



# City of Chicago



**R2013-823**

Office of the City Clerk

## Document Tracking Sheet

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	9/11/2013
<b>Sponsor(s):</b>	Burke, Edward M. (14)
<b>Type:</b>	Resolution
<b>Title:</b>	Commemoration of 50th anniversary of the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church
<b>Committee(s) Assignment:</b>	

## **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, Sunday, September 15, 2013, marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1963 bombing of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, one of the most tragic acts of violence to take place during the Civil Rights movement, which killed four African American girls and shocked the nation; and

**WHEREAS**, On September 15, 1963, a powerful bomb consisting of a box of dynamite, exploded before Sunday morning services at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church; and

**WHEREAS**, This church was the first house of worship for African Americans in Birmingham and the center of life for the town's African American community; additionally, the church served as a meeting place for civil rights leaders, thereby became the target of a racially motivated bombing; and

**WHEREAS**, The devastating blast killed Denise McNair (age 11), Carole Robertson (14), Addie Mae Collins (14), and Cynthia Wesley (14), dressed in their "Sunday Best", ready to lead the 11:00 a.m. service at the church; just prior to the explosion, the girls had gathered, excitedly discussing their first days of school; and

**WHEREAS**, Outrage over the death of the four innocent girls helped build increased support behind the continuing struggle to end and condemn segregation in the South and helped draw national attention to the hard-fought, often dangerous struggle for civil rights; and

**WHEREAS**, The bombing, which occurred after the historic "March on Washington," came to symbolize the depth of racial hatred in the South and helped to motivate passage of civil rights laws, most notably, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

**WHEAREAS**, The bombing's impact was exactly the opposite of what its perpetrators had intended; and

**WHEAREAS**, On May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013, McNair, Robertson, Collins, and Wesley were posthumously awarded the United States' highest civilian honor, the Congressional Gold Medal; now therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED**, We, the Mayor and Members of the Chicago City Council of the City of Chicago assembled here, this 11<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2013, do hereby commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1963 bombing of Birmingham's 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church and this tragic moment in our nation's history at a time when righteousness overcame hatred and the blood of these innocent children became the seeds of justice.



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Alderman Edward M. Burke

14<sup>th</sup> Ward

