

Proclamation



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, founded in 1893, **Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist Church**, originally known as Ebenezer Baptist Church, located at 1207 North Jefferson Street in downtown Tampa, Florida, led by Pastor Thomas, and in 1904, the church was reorganized and renamed Bethel Missionary Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, in 1936, Jacob Wesley Rhodes began his service as Pastor, and under his leadership, the church was reorganized including with the new name of Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, and as it grew in membership, Pastor Rhodes rebuilt the wooden structure in 1949 with bricks he brought from Alabama, and the magnificent building continues to serve the community in its original location. In 2004, it was designated by the City of Tampa as a local landmark in the historic Central Avenue area and recognized for its outstanding service in the African American community for well over a century; and

WHEREAS, as Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist Church continued to prosper, the church facilities were expanded including the **Reverend Oscar Johnson, Jr. Fellowship and Educational Center**, named for Pastor Johnson who served with dedication from 1978 to 2013, and on March 12, 2017, Reverend Dr. Brett Snowden was named as the institution's 15th Pastor; and

WHEREAS, with its motto *Investing in the Kingdom of God by Sowing Seeds for The Savior*, Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist Church strives to expand God's earthly kingdom by sowing seeds that will meet the needs of its members and the community, and through its many ministries and outreach programs, Tampa and its residents have benefitted greatly from the organization's contributions for 125 years; and

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa is pleased to congratulate Pastor Snowden and the congregation on the Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist Church's **125th Anniversary Celebration** on October 9-21, 2018, featuring the theme ***The Lord hath done great things for us; wherefore we are glad***, and the special events include Revival Prayer Meetings, an Anniversary Banquet, and a special Sunday, October 21, 2018 Anniversary Celebration Service.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Sunday, October 21, 2018 as

"GREATER BETHEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH DAY"

in the city of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to join me in congratulating Greater Bethel Missionary Baptist Church on this milestone occasion and in recognizing the rich history and many contributions the church and its members have made to our community through the years.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 2nd day of October, 2018.



Bob Buckhorn

Mayor

