



## Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, on February 3, 1943, during World War II, an allied military transport ship, the United States Army Transport *Dorchester*, was torpedoed by a German U-Boat and was sunk in the North Atlantic just off the coast of Greenland; and

**WHEREAS**, 905 servicemen, civilians and merchants were on the *Dorchester* when it was attacked only ninety miles from its destination; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 200 passengers and crew aboard the *Dorchester* survived the attack, thanks in part to the efforts of four Chaplains; George L. Fox, Alexander D. Goode, Clark V. Poling, and John P. Washington, who sacrificed their lives to save others by giving up their lifejackets and distributing available lifejackets to others onboard; and

**WHEREAS**, the four clergymen served as a calming influence to many during a chaotic time through prayer and quiet counsel, and reports of their valor and dignity spread quickly once the *Dorchester* survivors returned safely to their homes; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 3, 1951, President Harry S. Truman ordered the Chapel of Four Chaplains be built, and in honor of the four clergymen who sacrificed their lives, the president declared, "This interfaith shrine...will stand through long generations to teach Americans that as men can die heroically as brothers so should they live together in mutual faith and goodwill"; and

**WHEREAS**, for over fifty years, the Gastonia Civitan Club has recognized and honored these chaplains, as well as, the ministers, priests, and rabbis of Gastonia; and

**WHEREAS**, it is appropriate to honor the four clergymen who were on the *Dorchester* whose faith compelled them to lay down their lives to save the lives of others, and to further express our gratitude to our ministers, priests, and rabbis in Gastonia, who have dedicated their lives to providing unselfish service to others.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, John D. Bridgeman, Mayor of the City of Gastonia, do hereby proclaim February 12 – February 18, 2017, as

### **CLERGY APPRECIATION WEEK**

in the City of Gastonia and encourage our citizens to express their gratitude to their ministers, priests, and rabbis by expression of thanks in word and deed.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the City of Gastonia to be affixed this the 15<sup>th</sup> day of February, two thousand and seventeen.

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John D. Bridgeman, Mayor

Attest:

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Sherry H. Dunaway, City Clerk