

BY: M. of A. Anderson

HONORING The Upper Room International Ministries
Inc. upon the occasion of its 25th Anniversary

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to recognize and honor community organizations that have demonstrated an extraordinary legacy of service, commitment, and enduring positive change in their communities; and

WHEREAS, The Upper Room International Ministries Inc. (URIM) was founded in January 2000 in the living room of the matriarch of the Brown family, affectionately known as Mother Brown; and

WHEREAS, Under the leadership of Pastor Courtney Brown, The URIM began as a small congregation of six members dedicated to weekly prayer and fellowship, growing into a pillar of faith and service in the Far Rockaway, New York community; and

WHEREAS, Within two months of its founding, The URIM secured its first worship space at 2515 Seagirt Avenue, where it remained until 2003 when the congregation was presented with the opportunity to purchase its current location, marking a significant milestone in its expansion and stability; and

WHEREAS, Despite early challenges, The URIM established itself in the community through impactful initiatives, including but not limited to: partnering with Walmart and Bagel Boss to provide free food and clothing to those in need; collaborating with Kingsborough Community College and York College to offer educational programs and resources; working with the Parks Department to host clothing drives, health fairs, and community distributions; organizing annual back-to-school events, ensuring thousands of children receive essential supplies; and launching an after-school program and summer camp, offering mentorship and extracurricular activities, including introducing students to sports that led to scholarship opportunities; and

WHEREAS, The URIM also established a music school to enrich the community with artistic and creative development; partnered with the Food Bank for New York City to feed over 2,000 registrants monthly; provided disaster relief during Hurricane Sandy through partnerships with World Vision and the Pajama Program; hosted community seminars featuring prominent leaders such as Selvena Brooks, Melinda Katz, Thabiti Boone, and Dan Brown to educate and uplift residents; and

WHEREAS, Over the past 25 years, The URIM has faced and overcome various adversities, including economic hardship and natural disasters, yet has remained steadfast in its mission through prayer, faith, and determination; and

WHEREAS, The URIM continues to adapt and expand its outreach, most recently navigating the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring

that essential services such as food distribution, spiritual guidance, and community support remained available to those in need; and

WHEREAS, The URIM's commitment to service is reflected in the recognition and leadership of its members, including Pastor Courtney Brown, appointed to serve on the local community board and honored for his leadership, including delivering the invocation and benediction at the Queens Borough President's Memorial Day Observance and participating in the swearing-in ceremony of the Assemblymember of the 31st District; Tyrone Worsely, formerly of The URIM, who was appointed to the community board in recognition of his service; the late Thelma Gibbons, a dedicated community leader who served the people on her block who were struggling with addiction, hardship, and loss, fostering an environment where they can experience hope, renewal, and purpose; and

WHEREAS, It is of utmost importance to honor Pastor Brown, the church leadership, and the dedicated members of The URIM, resolving that their legacy of faith and service shall endure in the public record; and

WHEREAS, The URIM has raised up a new generation of teachers, preachers, and community leaders, ensuring that its legacy of faith, service, and resilience continues for years to come; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor The Upper Room International Ministries Inc. upon the occasion of its 25th Anniversary recognizing its extraordinary service, leadership, and unwavering commitment to the people of Far Rockaway and beyond; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Pastor Courtney Brown, Senior Pastor of the Upper Room International Ministries of Far Rockaway, New York.