

## Richland County, Ohio

### A Proclamation by the Richland Community Prayer Network

*For a day of public repentance, corporate prayer, and private fasting*

**Whereas**, America, before and during its inception, had a civic government that demonstrated a firm reliance on Divine Providence, publicly acknowledging Him as the source of all liberties and social happiness, and thereby, with great regularity, issued 1,400 prayer proclamations between 1622 and 1815, and thousands more afterward <sup>1</sup>.....

**Whereas**, local pastor clergymen have a rich history of relying on the Great Redeemer of mankind<sup>2</sup> and calling all area citizens and local congregations under the banner of Jesus Christ to observe days of prayer and repentance for the community<sup>3, 4, 5</sup>, .....

**Whereas**, area church laypersons have a history of opposing immoral behavior,<sup>6-16</sup> and local civic government has a record of discouraging immoral behavior, <sup>17-24</sup>.....

**Whereas**, church sermons printed on the front page used to sell local newspapers in the past, <sup>25</sup> today high profile reports of immorality <sup>26, 27</sup> striking nearly every institution of our community including the Church, now tragically appeal to our society's public interest.....

**Whereas**, with the federal promotion in modern times of obscenity, <sup>28,29</sup> our community nevertheless has been listed as the sex predator capital of the state, <sup>30</sup> and is located just on the outskirts of the heartland of human trafficking, <sup>31</sup> .....

**Whereas**, the Bible explicitly states that it is the will of the Heavenly Father that we should abstain from sexual immorality, and that each of us should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust. Furthermore, the following immoral behaviors are considered sin in The Holy One's eyes: adultery, <sup>32</sup> bestiality, <sup>33</sup> covetousness, <sup>34</sup> homosexuality, <sup>35</sup> incest, <sup>36</sup> pedophilia, <sup>37</sup> pornography, <sup>38</sup> premarital sex, <sup>39</sup> prostitution, <sup>40</sup> and the like. ....

**Whereas**, the collateral damage from the sin of immorality that afflicts our society includes: the increase of communicable disease, <sup>41</sup> the abuse of vulnerable women and children, the elimination of religious freedoms, <sup>42</sup> the increase of statutory confusion leading to costly litigation, <sup>43</sup> and the like.....

**Whereas**, there is proof of evidence of contemporary turnarounds where societies are tangibly redeemed when Biblical principles are practiced in the board rooms, courtrooms, and classrooms of a society, like the Nation of Uganda,<sup>44</sup> and the Canadian Arctic Region of Nunavut<sup>45</sup> when both societies repented of the sin of immorality during the late 1990's.....

**Whereas**, let the priests who minister to the LORD weep between the porch and the altar; let them say, "Spare Your people, O LORD, and do not give Your heritage to reproach, that the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their GOD?' Then the LORD will be zealous for His land and pity His people....."<sup>46</sup>

**Therefore**, the Richland Community Prayer Network, consisting of lead pastors from at least sixty-six diverse congregations in the county in a joint resolution humbly recommend the fourth Sunday in July, on July 26th of the year 2015, as a convenient day for all citizens of Richland County to set apart for corporate prayer, public repentance, and private fasting to the Almighty GOD.....

**Seeking His merciful forgiveness as a people, from our sin of immorality, and His assistance in the great duties of our repentance .....**

### **Pastor Signees of Proclamation from (66) local congregations throughout Richland County, Ohio:**

Bishop Andy Keim, Amish Perry District 1  
 Bishop Eli Miller, Amish Perry District 2  
 Pastor Paul Staton, Bellville Free Will Baptist  
 Pastor Mike Stine, Clear Fork Alliance  
 Pastor Bill Henderson, First Baptist  
 Pastor Patrick Bailey, North Bend Brethren  
 Pastor Bill Lewis, River of Life  
 Pastor Dallas Waggle, Lucas Foursquare Gospel  
 Pastor Harrison Gapter, Mt. Zion Lutheran  
 Pastor Steve Schag, Calvary Baptist  
 Pastor Walter Keib, First Baptist  
 Pastor Jim Marshall, Ganges Community  
 Pastor Art Kennard, Maranatha Christian  
 Pastor Rick Lewis, Shelby Church of GOD  
 Pastor Doug Tackett, Taylortown Community  
 Pastor George Lewis, Temple of GOD  
 Pastor Kevin Evans, Liberty Baptist  
 Pastor Bill Howell, Messiah House of Prayer  
 Pastor Russell Stanford, All Believers in Christ  
 Pastor Paul Larson, First English Lutheran

Pastor Clarence Sanderfer, New Life Baptist  
 Pastor Willie Mack, Philippian Community Baptist  
 Pastor Tom Hunt, Providence Baptist  
 Pastor Mike Workman, Caeserea Baptist  
 Pastor Eric Byrom, Grace Fellowship  
 Pastor Sylvester Ginn, Hesus Agape  
 Pastor Glen Phillips, Hillside First Church of GOD  
 Pastor Bruce Philippi, Journey Life Center  
 Pastor Robert Kurtz, Mansfield Baptist Temple  
 Pastor Clinton Hearn, Mount Hermon Missionary  
 Pastor Larry Rawls, Mount Sinai Baptist  
 Pastor Henry Bradley, New Community Temple  
 Pastor Paul Lintern, Oakland Lutheran  
 Pastor Walt Jordan, Oasis of Love  
 Pastor Ron Puff, Pleasant Valley Baptist  
 Pastor Nate Meiers, Berean Baptist  
 Pastor James Streib, Fusion Ministries  
 Pastor Mike Cloud, Impact Worship Center  
 Pastor John Wildman, Lexington Nazarene  
 Pastor Larry Hulver, New Liberty Baptist

## **Pastoral Signees of Proclamation from (66) local congregations cont'd:**

**Pastor James Spencer, Peoples' Baptist**  
**Pastor Darrin Thurber, Seventh Day Adventist**  
**Pastor Paul Lintern, Southside Disciples of Christ**  
**Pastor John Harris, Armorbearers International**  
**Pastor John Freeman, First Church of Open Bible**  
**Pastor Mike Williams, Lincoln Heights Baptist**  
**Pastor Ron Kosa, Living Word**  
**Pastor Mark Barth, Real Life Community**  
**Pastor Joseph Bathe, Abundant Grace Fellowship**  
**Jerry Laudermilk, Abundant Life Tabernacle**  
**Pastor Robert O'Brien, Apostolic Faith Assembly**  
**Pastor Ted Howard, Apostolic Holiness**  
**Pastor Gary Lambert, Belmont Avenue Community**

**Pastor Merle Stewart, Bethesda Fellowship**  
**Pastor Mike Rogers, Church of GOD**  
**Pastor John Webb, Cornerstone Free Will Baptist**  
**Pastor Les Vnasdale, Cornerstone Grace Brethren**  
**Pastor Bruce Copley, Faith Chapel**  
**Pastor Ferlie Yates, Hanna Road Church of GOD**  
**Pastor Aaron Williams, Maddox Memorial Temple**  
**Pastor Les Farley, My Father's House**  
**Pastor Jeremy Muncy, Westwood Alliance**  
**Pastor Chris Thomas, Diamond Hills Baptist**  
**Pastor Dave Guild, Mansfield Foursquare Gospel**  
**Rabbi William Halbrook, Sar Shalom Messianic**  
**Reverend El Akuchie, Richland Community Prayer**

## **References**

<sup>1</sup> "An Appeal to Heaven- YouTube," by David Barton and Wallbuilders, December 30, 2014. David Barton owns more than 100,000 original documents that predate 1812.

<sup>2</sup> "National Day of Prayer seeks Divine intervention," by Benjamin Mut ti, Mansfield News Journal, April 3, 2009, p. C1. In a phone survey conducted by prayer network the week of April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009, 47 of 63 pastors interviewed on prayer believed that there is a relationship between the social conditions of a community and its corporate prayer life.

<sup>3</sup> "Ministers calling for racial calm" Mansfield News Journal, May 2, 1992 ministerial association call on Mansfield and surrounding areas in the aftermath of violence connected to the verdict from the Rodney King trial to pray and believe GOD for calm, greater understanding and justice in marketplace. Official statement based from 2 Chronicles 7:14.

<sup>4</sup> "Prayers promote unity: event breaks down religious barriers," by Lisa Culp, Mansfield News Journal, May 5, 1995, p. A1. Archival search of Mansfield Public Library newspaper microfilm seems to indicate that local observance of the National Day of Prayer at Central Park in downtown Mansfield began in May of 1993.

<sup>5</sup> "Richland County Pastors plan day of prayer for GM by Jamie Kinton, Mansfield News Journal, June 12, 2009, p. A2. Eighty-three area pastors call for day of prayer and repentance in aftermath of the General Motors plant closure.

### **Historic examples of area citizens having a record of opposing immoral behavior**

<sup>6</sup> "Anti-pornography picketer gives his view," by George Constable, Mansfield News Journal, December 31, 1979. Citizens protest X-rated porno film being shown at Ohio Theater (now Renaissance Theater); theater closes shortly thereafter

<sup>7</sup> "The crackdown on pornography," editorial, Mansfield News Journal, February 10, 1987, p. A4. Petitions signed by more than 2,000 Richland County citizens prod law enforcement to take action to enforce current laws on books "

<sup>8</sup> “Video store pickets,” photo caption by Jeff Sprang, Mansfield News Journal, April, 22, 1990, p. A14. Citizen group pickets movie rental store in Appleseed Mall for selling pornographic films.

<sup>9</sup> “Council yells ‘charge!’ in porn war,” by Kimberly Lancaster, Mansfield News Journal, October 7, 1993, A1 Legislation enacted to direct Law Director and police department to aggressively investigate and litigate sale of hardcore porn

<sup>10</sup> “Public: Stop nude bar,” by Ron Nissiimov, Mansfield News Journal, April 18, 1995, A1. Several hundred people packed City Council chambers to encourage passage of tough regulations on sex businesses including proposed juice bar on Park Avenue East.

<sup>11</sup> “Protest effort grows,” by Lou Whitmire, Mansfield News Journal, March 18, 1998, A1. Citizens picket Ontario bookstore for sale of child pornography.

<sup>12</sup> “Topless revue has prayer group and City Council concerned,” by Linda Martz, Mansfield News Journal, December 21, 2004. Business on South Main Street holds topless event and is met with resistance.

<sup>13</sup> “Coalition opposed to adult entertainment attracting followers,” by Mark Caudill, Mansfield News journal, July 9, 2006, A1. Family group protests strip club on Ashland Road and provides intelligence to law enforcement.

<sup>14</sup> “Protesters were ready this time around,” by Jamie Kinton, Mansfield News Journal, April 18, 2007, A1. Girls Gone Wild Corporation comes to Ontario West Fourth Street bar to film sex acts by local women and are met by citizen opposition.

<sup>15</sup> “Critics block health talk on transsexuality,” by Regina McEnery, Cleveland Plain Dealer, May 12, 2007, B1. Family group and churches help block a presentation promoting transsexuality lifestyle at the Mansfield OSU branch campus.

<sup>16</sup> “Steps taken to shut down George’s Bar,” by Mark Caudill, Mansfield News Journal, December 2, 2007, B1. Strip club closes in Shelby area as a result of citizens and churches testifying before Township Trustee Board.

### **Historic examples of local civic government discouraging immoral behavior**

<sup>17</sup> “Residents petition council to ban pornography sales” by David Pierini, Mansfield News Journal, April 18, 1990. Mansfield Mayor Edward Meehan proclaims week of April 8th, 1990 as Pornography Awareness Week,

<sup>18</sup> “Mayor Scott’s proclamation warns of dangers of pornography,” staff, Mansfield News Journal, October 29, 1992.

<sup>19</sup> “Prostitution goes underground: Police waging battle to keep downtown respectable,” by Linda Martz, Mansfield News Journal, December 7, 1997, A1.

<sup>20</sup> “Former Big Boy won’t go topless,” by Linda Martz, Mansfield News Journal, March 1, 2003, A1. Mansfield Mayor Reid persuades local businessman not to open a topless bar off Ohio 13 exit of Interstate 71.

<sup>21</sup> Pornography Awareness Week proclaimed by Mansfield Mayor Lydia Reid on the week of October 31, 2005. From official records of the Mayor’s office.

<sup>22</sup> “Adultmart opponents mobilize,” by Erik Shilling, Mansfield News Journal, January 29, 2010, A1. Following this article, thirteen of the eighteen townships and all ten municipalities within Richland County adopt tough restrictive ordinances regulating sex businesses.

<sup>23</sup> “Sheriff: Prostitute ring busted,” by Mark Caudill and Kaitlin Durbin, Mansfield News Journal, July 27, 2013, A1. Officials allege drug addicts forced into sex for hire.

<sup>24</sup> “Prostitution sweep targets 30 people,” by Lou Whitmire, Mansfield News Journal, May 23, 2015, A1.

## **Other**

<sup>25</sup> Sermons preached by local pastors appear on front page, top fold of newspapers of the Mansfield Herald, April 14, 1858, and April 28, 1858. These references are not exhaustive, only cited as examples.

<sup>26</sup> “Bill will make bestiality illegal in Ohio,” by Josh Jarman, The Columbus Dispatch, July 3, 2011. Accessed on June 22, 2015 at <http://m.whio.com/news/news/local/bill-will-make-beastiality-illegal-ohio/nC3hJ/> . Shelby, Ohio man arrested for sex abuse of dogs; further investigation revealed man was part of an online community of people who use the internet to connect with others who share videos of “romance” with their companion animals. Presently it is still legal in Ohio to commit bestiality.

<sup>27</sup> “Murderer sparked notorious surveillance: Attitude changes toward sexual behavior” by Mark Caudill, Mansfield News Journal, August 26, 2012, A1. Local media commemorates 50th anniversary of infamous investigation of acts of sodomy occurring in the men’s public restroom of Mansfield Central Park; the restrooms would later be closed. Story reports that contemporary attitudes on sexuality have now changed and sodomy is now more acceptable.

<sup>28</sup> “White House lit in rainbow colors after Supreme Court ruling,” Associated Press, June 26, 2015. Accessed on June 30, 2015 at: <http://www.onenewsnow.com/ap/politics/white-house-lit-in-rainbow-colors-after-supreme-court-ruling>

<sup>29</sup> Hatch Article in the Stanford Law & Policy Review: Fighting the Pornification of America by Enforcing Obscenity Laws, June 5, 2012. Accessed on June 30, 2015 at: <http://www.hatch.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/releases?ID=e228e97a-9f9e-4428-8a9e-6d4f03bdc8d0>. The 1986 Attorney General’s Commission on Obscenity and Pornography noted that, “with few exceptions federal obscenity laws that are on the books go unenforced.”

<sup>30</sup> “Home to sex offenders” by Eric Shilling, Mansfield News Journal, February 14, 2010, A1. Richland County tops Ohio in serious sexual criminals. Richland County, Ohio listed as the “Sex predator capital of the state.”

<sup>31</sup> “It’s time to end slavery in Ohio,” Toledo Blade editorial printed in Mansfield News Journal, February 13, 2010, p. A8. Per capita, Toledo, Ohio leads the nation in the number of arrests, investigations, and rescues of children held as virtual slaves and forced to work in the sex trade.

## **Biblical Scriptures that pertain to the sin of immorality**

<sup>32</sup> Adultery considered sin (Exodus 20:14) (Leviticus 18:20) (Deuteronomy 5:18) (Deuteronomy 22:22)

<sup>33</sup> Bestiality considered sin (Leviticus 18:23) (Leviticus 20:15-16)

<sup>34</sup> Covetousness considered sin (Exodus 20:17) (Deuteronomy 5:21)

<sup>35</sup> Homosexuality considered sin (Leviticus 18:22) (Leviticus 20:13) (Romans 1:26-27), (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

<sup>36</sup> Incest is considered sin (Leviticus 18 6-18) (Leviticus 20:17, 19-21)

<sup>37</sup> Pedophilia is considered sin (Matthew 18:6-7)

<sup>38</sup> Pornography is considered sin (Job 31:1) (Psalm 101:3) (Matthew 5:28)

<sup>39</sup> Premarital sex is considered sin (Deuteronomy 22:23-29)

<sup>40</sup> Prostitution is considered sin (Deuteronomy 23:17-18)

Special note: All Biblical texts are derived from "The American Patriot's Bible: The Word of GOD and the Shaping of America," Thomas Nelson Inc. Copyright 2009, edited by Dr. Richard G. Lee, New King James Version.

### Other

<sup>41</sup> "Reported STDs in the United States: 2013 National Data for Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis, CDC Fact Sheet, [www.std-trends-508.pdf](http://www.std-trends-508.pdf), accessed on June 21, 2015.

<sup>42</sup> Houston subpoenas pastors' sermons in gay rights ordinance case," by Sara Pulliam Bailey, Washington Post. Accessed on June 29, 2015 at: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/religion/houston-subpoenas-pastors-sermons-in-gay-rights-ordinance-case/2014/10/15/9b848ff0-549d-11e4-b86d-184ac281388d\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/religion/houston-subpoenas-pastors-sermons-in-gay-rights-ordinance-case/2014/10/15/9b848ff0-549d-11e4-b86d-184ac281388d_story.html). The Mayor of Houston subpoenas five area pastors ordering the submission of all sermons related to a controversial restroom law, the Petition opposing the law, Mayor Annise Parker, homosexuality, and gender identity.

<sup>43</sup> "Understanding and responding to the Transgender Movement," by Dale O'Leary and Peter Sprigg, Family Research Council, p. 30-31, [www.frc.org](http://www.frc.org) accessed on June 20, 2015.

<sup>44</sup> "Uganda's Miracle," by Kyalo Nguku, Charisma Magazine. Accessed on June 29, 2015 at: <http://www.charismamag.com/site-archives/146-covers/cover-story/1965-ugandas-miracle> . In early 1991, officials summoned area pastors and announced that the government was turning over the AIDS disaster to the church. World Health Organization indicated that 30 percent of the population would be dead by 2000 and another 30 percent infected. Instead, with the implementation of Biblical principles, the nation once known as the "Nursery of AIDS," saw HIV rates plummet to below six percent.

<sup>45</sup>"Arctic Revival," by Debra Fieguth, Faith Today, January-February 2002, pp. 18-22 Canadian Arctic region of Nunavut overcame sex abuse, teenage pregnancies and suicide rates that were off the charts. When residents began disposing of pornography, drugs and illicit materials with the help of Royal Canadian Police, new found hunger for Bible conferences and baptisms ensued. In one town. One powerful supernatural visitation believed to be from GOD was recorded. Ecological turnaround and a voice in the political realm also occurred for the first time.

Both stories above featured in the award-winning documentary film "Transformations 2: The Glory Spreads,' produced by The Sentinel Group, 2002. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BMQm\\_XY6FQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6BMQm_XY6FQ)

<sup>46</sup> Taken from Joel 2:17-18.