts Home, Atlanta

University, the National Medical Association, the first public library for African Americans, and the first African American Boy Scout Troop in Atlanta, and

WHEREAS, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the church's current leader, Rev. Dwight D. Andrews was installed as pastor on July 19, 1999. Andrews, like Rev. Proctor a century before, is a gifted musician and product of the Yale Divinity School. Under his leadership the historic church edifice was completely restored, an award-winning building of the East Wing was completed, the campus was expanded with a nine thousand square foot multi-purpose facility called the "Commons, " and a beautiful and serene garden and urban green space was created and

WHEREAS, the First Congregational Church continues to broaden its outreach and mission regarding the pressing issues of our time such as literacy, hunger and homelessness, and disparities in our judicial system through strategic community partnerships with like-minded organizations such as C.H.O.I.C.E.S. (Children Helping Obesity in Children End Successfully), CARE, The Medici Project, the Still Waters Youth Sinfonia Orchestra, and the Atlanta Music Festival Conservatory After School Music Program.

WHEREAS, the Reverend Dr. Dwight D. Andrews is an accomplished composer, musician, and arts and education advocate who has initiated innovative holistic ministries dealing with the mind, body, and soul, including a comprehensive jazz ministry that serves as a model for churches nationwide, and

WHEREAS, First Congregational Church remains committed to honoring the extraordinary legacy of its history by beginning a yearlong commemoration of its 150th Anniversary on June 5, 2017 with the theme of "*Building on Purpose*," continuing a heritage of servant leadership, prophetic vision, and Christian ministry to Atlanta and the world;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, ...