

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."
Hebrews 11:1 KJV

A father walked by his daughter's bedroom door which was cracked just enough so that he could see that she was kneeling beside her bed in prayer. Interested to find out what subjects a child would bring before God, he paused and listened. He was puzzled though to hear her reciting the alphabet: "A, B, C, D, E, F, G ..." She just kept repeating it over and over. He didn't want to interrupt her, but soon curiosity got the best of him. He opened the door and asked, "Honey, what are you doing?" "I'm praying, Daddy," she replied. "Well, why are you praying the alphabet?" he asked. She explained, "I started my prayers, but I wasn't sure what to pray. You told me that God knows everything. Right?! You told me that God loves me. Right?! So, I decided to just say all the letters of the alphabet and let God put them together however He thinks best." This little girl shows such great faith!

What is faith? It is the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. It is the certainty that what we hope for is waiting for us, even though we cannot see it up ahead. To have faith in God is to make a *practical commitment*—the kind involved in *trusting God* or *trusting in God*. This faith in God is a *fiducial* model—a model of faith as trust, understood not simply as an affective state of confidence, but as an *action*. (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2010)

The letter to the Hebrews was written to a community who had begun to grow weary of their Christian life. The words in the eleventh chapter of this book are a summons to faith and a word of encouragement to a community. The cares and challenges of their day had made it difficult for them to see a way forward. Some were struggling with their faith and others were neglecting to meet together. When the letter was written, things seemed even more fraught than when the community had faced explicit external pressure and duress. They had become less confident and their energy for the faith seemed to have waned. The letter is written with the intention of offering encouragement and in the hope of reawakening the community's faith. Sound familiar?

During these times when wars and rumors of more wars, the ongoing pandemic, mass shootings, and the pain of disease and death have become a 21st century reality, discouragement may seem inevitable. In times like these, it is our faith in God that gives us hope. It is our faith in God that keeps us focused. It is our faith in God that keeps us moving forward—present today while working toward a better tomorrow.

Faith makes God the focus and center of our awareness. When the focus of our vision is God, we begin to see the world and all of creation differently. Our depth of perception increases. Our vision becomes clearer. We look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. We look to God.

Each and every day, we make choices, most often unconsciously. We choose what we are willing to see; what we are willing to allow in our awareness; what we are willing to recognize or perceive. Faith teaches us to recognize God in everyone, in every decision, in every action and interaction. Faith teaches us to always hold onto the hope of God's love for the world and God's love for each one of us.

May we find our way in faith. May we, like the little girl, trust God to put the world together how God thinks best and may our most profound and personal influence, in this world, be a legacy of faith.

In Christ's service with you.

Shalom,

Dr. N. C. Wimberly



A Message from the President

Submitted by Doris O'Rourke

June is known as the traditional month for weddings and graduations. At Harrisena June will be a busy month for tasks and celebrations. **We begin on June 4th with JUNK IN THE TRUNK from 9AM -3PM.** There will be a book sale and bake sale as well. Collect your old books and get baking some delicious goodies!

On Sunday, June 5th we will hold the final vote for the property sale.

The following week, **June 12th, there will be a delicious potluck brunch/lunch following our worship service** and our Election of next year's officers and committee members. These members will be installed the Sunday after Labor Day which is one of our traditions.

There have been many meetings and mediation seminars this year. Everyone on our Council and Rev. Natalie have worked hard. I think we all are looking forward to a relaxing summer.



The Church Council and each committee has been given a ministry plan by Rev. Stefani.

Ministry is how we demonstrate our love for Christ by service to the intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, and social needs of our congregation and community?

The Board of Trustees, Financial Officers, and each HCC committee is working on their ministry plan. The president of the congregation and the pastor will work with the council to identify the themes and supporting goals and actions for the church.

Trustee Report

Submitted by Shelley Durkee

The Board of Trustees is looking into having the **steps leading into the Sanctuary repaired** at some point this Summer. More information on this project will be forthcoming as we have it.

Many thanks to **Bill Loeb** for researching and making the arrangements to have this job completed.

Thank you also to Steve Greene for the attending to the repairs on the Parsonage garage!

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Peter Cartier, Pam Loeb, Donna Davison Smith

The PRC continues to work to better understand and strengthen the relationship between the pastor and the congregation. Through the mediation process, we have committed to moving forward. Working with other committees, boards, and officers, we aim to build a healthy church family. Our focus and goals for the year are:

1. Increase healthy communication between our pastor/congregation.
2. Develop a ministry plan that supports a healthy congregation.
3. Commit to attending at least one HCC Bible Study and other leadership training.

We encourage you to commit to a healthier Harrisena Church. We are encouraging everyone to take the time to speak with our pastor about how you can share your gifts with the church. If you would like help in reaching our pastor, contact one of the PRC members. We will help you make that connection. Please let us know if you need or want our assistance.

Also, the **PRC has completed an annual evaluation for Rev. Wimberly** and submitted a proposed call agreement (contract) to the Financial Team and the Trustees. **We have included our final evaluation.**



PRC REPORT

One of the responsibilities of the Pastoral/Congregational Relationship Committee is to complete an annual evaluation of our Pastor. The PRC felt it was important to share this evaluation with our congregation. In preparing this evaluation, we found ourselves thinking about our relationship with our pastor, and our role, both as individuals and as a part of our congregation, as we work together. We found this introspection helpful, and we believe sharing our thoughts with the congregation on this topic is important.

As each of us plays a role in helping Harrisena move forward into its bright future, we believe that learning how to openly share and communicate with each other will be key to successfully co-creating with God to bring his Church and the message of Christ into our world through Harrisena's vision and mission.

Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC)

Pastoral Evaluation

According to the Call Agreement entered into by Harrisena Community Church and Dr. Natalie C. Wimberly, pastoral duties consist of, but are not limited to the following:

Pastoral duties consist of, but not limited to, providing regular worship services on Sunday and the usual Christian holy days, leading adult religious studies, confirmation classes, as well as preach the Gospel, administer the Ordinance of Communion, perform Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals or Dedications, watch over the membership and promote the spiritual interest and unity of the Church. The pastor shall also administrate actions directed by the Harrisena Community Church Council.

Please record your evaluation for each area defined in this Call Agreement. Use a number from 1 to 10. One means ineffective and 10 is highly effective. If you do not feel you can provide an evaluate please enter NA.

Review Responses were made by the Pastoral/Congregational Relationship Committee:

Peter Cartier, Pam Loeb and Donna Davison Smith

We evaluated Rev. Natalie based upon her Call Agreement. The full content of the review is listed below. We used a scaled response format. An evaluation of 1 = ineffective, and a score of 10 = highly effective. We also included a section of reflection for ourselves as members of the congregation. It is our hope that we are able to use this information to encourage our own participation in this call/covenant agreement with our pastor going forward.

1. Provided regular services on Sunday and the usual Christian holy days:

3 people gave a 10 score

Comments: Sermons are timely and illustrated with positive and appropriate stories to help us connect to scripture.

2. Led adult religious studies:

3 people gave a N/A as none of us had attended an adult study.

Comments: There are ample opportunities for people to participate as evidenced by items in the bulletin, Harbinger and announcements from the pulpit.

3. Facilitated confirmation classes

3 people gave an N/A.

Comments: There have been no confirmation classes scheduled due to Covid.

4. Preached the Gospel

3 people gave a score of 10

Comments: Rev. Wimberly provides a clear and thorough explanation of the gospel message. She further explains the message with relevant stories. Her sermons help us apply the gospel message to our everyday life.

5. Administered to ordinance of communion

3 people gave a score of 10

Comments: Rev. Wimberly makes it enthusiastically clear that communion is for everyone. During the pandemic she provided individually packaged communion sets both regular and gluten free.

6. Performed baptisms or dedications

3 people gave a score of 10

Comments: These haven't happened often but Rev. Wimberly wonderfully includes the entire family. Beautiful how she also incorporates siblings & grandparents of the child being baptized. Her ceremony is super meaningful .. yet keeps room for fun.

7. Performed weddings as needed

3 people gave an N/A

Comments:

8. Officiated at funerals and memorials

3 people gave a score of 10;

Comments: Rev. Wimberly was in tune to the family dynamics and provided necessary guidance and support in the planning of the funeral. She worked well with additional pastors. Her follow up care was deliberate, intentional and strong as was her care prior to death.

9. Watched over the HCC membership

3 people gave a score of 10

Comments: The pastor has made contact with parishioners by phone calls and visits on a continuing basis. Rev. Wimberly even did some drive by checks during Covid. She has brought communion to members of the congregation who were unable to attend church.

10. Promoted the spiritual interest and unity of the church.

3 people gave a score of 10

Comments: The pastor has promoted the spiritual interest and unity of the church even under the most difficult of times. Rev. Wimberly has maintained a calm demeanor even while under attack. Rev. Wimberly is available by email and phone at any time as her information is published in our bulletin and Harbinger. She has encouraged all of us to discuss concerns with her. Even during Covid, HCC did not miss one service. Rev. Wimberly provided worship services in the parking lot, on line and by conference call. Currently services are in person, on line and conference call to reach those who can't attend services in person.

Self-Reflecting as a Church

1. How has the church supported our pastor over the past 2 years?

3 people gave a score of 3

Comments: As a church we have not supported Rev. Wimberly in the role as pastor although there has been support from individuals.

2. In what ways can the church support the pastor going forward?

Commentary: We are committed to leaving the past behind and moving forward in a loving and respectful manner. The Church can support the pastor going forward by continuing to support the success of the Mediation process and the commitment to becoming a healthy congregation. This can be achieved through open and effective communication with the pastor. We must adopt the philosophy of being hard on issues and soft on people.

3. List 3 ways in which you, as a member of the PRC, have supported the pastoral ministry over the past 2 years.

We have supported the Mediation process and have worked with Rev. George Stefani.

We attended Mediation sessions and council meetings and tried to promote positive and respectful behaviors.

We have monthly meetings and have worked with Rev. Stefani to become more effective.



Fellowship

The Fellowship Committee held another “**Out To Eat**” on **May 22nd** at **40 Oaks** that was attended by 21 people. Due to the busy summer season, there will be **no** “**Out To Eats**” **scheduled in June, July or August**. They will resume in September.

We set up the coffee after Sunday Service and enjoy fellowship with other HCC members. If you would be willing to provide snacks for a coffee hour, please sign up on the sheet in Robinson Hall.

There will be a **Potluck Lunch on Sunday, May 12th** after the service. Please sign up to bring something yummy to share.

Janet Wilson is cycling off the Fellowship Committee and **Shelly Durkee and Pam Loeb would like to have one more person to join us on the committee.**

Feeling unqualified to read Scripture?

Let me help you get out of this phase. You will learn tips on how to feel comfortable & CONFIDENT. up there at our podium. If you can read & can produce decent volume, if you have eyes for reading .. We'll work on phone, in person & most likely in sanctuary after a service.

After working with me, Christine Burke, I would expect to see you up there. And you will agree... I'm sure of it. You'll see how easy it can be!

So please, IF YOU are ON THE FENCE, give me a call # (518) 798-2090.

Membership Report

The Membership Committee is finalizing the directories of the church members and friends, as well as the birthday lists.

Additionally, we are **reviewing the Membership intake form** to better serve the pastor and the committee.

Visitor Welcome cards are being developed to add to the pews, as the store-bought cards are running out. We will format and print them personally.

If you have any information you would like to share with us for our directories, please contact one of us.

Blessings,

Donna Gelder-Bigelow, Brandy Madon, Cheryl Straut

Worship Committee

Father's Day June 16: please send a picture of your family's father or father figure with their name to Bob Tucker at tuck1225@gmail.com by **Thursday, June 16** so he can create a slide show.

The Lenten Alms giving: We raised \$230 and we donated \$115 to Open Door and \$115 to WAIT House, per donor's requests. We had a very nice Mother's Day service with flowers given to all of the women and pictures of mothers displayed.

Please consider signing up to bring flowers to a service and to read scriptures during worship service. The sign-up sheets is located in Robinson Hall.

2021-2022 Worship Committee Members: *Melissa Ferrie-Healy (chair), Kathleen Gusek (Harbinger) and Phyllis Straut* (Rev. Natalie Wimberly & Doris O'Rourke- ex-officio members)

WE REMEMBER THEM: May 2021 – May 2022

Nancy Cathers

Theodore Gusek

Bambi Greychek-Spenser

Carmen LeFebvre

Dave Rogers



A PRAYER FOR MEMORIAL DAY SUNDAY

Written by Austin Fleming

In the quiet sanctuaries of our own hearts,
let each of us name and call on the One whose power over us is great and gentle, firm
and forgiving, holy and healing ...

You who created us, who sustain us, who call us to live in peace, hear our prayer this
day.

Hear our prayer for all who have died, whose hearts and hopes are known to you alone

Hear our prayer for those who put the welfare of others
ahead of their own and give us hearts as generous as theirs...

Hear our prayer for those who gave their lives
in the service of others, and accept the gift of their
sacrifice ...

Help us to shape and make a world where we will lay down the arms of war and turn our
swords into ploughshares for a harvest of justice and peace ...

Comfort those who grieve the loss of their loved ones
and let your healing be the hope in our hearts...

Hear our prayer this day and in your mercy answer us
in the name of all that is holy.

The peace of God be with you.

JUNE CALENDAR 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 AA@7:30	2 conversations @10:30	3 FRIDAY NIGHT MEALS	4 Junk in the Trunk : 9-3
5 DAY OF PENTECOST SUNDAY Communion@9:30	6	7	8 Bible Study@1 pm AA @7:30	9 Conversations@10:30	10 FRIDAY NIGHT MEALS	11
12 <i>Trinity Sunday</i> Worship @9:30	13	14 COUNCIL @7	15 LGGC Bible Study @1 pm AA@7:30	16 Women's Assoc. Mtg @12	17 FRIDAY NIGHT MEALS	18
19 FATHER'S DAY Worship @9:30	20	21	22 Bible Study@1 pm AA @7:30	23 Conversations@10:30	24 FRIDAY NIGHT MEALS	25
26 SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP @9:30	27	28	29 Bible Study @1 pm AA @7:30	30 Conversations@10:30		

JOIN US!

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

In-person at Harrisena Community Church sanctuary
By Conference CALL-IN at: 1) Dial+1 (313) 209-8800;
2) Enter Conference ID 796-8500 and press the pound key
OR
On Harrisena.org (click on the link for the live service)

June Birthdays: 5) Joanne Beck; 8) Nancy Wilder; 26) Deanna Payne;
 27) Roger Smith, Kyla Wilson; 28) Melissa Ferrie-Healy; 30) LaMont
 Robinson

Long-Term Prayer Requests–June 2022

Please remember the following members and friends who need our prayers of love and encouragement.

In Facilities

Cindy Farbaniec – Home of the Good Shepherd, Saratoga
Maria Foss –Sunnyview Rehabilitation, Schenectady
Linda Kennedy – Fort Hudson
Jane Lis – Eastern Star Campus, Oriskany
Manu Malkani – The Terraces
Linda McCollister – Home of the Good Shepherd, Saratoga
Art Norton – Slate Valley Center, Granville
Marilyn Somerville – Coburn Village, Rexford

At Home

Laura Avent – member of Harrisena
Celine & Bob Boulé – Daughter/Son-in-law of Brandy & Wally Madon
Patricia Burke – mother of Christine Burke
Sally Busted – friend of the Cartier family
Kathleen Dumont – Niece of Brandy Madon
Rev. Patti Girard – Friend of Harrisena
Edna Harris – Sister of Laura Avent
Randy Huber – Husband of Cindy Huber
Fabiola Jabaut – Mother of Steve Jabaut
Marjorie Johnson – mother of Gigi Barrett
Douglas Jones – Son-in-law of Art Norton
Teagan Klingenburg – Student of Melissa Ferrie-Healy
Carmen LeFebvre – Friend of Peg McArthur
Wendy Leyonmark – Sister of Cindy Huber
Ann Malkani – Neighbor of Joanne Beck
Christopher Nobile – Son of Jim & Eleanor Nobile
Gay Smith - Member
Sharon Sturdevant – Daughter of Marilyn Somerville
Doloras Van Detta – Friend of Marie Scarselletta
Joan Walker - Member

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*Our Heartfelt Condolences go out to the Family & Friends of **Nancy Cathers** who died this past month. Nancy was a member of Harrisena and friend to many of us.*



Members and Friends in the Military

*Please **update the status of anyone you know** on this list **as soon as information is available.***

Andrew Bigelow (*Army*), son of Karen Bigelow—serving stateside
Derek Dumas—stateside
Michael Gusek (*Patriot Missile Battery*),son of Kathleen & Tim Gusek – serving in Middle East
Joseph Hubbard (*Army*) – stateside
Corey Ledgerwood (*Army*) -serving in Afghanistan
Wes McQueen, nephew of Dodi/Rev. Robinson- serving stateside
Tony Mitchell (*USAF*) - serving in Afghanistan.
Tyler Monroe (*USAF*), son of Cheryl Pagano – serving at Sheppard AFB
Kaleb Parker(*Army*) – grandson of Rev. Wimberly – serving in Germany
Griffith Parry (*Army*), relative of Griffith Parry- serving in Poland
Todd Payne(*Army*), cousin of the Payne family - serving stateside
James Pearson (*USAF*)
Phillip Riccio (*Army*), son of PhyllisRiccio-serving stateside
Brian Schneider (*Army*) – serving in Afghanistan
Kelly Thompson (*US Health Svc*)
Daniel Urband (*USAF*), grandson of Alice Urband—serving stateside
Mark Wilson (*Army Spcl Forces/Reserves*), husband of Andrea—serving stateside
Braden Stormer – serving stateside

