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The Heartbeat of Cedarville University: 70 Years of Daily Chapel

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- [Chapel](#) is the heartbeat of [Cedarville University](#). The daily program is what unites the campus community, including faculty, staff and students, around common themes of biblical truth and joyful worship.

With the start of the 2023-24 academic year on August 21, Cedarville will mark its 70th year of having daily chapel programs. During the 70 years, chapel was held in various locations across campus including [Alford Auditorium](#), [Milner](#) and the [Apple Technology Resource Center](#) before moving in 1996 to the [Dixon Ministry Center's James T. Jeremiah Chapel](#). The size of the venue has increased from 2,000 to nearly 4,000.

The 50-minute chapel program features worship music led by student musicians and biblical teaching from scholars across the country, including Dr. David Jeremiah, pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church and the teaching leader for Turning Point ministry in San Diego, California; Dr. Alistair Begg, senior pastor of Cleveland's Parkside Church, and the voice of Truth For Life Christian radio preaching and teaching ministry. Other notable speakers include Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Shai Linne, Christian recording artist and church planter; Clyde Christensen, quarterbacks coach of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers; Dannah Gresh, founder of Pure Freedom; along with Cedarville faculty members.

"Daily chapel sets Cedarville apart as a school committed to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ," said [Thomas White](#), university president. "It is the heartbeat of campus because Jesus is the center, and He truly is our life."

Although the chapel program was a part of Cedarville's founding, it did not become part of the daily schedule until 1953 when Cedarville College merged with the Baptist Bible Institute of Cleveland.

From its founding, Cedarville has focused on educating students from a biblical perspective, and teaching Scripture each morning in chapel at 10 a.m. only deepened students' opportunities for growth. Even during COVID, Cedarville offered chapel programs, moving from online to outdoor services.

James T. Jeremiah, president from 1954-1978, stated, "We must never lose the preaching in chapel as that has something to say about Christian living, salvation. Never, and if we do, we have lost the whole thing." Jeremiah set the precedent that has made chapel what it is today.

During its 70 years, the chapel program has evolved from a-Capella hymns to full worship bands. Regardless of style, the teaching from the Word of God has remained the same.

"Cedarville wouldn't be what it is today without daily chapel," said White. "We are blessed to hear the Word preached every weekday at 10 a.m. and all worship the Lord together."

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 5,082 [undergraduate](#), [graduate](#), and [dual enrolled](#) high school students in more than 175 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is one of the largest private universities in Ohio, recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, high graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and the #4 national ranking by the Wall Street Journal for student engagement. For more information about the University, visit cedarville.edu.

Written by Caroline Kimball

Photo Captions (Photos courtesy of Cedarville University)

- 1- In the early 1950s, the Cedarville University chapel was held in the building that is now offices for the faculty in the History and Government department.

- 2- During his tenure as president, James T. Jeremiah often spoke in chapel, then held in Milner Chapel.

- 3- In the 1960s, chapel was moved to Alford Auditorium, complete with squeaky theatre seats.

- 4- The chapel program moved into the James T. Jeremiah Chapel--now the Apple Technology Resource Center--in 1975. The facility increased its capacity to 2,000.

- 5- With the construction of the Dixon Ministry Center, chapel programs moved into the new facility, which now has a capacity of approximately 4,000.