



## RESOLUTION IN LOVING MEMORY OF THE REV. DR. VALENTINO LASSITER

The Apostle Paul tells us,

<sup>Phil 3:8</sup>I regard [every achievement of my past life] as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things ... in order that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup>and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. <sup>10</sup>I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, <sup>11</sup>if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. <sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. <sup>13</sup>...forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. ... <sup>17</sup>Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. ... <sup>20</sup>[For] our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>21</sup>He will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself.

Since it has pleased Almighty God to take our beloved brother to his eternal reward, where he will join that great cloud of witnesses in the heavens who have pressed on to reach the ultimate goal in Christ, all of John Carroll University – and especially the members of the Department of Theology & Religious Studies – wish to express our sincere condolences to Yvonne Lassiter and all the Lassiter family. Our hearts are with you as we gather to celebrate our brother in Christ, the Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter, husband, father, colleague, teacher, friend, and example of faithfulness to “the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.”

WHEREAS Valentino Lassiter was born in Suffolk, Virginia, on May 27, 1952 to the late Addie and Johnnie Lassiter, and professed a hope in Christ from his early years.

WHEREAS Valentino Lassiter was a graduate of John F. Kennedy High School in Suffolk, Virginia; he earned a his baccalaureate degree at Fisk University (1974), Master of Divinity at Boston University (1977), culminating with the Doctor of Ministry degree at Eden Theological Seminary (1995).

WHEREAS Valentino Lassiter was a faithful and loving husband to Yvonne Marie Lassiter (née Gillum) and loving father to their three sons, Christian Valentino, Jeremy Bryce, and Brian Roger, all faithful servants in the Lord.

WHEREAS the Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter was a reverent man of prayer who loved the Lord and who loyally and faithfully served God through his ministry in the church, especially at East View United Church of Christ in Shaker Heights, Ohio, where he pastored for over 35 years.

WHEREAS Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter generously served the wider Cleveland community, leading by word and example, through education, activism, and walking together with those in need.

WHEREAS the Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter joined the faculty of John Carroll University in 1989, became Pastor-in-Residence in 2000, and made his home in the hearts of all his colleagues in the Department of Theology & Religious Studies, in Campus Ministry, and all across the University.

WHEREAS the Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter touched the lives of hundreds of John Carroll students through his teaching, preaching, mentoring, and loving support throughout the last 25 years.

WHEREAS the Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter was not only a devoted husband and father and a beloved colleague and teacher, but also a spirit-filled pastor, gracious counselor, and exemplary friend always ready to provide an encouraging word and offer strong support to those in need.

WHEREAS the death of the Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter brings an ache to our hearts and minds that no mere human comfort can assuage, yet we take courage and consolation in the promise of Jesus who said, "I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2), and "remember, I am with you always, [even] to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20b).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Department of Theology & Religious Studies and all of John Carroll University embrace the Lassiter family and East View United Church of Christ in our common bond of love for our colleague, friend, and brother; who was your husband, father, and pastor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in collaboration with the City of University Heights, the national flags at City Hall and on John Carroll University's central quad will be flown at half-mast on Saturday, June 20, 2015, as a sign of mourning for the loss of our colleague and valued community member, the Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in honor of the Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter, who pursued "righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, [and] gentleness" (1 Tim 6:11b) throughout his life, and who sought only to fulfill the call of the Prophet Micah to "do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God" (Mic 6:8), the Department of Theology & Religious Studies of John Carroll University will found an annual "Continuing the Dream" contest, with a monetary prize to be awarded to the student whose work reveals the passion for justice embodied by our beloved colleague.

To the family of Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter, we know your loss is deep and your sorrow is great, and we share in your sorrow. Yet, we recognize that our beloved Val has fought the good fight of the faith, and we trust that he has taken hold of the eternal life to which he has been called and for which he made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses (1 Tim 6:12). Remember that we are here to support you in your time of need. You will be in our thoughts and prayers in the days and months to come.

Humbly submitted on this 20<sup>th</sup> day of June 2015, the Faculty and Staff of John Carroll University, University Heights, Ohio, the Rev. Robert Niehoff, S.J., President.