



Proclamation

WHEREAS, in the spring of 1887, Epworth Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church was organized by Reverend G. W. Byers and Reverend Robert E. Smith in the old Leeper Hall on West Page Avenue in West Gastonia and later purchased a church site on North York Street, and;

WHEREAS, in 1968 the Methodist Church merged with the Evangelical United Brethren and Epworth Chapel became **Epworth United Methodist Church** and in the fall of 1995, the congregation sold the North York Street site and purchased an eight-acre site on the corner of Linwood and Monument Avenues for \$115,000 where the church built a sanctuary and grew over time; and

WHEREAS, in fall of 2014, the vision of a mortgage-free congregation was the driving force behind the strategic planning and implementation of a **Burn the Mortgage Campaign** in which the congregation and supporters pulled together to support a fundraising effort that encouraged families to commit \$2.00 each Sunday towards the campaign; and

WHEREAS, through the dedication and faithful giving of the congregation and its supporters, Epworth United Methodist Church was able to retire its final Sanctuary mortgage in four years and eight months, saving more than \$73,000 in interest payments; and

WHEREAS, the congregation invites the entire community to join its **Burn the Mortgage Ceremony** celebration on Sunday, May 20, 2018 at 3:00pm.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Mayor and City Council do hereby congratulate Epworth United Methodist Church on the success of its **Burn the Mortgage Campaign** and thank the church leadership and congregation for its years of contributions to our faith community and community-at-large.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Gastonia to be affixed, this 15th day of May in the year of our Lord two thousand and eighteen.

Walker E. Reid, III, Mayor

Attest:

Sherry H. Dunaway, Deputy City Clerk