

OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____ C.M.S.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBERS TREVA REID AND LOREN TAYLOR

RESOLUTION IN MEMORY OF BISHOP ERNESTINE CLEVELAND- REEMS, BELOVED COMMUNITY LEADER AND FOUNDER OF CENTER OF HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH AND HONORING HER LIFE AND LEGACY

WHEREAS, Bishop Ernestine Cleveland Reems was born July 7, 1929, in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. She was the third of nine children born to the blessed union of Elmer Elijah (E.E.) and Matilda Cleveland. In 1939 the family moved from Brooksville, Oklahoma, to Richmond, California. It was in Northern California, that her father went on to become pastor of Ephesians Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in Berkeley, California, and greatly influenced Bishop Reems's charismatic preaching style; and

WHEREAS, At age 13, Bishop Reems's life took a dramatic turn when she was stricken with tuberculosis, a very highly contagious disease. After struggling for several years with no cure and no hope, Bishop Reems had a realization—she was created not for her own purposes, but for God's. Bishop Reems felt that God allowed her to experience hardship so that her relationship with Him would grow and to prepare her for her ultimate calling; and

WHEREAS, As a young woman Ernestine Cleveland began to travel to every major city in the country with her brother, Evangelist Elmer Cleveland, Jr., to preach the Gospel. During this time, she met Paul Reems, and they married in 1958. To this union two sons were born: Brondon Paul Reems and Brian Ernest Reems. Working together and starting with nothing, Ernestine and Paul Reems built their life on the pillars of "commitment, consistency, and consecration." With God's leading, she founded the Center of Hope Evangelistic Church with four members in 1968 at 705 98th Avenue in Oakland, California; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Reems later saw the building at 8411 MacArthur Boulevard and knew that was where the Lord wanted her to be. Pastor Reems negotiated for the property and on April 17, 1977, the Center of Hope congregation marched from 98th Avenue to 8411 MacArthur Boulevard. The church name was changed to Center of Hope Community Church, and the ministry continued to expand; and

WHEREAS, In 1973 she received national attention for her work when the United States Army requested that she minister to soldiers stationed in West Germany and bestowed on her the honorary rank of Five-Star General; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Reems also had a vision for bringing women together to share God’s Word and fellowship. This vision cumulated with the creation of E.C. Reems Women’s International Ministries (ECRWIM) with the first convention held in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, in 1988. ECRWIM annual convention grew to attract hundreds of attendees to thousands. Conventions were held in Washington, DC; Atlanta, Georgia; Los Angeles and Oakland, California; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Reems championed many endeavors such as breaking ground for the E.E. Cleveland Manor in 1989, a 56-unit senior housing complex that opened to residents September 1990, combining federal and city funds with private donations, to purchase and remodel a dilapidated motel, and in 1992 opened the home, which offered programs in such areas as job-training and provided child care and opening the Ernestine C. Reems Academy of Technology and Art Charter School in Oakland in 1999, which served the community for several years; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Reems dedicated her life to serving Jesus Christ and through God’s Word brought hope and promise into the lives of thousands. She shepherded not only her own beloved congregation, but also counseled, mentored and sent forth pastors, spiritual leaders, and lay ministries near and far, cultivating and nourishing the gifts within others. Ernestine Cleveland-Reems was elevated to Bishop by the Apostle Richard D. Hinton, Monument International Church Assemblies (M.I.C.A.), in 2000 and served as a member of the Board of Directors; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED: that I, Councilmember Treva Reid of Oakland, California do hereby February 4, 2022 as:

“Bishop Ernestine Cleveland-Reems Day”

in Oakland, California to honor Bishop Ernestine Cleveland-Reems significant contributions to the City of Oakland and globally and the positive impact of service and legacy of her incredible work.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA,

PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES - FIFE, GALLO, KALB, KAPLAN, REID, TAYLOR, THAO AND
PRESIDENT FORTUNATO BAS

NOES –

ABSENT –

ABSTENTION –

ATTEST: _____
ASHA REED
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council of the
City of Oakland, California