



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on October 11, 2019

Charleston Mayor Gets Flak Over Secular Christmas Parade, Backs Down on Name Change

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Charleston, West Virginia, Mayor Amy Shuler Goodwin has announced she will not be changing the name of the city's annual holiday parade to the "Charleston Winter Parade" after backlash from church leaders and community members, the [Washington Times reports](#).

On October 7, the city of Charleston had announced it would change the name of the annual Christmas Parade to the Charleston Winter Parade in an effort to be more inclusive.

City spokesperson Mackenzie Spencer said, "Charleston is a welcoming and inclusive city. Charleston Winter Parade is a more inclusive name for the parade."

Additionally, the float rules and guidelines have been amended to read, "No advocating, opposing or depicting of any political, religious figures or social issues. Any unit doing so may be removed from the parade line and not allowed to participate."

Predictably, the announcement provoked backlash from Charleston citizens.

West Virginia Senate President Mitch Carmichael was an outspoken critic of the name change, asserting it was an example of political correctness run amok. Carmichael slammed the change as an affront to religious freedom, issued by the city's "elite liberals."

"It is clear, these radicals have no interest in our Christmas traditions or in following our United States Constitution. We are calling on Mayor Goodwin and her liberal allies to end this madness and allow our citizens to freely and fully exercise their Freedom of Religion with a CHRISTMAS PARADE," said Carmichael in a statement.

State Attorney General Patrick Morrisey took to Twitter to voice his opposition to the name change:

The recent decision by the City of Charleston to change the name of its "Christmas Parade" to a "Winter Parade" is political correctness run amok. Naming a function as a "Christmas Parade" is not prohibited under the Establishment Clause. Charleston should reverse course.

By October 10, the city realized it was fighting a losing battle and reinstated the parade's original name.

"After much consideration and conversation with religious leaders from all faiths and community members, we have decided to keep the name, 'Charleston Christmas Parade,'" Mayor Goodwin wrote. "We understand the history and tradition of the parade and we want to continue that for years to come."

But Mayor Goodwin did not miss the opportunity to criticize the opponents of the name change, West Virginia's *Metro News* reports. In a Facebook post, she claimed to find the "kind of vitriol that has come



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forth” against the name change to have been “disappointing and hurtful.”

Still, Mayor Goodwin’s decision to restore the original name of the parade is being marked as a victory for religious freedom.

Carmichael issued a statement celebrating the mayor’s decision:

Christmas celebrates the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is a central holiday for thousands of Christians in our Capitol City and throughout West Virginia.

I am thankful Mayor Goodwin listened to her constituents and decided to cancel her plans to rename the parade.... People of all faiths, Christian, Judaism, Islam and all other faiths, should never feel as though the government is prohibiting their ability to worship and celebrate their religion. That is what inclusion looks like and that is what West Virginia should look like.

And while keeping “Christmas” in the parade’s title does mark a small victory for Christians and religious freedom in general, the mayor’s “War on Christmas” remains, albeit subtle, by commercializing the event and distracting from what is at the core of Christmas: the birth of Christ.

In her statement, she added that the parade would be moved from its traditional Saturday schedule to a Thursday evening: “We decided to move the parade to the evening of Thursday, December 12 after consultation with business owners to create an amazing festive scene with window decorations and lights.... I want to personally invite everyone to downtown Charleston to not only come to these events, but to enjoy our amazing restaurants and shop our downtown.”

Mayor Goodwin announced that while the name of the parade will remain the same, the parade will be preceded by a series of events that will “celebrate a variety of cultures, religions, [and] organizations.”

The amended rules for the Christmas parade floats have not been addressed either.

Sadly, Christmas has always been a target of atheists and social justice warriors. The word “Christmas” has itself become [taboo](#) as its use by employees continues to be banned by schools, governments, restaurant and retail industries, etc. A handful of complaints somehow spark the [removal](#) of long-standing Nativity scenes in public places. Atheists target the holiday with annual billboard [campaigns](#) that claim the story of Christmas is a myth and that Americans do not need God to be “good.” Starbucks brewed [controversy](#) in 2015 when it released its secular holiday cups. The list goes on.

And so long as SJWs have their way, it will remain a target.

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