

1 [Reverend Roland Gordon Day - February 13, 2025]

2

3 **Resolution recognizing and commending Reverend Roland Gordon on the occasion of**
4 **his 81st birthday and for his many years serving the Ingleside Presbyterian Church and**
5 **San Francisco’s community; and declaring February 13, 2025, as Reverend Roland**
6 **Gordon Day in the City and County of San Francisco.**

7

8 WHEREAS, On February 13, 1944, Reverend Roland Gordon was born in Greenwood,
9 Mississippi before moving with his family to Gary, Indiana, where he was a captain and star
10 player on his high school basketball team; and

11 WHEREAS, Reverend Gordon obtained a bachelor’s degree in education in 1967
12 before moving to Los Angeles in 1972, where he engaged in a number of creative endeavors
13 including publishing a book of poetry, writing two musicals, and organizing a weekly arts
14 festival; and

15 WHEREAS, In 1978, Reverend Gordon enrolled in the San Francisco Theological
16 Seminary and began a career as a pastor at the struggling Ingleside Presbyterian Church,
17 whose membership had dwindled to just four parishioners; and

18 WHEREAS, Reverend Gordon completed his Master of Divinity degree in 1983 and
19 was ordained as Ingleside Presbyterian Church’s full-time pastor; and

20 WHEREAS, Seeing the church’s immense potential, Reverend Gordon organized the
21 Ingleside Church Basketball League inside the church’s gymnasium, providing a positive
22 space for local youth to learn and play; and

23 WHEREAS, To inspire the predominantly Black young people drawn to the
24 gymnasium, Reverend Gordon began affixing photos of prominent African Americans on the
25 walls, creating the massive Black History collage that consists of thousands of images now

1 known as the “Great Cloud of Witnesses,” which was designated as an official historic
2 landmark in 2016; and

3 WHEREAS, Reverend Gordon positioned his church as a nexus for the Ocean-
4 Merced-Ingleside community, facilitating local organizing, serving seniors and families through
5 food pantries, promoting cross-cultural collaborations between Black and Asian community
6 members; providing meeting space for community events, inviting renowned artists to address
7 the community, and rehabilitating the dilapidated Phelan Loop (now known as the City College
8 Station) into a beautiful green space; and

9 WHEREAS, Reverend Gordon continued his own artistic works, including producing
10 the play “Enter Frederick Douglas,” playing the lead in “The Seven Exaltations of Simon,” and
11 narrating the musical “The Modern Mass”; and

12 WHEREAS, Reverend Gordon dedicated years of service to organizations throughout
13 San Francisco and the wider Bay Area, serving as President of the Board of Directors of the
14 San Francisco Council of Churches, serving on the Board of Directors of the Bay Area Black
15 United Fund, and founding both the Ingleside Community Center and the Thad Brown Boys
16 Academy; and

17 WHEREAS, Reverend Gordon has been widely recognized for his outstanding
18 dedication to his church and community, including receiving the 1995 Koshland Award for his
19 community service, the 2003 Distinguished Alumni Award from the San Francisco Theological
20 Seminary, the 2004 Alumni Merit Award from his alma mater Baldwin-Wallace College, and
21 the 2023 national Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for Outstanding Public Service
22 Benefiting Local Communities; and

23 WHEREAS, Reverend Gordon has left an indelible mark on the Ingleside neighborhood
24 and wider San Francisco community, demonstrating his immense creativity, his talent for
25 revitalizing a struggling spiritual community, his undeniable passion for developing new

1 opportunities for youth, and his humble leadership as a champion for San Francisco’s African
2 American community; now, therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors recognizes, celebrates, and
4 commends Reverend Roland Gordon on the occasion of his 81st birthday and extends their
5 deepest gratitude for his many years ministering the people of San Francisco; and, be it

6 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors declares
7 February 13, 2025, as Reverend Roland Gordon Day in the City and County of San
8 Francisco.

9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25