

Refuge Quarterly Newsletter



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Happy New Year!

Embracing Our Commission



Believe it or not, we have closed out 2021 and embraced 2022. Certainly, many of us thought 2020 would never end, and most of us, in one form or another, have experienced deep loss in these last two years.

Nevertheless, we have learned to be patient while moving forward in God's strength. Isaiah 40:31 explains the results of waiting on the Lord.

Refuge Church is committed to carrying out the Lord's will for us. We have positioned ourselves for maturity, productivity, and growth. Aligning ourselves with the word of God, we are determined to study God's word, submit to consistent prayer and to not forsaking fellowship with one another.

Alignment with God is not a dead-end process. As the early church grew, we will also grow. Growth requires constant change and development. John 15:2 lets us know that the Father adjusts our lives so that we will manifest more of His character. This year, as we add to our framework, let's give more of ourselves to others. This will facilitate our quest to daily die to our flesh. Romans 8:13 explains dying to the carnal deeds of the body.

God has planted us together to flourish as a rose on a thorny bush. Although He never promised that our lives would be without obstacles or thorns, He did promise that He would always be with us. I am anticipating many great victories as we trust and walk according to God's Holy ordinance. I pray that you have this same anticipation.

As we eagerly embark upon 2022, we can expect new adventures and opportunities. Let's begin by bridging the gap of isolation and embracing our commission to love (John 13:34) as given to us

by Jesus. Our objective is to let as many people as possible get a personal view of God's love that's embodied in each one of us.

Romans 5:5 says that God's love is in our hearts. God, by His sovereign power, is moving us forward into His design for our assembly. Let us embrace His Word, His Will, and one another as His next chapter for us unfolds.

*Much Love,
Pastor Orlando D Edwards*

Racial Reconciliation

It's easy to become discouraged when we hear the news of police shootings and killings of unarmed Black citizens or see that the law is not applied judiciously based on one's skin color.

News flash! The issue of racial reconciliation has been completed by the work of the cross. "How is that possible" you ask? Well, it falls under the category of "It Is Finished." Christ has raised us up together and made us sit together.

There is only one race, the human race and God sent his Son to die for all members of the human race. This included everyone who was without Christ, strangers from the covenant of promises, having no hope and without God in the world, whether Jew or Gentile, enslaved or slave holder.

We have all been brought near by the blood of Christ. This blood was greater than Slavery or the Holocaust. And not only did He preach peace, He himself is our peace. Because of the awesome grace of God, we all have access by one Spirit to the Father. This is why we can have hope today!

This gift of reconciliation is now available to every believer. All we must do is exercise this gift. If this sounds too simple to be true, well, that's a matter of believing. The harder issue is how to make practical application of this truth.

We first start by making the Word of God the priority over our ethnicity. Black is beautiful but only when it is aligned with the Word of God. Whiteness can never be supreme. God alone owns supremacy.

The call to join the Church is not a call to lay down your culture or ethnicity. The call is to bring your culture and ethnicity under the dominion of Christ.

When we promote our skin color over the work of the cross, we become guilty of idolatry. The construct of race came out of a desire to make one group superior to everyone else.

"It was argued that the Negro was inferior by nature because of Noah's curse upon the children of Ham—The greatest blasphemy of the whole ugly process was that the white man ended up making God his partner in the exploitation of the Negro." --- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Google [Jesus](#) then search images and you will see what Dr. King meant. Racism has even co-opted God.

If the Church had allowed the Word of God to be all sufficient in addressing the issue of racism, we would not have a black church or a white church.

If the Church had decided to follow the Word of God and **not the culture**, we would be the model for the world, instead we allowed the world to be the role model to the Church.

Imagine if in addition to chattel slavery, one of the most miserable and wretched conditions on earth, we were without hope and without God in this world. Even though we may have had a desire for a better life and a blissful existence, there was no real hope or confident expectation of one.

The blood of Christ gave us a home. The blood of Christ is the flag and color under which we all stand. The blood of Christ took those who were once strangers and made them family. For this we can rejoice!

¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—¹² that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (Eph. 2:11-13)

Let's make full use of the gift that has been given to us by making practical application. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35)





Re-Centering

As It Is (In Heaven)

Words and Music by Joel Houston & Ben Fielding

Whether now or then, death is not my end.
 I know heaven waits for me.
 Though the road seems long, I'll never walk alone.
 I've got all I need to sing!
 Should I suffer long, this is not my home.
 I know heaven waits for me
 Though the night is dark, Heaven **owns** my heart.
 I've got all I need to sing.

So, I will sing like I will there - in the fearless light of glory
 Where the darkness cannot find me,
 and Your face is all I see
 I will sing like a man with no sickness in my body
 Like no prison walls can hold me, I will sing like I am free

I know You love me, I know You found me,
 I know You saved me and Your grace will never fail me.
 And while I'm waiting, I'm not waiting I know heaven
 lives in me.

We'll sing holy, holy. The earth cries holy
 As it is in heaven, so let it be!

If the words of this song are comforting, read
 Philippians, Chapter 3. Philippians 3 exhorts us to
 focus more on our relationship with Christ than our
 current circumstances. Regardless of our
 circumstances, we've got all we need to sing. Our
 confidence and hope is not in our flesh, but in our
 relationship with Christ. We, too, can '**know He loves
 us, know He found us, know He saved us and His grace
 will never fail us.**' Hallelujah and Amen!

*"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this
 one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and
 reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press
 toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in
 Christ Jesus. Phil 3:13-14*



The Refuge leadership has asked that we pray about the following issues for the first quarter of the year:

January - Selflessness (1 Cor.13: 4-7)

- Our Time
- Our Money
- Our Service

February - Physical/Spiritual Health (3 John 1:2)

- Studying the Word
- Eating healthier
- Exercising consistently

March - Vision (Proverbs 29:18)

- Reduce worldly media influences
- Increase and embrace the influence of Christ
- Reduce idle conversations and increase Godly conversation

THANK YOU!

A big THANK YOU from the Trustee Board! We are grateful for your continued moral and financial support. Despite all we have been through, God is still God, and His word is true. He will never leave or forsake us. Praise God, we are still able to go forward.

Some of our improvements in 2021 include:

- Renovation of the Men and Women's bathrooms
- A new bathroom built in the Fellowship Hall
- Upgraded plumbing system
- We rebuilt the rear ramp
- New and improved front steps

And there's more to come! We could not do these upgrades and repairs without your help and support!

Thank you for your commitment and trust! We love and appreciate you.

Deacon Raphael, Trustee Chair



Please Join Us

Sunday School - 9:30am on ZOOM

Message - 11:00 am on Facebook at Refuge of Olney and in the sanctuary – where we're COVID compliant

Monday Men's Prayer – Every other Monday at 7:00 pm

Tuesday - Prayer at Noon – To call in, please use Conference Number 1.605.475.5900 Access Code: 907555

Tuesday - Social Justice Team meetings - 7:30 pm monthly - every 2nd Tuesday

Thursday Bible Study – Join us on ZOOM 7:30 - 8:30 pm

Send an email request to refugeroc@gmail.com and we can send you an invitation to join us on ZOOM!

Online Giving



Download the Givelify app on your mobile device, visit our website at www.refugeinolney.com or [click here](#).



Our Leadership Team

- Orlando and Denise Edwards, Pastor
- Pastor Kathy Maria Mosley-Settles
- Elder Gary and Deborah Randolph
- Deaconess Deborah Lynch-Butler
- Deacon Raphael and Deaconess Robin Rice
- Donté Foreman, Youth Leader

Contact Us

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Prayer Requests: Email us at refugeroc@gmail.com

Online Giving: www.givelify.com

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Community Awareness

Living Our Faith - Doing Good Works!

Olney Help

Bel Pre-Nursing Home

Central Union Mission

Christ the King Ministries in Kenya

Community Family Life Services

Rockville Women's Center

Women Who Care Ministries

Thank you for supporting these ministries through your donations!