

CONNECTING, CULTIVATING, CHALLENGING, AND CELEBRATING ALL IN CHRIST

Redeeming News

January 2017

IN THIS ISSUE

New Year, A New Hope

by Pastor Shannon

I hardly think it's an exaggeration to call 2016 one of the worst years ever from a worldly standpoint. Even in the waning days of the year, we continue to say goodbye to luminaries and beloved members of our tight-knit community taken from our lives far too soon.

We also stand on the threshold of realizing some of the enormous fears and uncertainties that have been building since November 8. As a church that lives in several intersections of marginality, we can't help but wonder what a new administration poised against the interests of people of color, women, immigrants, the poor, the disabled, the LGBTQ community, and those who do not embrace American Christianity will mean for the needs and concerns of those groups.

But a new year, as always, brings a new hope. More importantly, the new year that we have already entered as Christ followers should be an enduring reminder of the unfailing hope and promise that comes from worshipping the eternal, risen Christ.

Our work has not become any easier. Though American Christianity is the default and dominant religion in the United States, its embrace of the empire that Jesus and his

disciples actively resisted has created new challenges for those of us who seek authentic, radical faith expression. If we bow before the throne of empire rather than the throne of heaven, we will all be lost.

This is why Redeemer's work continues to be so important. We must continue to follow Jesus into the margins, to echo Jesus' repudiation of the power structures that trample on the poor and disenfranchise those to whom Jesus would give the kingdom of heaven itself.

My prayer is that in this new month, this new year, we will carry new hope and energy to disrupt the centers of power that distract from and dilute Christ's never-changing message. I pray that we will recommit to unabated, unapologetic discipleship and prophetic witness of Christ's work in the world.

Let this be a happy, productive, and Christ-filled new year for us all! Be blessed and rest in the depthless love of God the Creator, God the Word, and God the Holy Breath.



In Memoriam: David Carter & Rev. Orlando Chaffee

We remember two members of our United Methodist family who have gone to be with God.

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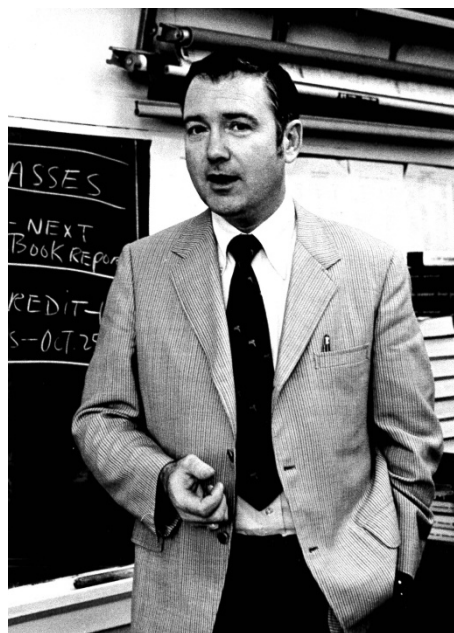


Reconciling Sunday: January 29

Mark your calendars for our annual Reconciling Sunday. Learn how we made it to where we are.

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David W. Carter, 1933-2016



David W. Carter, age 83, passed away peacefully on Dec 7, 2016 at Cedarwood Nursing Center.

David was a longtime member of Church of the Redeemer, where he most recently served as an usher. He was a beloved husband, father, brother, teacher, and friend.

A devoted fan of the Mount Union Purple Raiders, David also enjoyed playing billiards and badminton; planning and taking family vacations; and grilling steaks with his loved ones.

He is survived by his wife Jane (Roehl), his two sons Jeff and Tim, his daughter Melinda (Loretta), his brother Richard (Nancy), his two nephews and his two nieces. He had a wonderful and full life and will always be remembered for his laughter and love for all. He will be dearly missed by his family and friends.

We will celebrate David's life together at Redeemer on Saturday, January 7. Visitation with Jane and the family will begin at 1 pm in the parlor, and the service will begin at 2 pm. A light reception will follow in the coffee lounge.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Church of the Redeemer UMC, 2420 South Taylor Rd, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118.

David will live on in the hearts and memories of the Redeemer family, and our prayers and love continue to go out to Jane and the entire Carter family.

(Photo provided by the Carter family)

Reverend Orlando Chaffee, 1956-2016

Redeemer joins the North Coast District in mourning the untimely passing of Reverend Orlando Chaffee on Sunday, December 18.

Reverend Chaffee, most recently pastor of Mount Pleasant UMC, served in a number of pulpits throughout the East Ohio Conference during his long ministry journey. He also served as the District Superintendent in the Mahoning Valley and North Coast Districts.

Reverend Chaffee was born in Detroit to Leon and Vera Chaffee on April 24, 1956. Affectionately called "Rev" and "Doc" by those who knew him, Rev. Chaffee enjoyed reading, cooking, and fishing. He was a grill master, a car enthusiast, and a member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.

Reverend Chaffee is survived by his wife of 37 years, Velma; children Ondra, Orlando Jr. (Buddy), and Omar; grandchildren Heinz III and Hailey; four sisters and two brothers.

On Tuesday, December 27, clergy and laypeople from the area gathered at Church of the Saviour for a service of celebration and remembrance. The Mount Pleasant UMC choir provided a number of musical selections, and several of Reverend Chaffee's clergy colleagues offered reflections on his full life and ministry.

On Wednesday, December 28, the family gathered for a wake and celebration of life at Grace Missionary Baptist Church.

Those who had the pleasure of meeting Reverend Chaffee even once will long remember his kindness, good humor, and the feeling of having known him forever. Our thoughts, prayers, and love extend to his family; his congregation; and all whose lives have been touched by his ministry.



(Photo included in obituary, www.cleveland.com)



Building off of the focus we gained from our Advent series, this 8-week series will prepare us to live out the way of Jesus during the Lent season beginning in March.

Liturgical Season: Ordinary Time
Liturgical Color: Green

January 8 (Baptism of the Lord):
"The Heavens Are Opened"

We witness the baptism of Jesus, reaffirm the baptismal covenant, and enter anew into the mystery of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit from "opened heavens" for the work of evangelism that lies ahead of us during the coming weeks.

January 15: "Come and See"

In the story of the calling of the first disciples from John's gospel, we are inspired and challenged to come and see how Jesus lives ourselves and to continue to invite those we know to come with us.

January 22: "Follow Me"

At the end of the story of the calling of the first disciples in Matthew's gospel, we follow Jesus with his disciples into the places of greatest need and opportunity and offering teaching, good news, and healing love.

January 29: #Blessed

We've seen Jesus in action. Now we settle in for the first of four weeks to hear him teach his first disciples with a large crowd in the background. Today he sets us straight about who and what God's kingdom is blessing in the world.

February 5: Salt and Light and Righteousness Abounding

In light of who and what God is blessing and how different that is from what the world and sometimes even the church seems to bless, how do we then live? As salty, light-shining people whose righteousness abounds!

February 12: This, Not That

Jesus continues to offer concrete examples of what life in God's kingdom does, and doesn't, look like.

February 19: And Now Your Reward

Blessings are a gift of God in God's kingdom. Rewards are the result of living more fully into the ways of God's kingdom, or as we might say, "growing in holiness of heart and life." Jesus reminds us of ways we can stay on or stray from the trail God's kingdom blazes for us in this life.

February 26 (Transfiguration Sunday): Shine!

Today we exult in the vision of God's exultation of Jesus and in anticipation of our own transfiguration now and in the age to come. That hope, that vision, drives us not to stay where we are on the mountaintop, but to get into the valley of sin and suffering and be a healing and formative presence for all who seek God's salvation with us in the weeks of lent that lie ahead.

The adult Sunday School will meet each week at 9:30 to work through the weekly Scriptures in preparation for the message to be shared at worship.

SPECIAL EVENTS IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Through this series, we will recognize a number of special opportunities for worship and recognition. Please contact the church office if you would like to help celebrate these events.

- **January 15:** Human Relations Day/Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (1/16)
- **January 18-25:** Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- Theme: "The Love of Christ Compels Us"
- **January 22:** Ecumenical Sunday
- **February: Black History Month**
- **February 19:** Guest Worship Leaders – Mentor UMC Praise Team

Members of the iConnect Praise Team from Mentor UMC will lead us in a modern worship service. We will have a lunch reception in Fellowship Hall following service.

- **February 26:** Jazz Sunday

A Redeemer tradition returns! Join us for a jazz-themed worship service to celebrate the Transfiguration of Christ before moving into Lent.

SERVICE PHOTOS FROM CHRISTMAS EVE



Shanelle and Cynthia direct the children in song.



Cathy Kaus directs the Malcolm Kerr Peace Bell Choir



Bridgett gives the offertory, accompanied by Shanelle



Christmas Eve Message: Peace



The choir rehearses for their processional.



Christmas Eve 2016: Peace

We were blessed with an outstanding turnout for this year's Christmas Eve service, themed "Peace" to close out our Advent series. More than 100 members, family, and friends gathered to worship and celebrate the coming of the Christ child.

The worship service was filled with beautiful music from the choir as well as a number of special performers. Our children became angels and shepherds and shared two songs from the chancel manger—a special surprise from Shanelle Cook and Cynthia Larsen, who spent several weeks teaching the children during Sunday School.

Cathy Kaus and the members of the Malcolm Kerr Peace Choir rang in the celebration with their performances of *Coventry Carol* and *Carol of the Bells*, perfectly capturing the reverence of the gathered worshipers. Finally, Bridgett Emerson gave a haunting performance of *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* as the offertory.

Pastor Shannon's message, also titled "Peace", explored the tension between a world in which peace is elusive and the hope and promise born on a cold night in Bethlehem. To welcome that promise into our hearts, we closed with the traditional singing of *Silent Night* as we circled the Sanctuary with candlelight.

Thanks to all who attended and served on Christmas Eve, and our love to all who were not able to be with us.

CHRISTMAS DAY LOVE FEAST!

Christmas Day falls on a Sunday every six years, so this year we decided to keep service casual with a family Love Feast!

The Love Feast is a non-sacramental variation of Communion that John Wesley encouraged early Methodist classes and bands to hold regularly. Our Love Feast was a spread of breakfast pastries, fruit, and breakfast bake with hot coffee and cold orange juice—a few steps up from Wesley's original idea!

In keeping with the laid-back atmosphere, Pastor Shannon skipped a formal message and instead offered a 3-minute reflection after a reading of John 1 and several prayers for the mission, witness, and people of our church and the world.

We've been blessed by the positive response to the Love Feast this year, and are excited to bring it back again in 2017! If you'd like to be a part of our next Love Feast, by bringing a dish or sharing a reading, please contact Pastor Shannon.



Reconciling Sunday January 29

At Charge Conference in November 1994, Church of the Redeemer concluded three years of study and discussion about homosexuality and the church with a vote to become the first Reconciling Congregation in the East Ohio Conference. Redeemer became one of 90 churches and five campus ministries around the country to join what was then called the Reconciling Congregations Program.

Twenty-two years later, Reconciling Ministries Network comprises more than 700 Reconciling Communities and 34,000 individuals who identify as Reconciling Methodists. In East Ohio, we are joined by the East Ohio Reconciling Methodists group as well as Cove UMC in Lakewood and University Circle UMC in Cleveland.

For those who were not here during the discussions that preceded the vote, it may seem like second nature that Redeemer is Reconciling. However, members who remember that time may recall the difficult conversations that paved our road to

reconciliation. To remember, I want to share with you reflections by Bishop Sally Dyck following that momentous vote:

I believe that becoming a Reconciling Congregation was a good and faithful thing to do; there are people in our church who do not and I acknowledge their opinions. But even if it was a wrong decision, I would far rather err on the side of working through this tough issue than haggling over money or building projects or carpeting or the lesser things...and I know we would, as most churches do, if we weren't working on what I do believe we were called to do and **that is to be a community of Jesus Christ that takes seriously its calling in an ever-changing world with a never-changing message of grace.**

It was a troubling and disturbing time for many people in the church because it made us all think and it burst an artificial bubble that we are so

accepting and kind and inclusive; the fact remains that we all have some rough edge of discrimination and prejudice. Now unity and healing are our agenda, not without their scars and limps...

...What does it mean to be a Reconciling Congregation? What does it mean to be a child of God? What does it mean to be a community of Jesus Christ? All those questions demand the unique vision of any group of people. For now and the near future, to be a Reconciling Congregation means that we continue to do what we have done for several years: to welcome all people into the life of our community regardless of sexual orientation.

A copy of Bishop Dyck's full statement, and her 1996 retrospective, are available in the church office. As we prepare to celebrate Reconciling Sunday this month, I encourage you to take a look!

Single-Board Meetings to Resume January 2017

September's single-board meeting was an experiment to demonstrate how Redeemer can do church business more effectively—giving us more time to pursue meaningful ministries in and out of the church building. Despite the success of the initial meeting, the momentum was difficult to maintain into the following months.

However, beginning in January 2017 we will give the single-board format another go!

Single-board meetings will take place on the second or third Sunday of each month from January until June, lasting **one hour** and beginning immediately after service. Coffee hour volunteers should set up in Fellowship Hall on single-board days.

Members are invited to bring their lunch, or to bring a dish to share if they are led; however, we will not have a formally structured lunch.

The basic format for this **one hour meeting** will be:

- **Welcome (5 minutes): Take this time to get a snack and gather into your committees**
- **Committee breakouts (30 minutes): Individual committee business. Identify issues to share with the whole board.**
- **Whole group reporting (20 minutes): Committees will report on action items for the coming month; the single board will vote to approve items requiring such approval.**
- **Closing (5 minutes)**

Each committee should prepare an agenda and send a copy to Pastor Shannon no later than the **Wednesday** before the meeting. Also, committees are requested to keep minutes of their individual business. All meeting minutes should be sent to Pastor Shannon following the meeting.

Meetings for the first half of 2017 will be held on the following dates:

- **January 15 (3rd Sunday to accommodate Taking Down the Greens)**
- **February 12**
- **March 12**
- **April 9 (Palm Sunday)**
- **May 21 (3rd Sunday to accommodate Mothers' Day)**
- **June 11**

During the April meeting we will evaluate the effectiveness of the single-board format and decide whether to extend it into the 2017-2018 conference year.

Thank you all for your commitment to helping COR live out its mission to Connect, Challenge, Cultivate, and Challenge ALL in Christ!

Redeemer on the Web: An Update

As I announced to the congregation in October, the Redeemer Web site has been in need of a makeover for some time. The page that was diligently updated by Pat Steinfurth had, in the months following her passing, become cluttered and outdated and was no longer a welcoming digital presence.

UMC Communications offers affordable hosting services for church Web sites, along with more dynamic theme and design options for subscribers. Because switching our subscription would save us more than \$30 per year and give us more flexibility to create a site that captures our personality, we decided to take the plunge.

Unfortunately, my original goal of having the site live by the middle of November fell short thanks to some administrative conflicts with our previous domain registrar, GoDaddy. I'm pleased to report, though, that after several online support chats we are back online!

If you visit the Redeemer site now, you will see a new color scheme and a different arrangement of information. Everything is designed to be visually appealing, up to date, and to encourage visitors to the site to check us out in person!

Prayer Requests

You can now submit prayer requests for the bulletin online! Visit the "Prayers" page on the site and you will see the contact form below:

Contact Form

Email*

Name of Requester*

Prayer Request*

Please be mindful of confidentiality needs when making requests on behalf of others.

Include in Bulletin? (Will appear on Prayer Requests page)*

Please type Yes or No

Would you like a follow-up?

Please type Yes or No

If you request a follow-up, Pastor Shannon or a member of Care Team will respond to you within 24 hours.

Submit

Simply fill it out and your prayer will be included on the private Prayer Requests page and in the weekly bulletin. You can also continue to submit prayer requests directly to the church office if you wish.

Redeemer Calendar

The Redeemer Google calendar will now be accessible directly from the Web site! This calendar shows all public events happening at the church, including worship and

Community Meal as well as other periodic activities. Special events will also be included on the "What's Happening?" page with more detailed information.

If you have events or announcements that you would like posted on the calendar and the Web site, please email corcommunications1@gmail.com with the following:

- **What** the event is
- **When and where** it is happening
- **Who** to contact for registration or more information
- **Cost** and other registration details

Submissions may be edited for space or clarity. Also, please keep in mind the standing deadlines for publication:

- **Web:** 48 hours before event
- **Bulletin:** Noon each Wednesday
- **Newsletter:** 16th of prior month (January 16th for February issue, etc.)
- **Church bulletin boards:** Contact church office

Worship: Sermon Series

The main Worship page of the site will feature information about current and upcoming sermon series, as well as special Sundays that are coming up in the life of the church. Expect more detail in this section of the site as we grow.

Online Sermons

If you've been hoping to go back and revisit one of our earlier sermons, or you missed a week and want to catch up, you'll be able to do so by visiting the Web site in the next several weeks. We will upload sermons from at least the last three months for easy access. Feel free to download and share with proper attribution: all sermons are written and owned by Shannon V. Trenton unless otherwise credited.

Photo Release

One of the processes we are updating, which affects the Web site, is making sure that we have proper security and privacy measures in place. This month, we will make updated photo release forms available at the church. Please fill this out for each member of your family to give Church of the Redeemer permission to use photo, video, and audio of you on the Web site; Facebook page; and other published material.

Subscribe!

Finally, keep up with new posts and site updates—and leave comments where they are enabled!—by signing up as a site user. You can do so using an existing WordPress account or Google Account, or by signing up for a new one. To keep things safe and secure, only registered users will be able to comment on site content.

I look forward to bringing you more updates about the Redeemer Web site in the coming weeks and months. To see the changes for yourself, you can still find Redeemer online at www.cleredeemer.org. Check us out!

~Pastor Shannon

#WEDNESDAYWISDOM ON FACEBOOK

Do you follow Church of the Redeemer on Facebook?

If so, tune in on Wednesdays for snippets of **#WednesdayWisdom** from Pastor Shannon!

Each week there will be a blog post or a short SoundCloud post discussing current events and the church or diving deeper into the message from the previous Sunday's worship.

Upcoming topics include the liturgical calendar; spiritual disciplines; and ways to deepen our radical witness.

Stay tuned also for information about **Awesome Women of the Bible**, a Facebook-based Bible study that will begin later this month!

If you aren't on our Facebook page, stop what you're doing and join the fun! You can find us at:

www.facebook.com/ChurchOfTheRedeemerUMC

Church of the Redeemer - January 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 New Year's Day 11 am Worship 7 pm AA Promises	2	3	4 10:30 am Bible Study	5 8:30 am Breakfast Group 9 am Overeaters Anon. 10 am SLAA 6:30 pm AA Grapevine 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	6 Epiphany	7 11 am SLAA 1 pm David Carter visitation 2 pm David Carter memorial
8 8 am ARM (Rm 5) 11 am Worship 12:30 pm Taking Down the Greens 7 pm AA Promises	9	10	11 10:00 am Love INC Interfaith Worship 10:30 am Bible Study	12 8:30 am Breakfast Group 9 am Overeaters Anon. 10 am SLAA 6:30 pm AA Grapevine 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	13	14 11 am SLAA
15 8 am ARM (Rm 5) 11 am Worship 12:30 Single Board Meeting 7 pm AA Promises	16	17	18 10:30 am Bible Study	19 8:30 am Breakfast Group 9 am Overeaters Anon. 10 am SLAA 6:30 pm AA Grapevine 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	20	21 11 am SLAA
22 8 am ARM (Rm 5) 11 am Worship 7 pm AA Promises	23	24 5:30 pm Community Meal	25 10:30 am Bible Study	26 8:30 am Breakfast Group 9 am Overeaters Anon. 10 am SLAA 6:30 pm AA Grapevine 7 pm Choir Rehearsal	27	28 11 am SLAA
29 Reconciling Sunday 8 am ARM (Rm 5) 11 am Worship 7 pm AA Promises	30	31				