

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Throughout this Advent Season, I invite you to meditate with me on the subject, “*No Ordinary Moments.*” The sermon series during Advent will explore the experience of God with us in our seemingly ordinary days. It is quite interesting that our lives so often seem like ordinary days and ordinary nights, ordinary encounters, ordinary work, ordinary relationships and yet, not many, if any of them are ever truly ordinary. They are an accumulation of sacramental moments. Think about it!

Sacramental moments are experiences in our daily lives of the loving and creative presence of God with us. They are points in time when we experience the grace of God in powerful, mysterious, life-changing ways. They are holy moments. The invasion of the Holy in space and time set apart, crackling with the presence of God with us.

Edmund Chia tells a story about Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, a Malaysian intellectual and chief monk of the country's Buddhist community. More important, Dr. Dhammananda was a personable character, forever smiling, disarming and always one for cracking jokes and cheering the group. Try picturing the image of the laughing Buddha, Dr. Dhammananda was very much like one. Mr. Chia recalls an encounter with this great man. He identified his experience with Dr. Dhammananda as itself a sacrament. Mr. Chia shares his story below:

Once when Dr. Dhammananda took ill and was in the hospital, a Christian pastor paid him a visit. As Dr. Dhammananda was in hospital attire, the pastor did not know who he was, except an elderly, bald-headed gentleman who looked quite sickly. The pastor introduced himself as one who had come to bring the Good News and invited the old man to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Dr. Dhammananda accepted the invitation, was prayed upon in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and received the blessings from the pastor.

Later as the pastor was leaving the hospital, he passed by Dr. Dhammananda's room. Imagine the shock when he saw a group of young Buddhist monks clad in saffron robes kneeling by the old man's bedside. They looked as if they were receiving some sort of blessing and teaching.

As the young monks were leaving the room the pastor asked one of them who the old man was. “He is our chief,” came the reply. Troubled, the pastor rushed into the room and asked for forgiveness: “I am sorry, Sir. I did not know you are the chief Buddhist monk. I didn't mean to insult your religion. Had I known who you are I would not have invited you to receive the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Surprised, Dr. Dhammananda said: “Young man, I don't know why you have come to apologize. You offered me something good graciously and I accepted it willingly. I

thank you for the wonderful gift and blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ. Go in peace.”
WOW! Such gentleness! Such kind regard! Such amazing grace!

Sacramental moments can occur at any moment, any place, and to anybody. It is transparent time. It is time which you can see through...to something deep inside. Watching someone or something get born, a high-school graduation, a simple smile, somebody coming to see you when you're sick, a kind word, a meal with people you love or looking into a stranger's eyes and finding out she/he is not a stranger. If we dare to open our eyes, truly open our eyes, we may just discover that life itself is sacramental.

It is my hope and prayer that we all discover the plethora of sacramental moments in our ordinary days.



In Christ's service with you.

Shalom,

Dr. N. C. Wimberly

Sacramental moments

- ⦿ After developing sacramental awareness, we may begin to see God and the sacred in our daily lives
 - “Finding God in all things” St. Ignatius of Loyola
- ⦿ These *sacramental moments* can come after long practice...
- ⦿ Or can be sudden and unexpected

“Look at the stars...” “Remember who you are, Simba...”

My Prayer for you this Holy Season

The Gift of faith, that you would know the love of God.

The Gift of friendship, that you would learn to love others deeply

The Gift of love, that you would love others completely

The Gift of peace, that you will enjoy life to its fullest, that you would have a heart full of peace

The Gift of family, that you will embrace family no matter the circumstance

The Gift of forgiveness, that you would discover the healing and restoring power of forgiveness

The Gift of God, that you would know that you are greatly loved and are never ever alone.

SHALOM

The Prayer is an excerpt from the movie “Christmas Snow” one of my favorite seasonal movies.

President's Message

Even though winter has started a little early this year, I welcome it with open arms. The air is fresh and clean and it is a great time to reminisce about all the times of your life that revolve around the holidays.

Being a grandfather brings a whole new level of enjoyment to visiting at Thanksgiving and Christmas. I very much enjoy the company of the adults, but I really love spending time with my granddaughters to catch up on what is happening in their world. I always expect to be surprised but lately it's more like being amazed by the sincerity of their personalities. How they think of themselves and their role in this world is far different from the way the youth of my time looked at life.

I'm also impressed with the way the younger generation thinks about their future. There is so much for them to look forward to and with no shortage of opportunities we can expect some wonderful things.

Opportunities are something we all can look forward to in 2020. There is an abundance of them. We just need to recognize them and take advantage of them. Like the calendar year 2020, Harrisena Community Church is also on the verge of a new beginning. Make the effort to really communicate with the young folks of our church. We can expect some marvelous things from them in the coming year.

Here's wishing all of you a very Merry Christmas and an exceptional New Year.

God Bless us all.



Upcoming *Women's Event at Harrisena*

Women's Association **Christmas Party** is Thursday, **December 12** at **Deanna Payne's** home. It is a pot luck event, so **bring a dish to share**. Come around **11:30**. More info to follow closer to the date.



Membership Committee

Last year the Membership Committee began **celebrating birthdays by providing a cake the first of each month**. Because our committee has dwindled in size, we are looking for help in continuing this practice. If you would like to donate, or bake, a cake, please sign up on the Coffee Hour sheet. We would really appreciate the help.

Visitor cards and generic offering envelopes have been placed in each pew. Hopefully this will encourage any visitors to our church to let us know who they are and if they require further information of a meeting with our pastor.

We are planning to have a *"bring a Friend"* month **this February**. Please start thinking of someone who might be interested in attending Harrisena and encourage them to do so. Our Sunday School students will also be *"challenged"* to bring a friend.

Based on the **results of our Membership Letter** sent our earlier this year, 71 people responded as **active members**; 11 listed themselves as **inactive, but wished to keep affiliation** with the church; 2 listed as **friends**; 2 did not put their names on the envelopes or sheet, but **one checked active** and the other **wished to keep their affiliation**; and 2 checked the box **to be removed from our membership list**. Folks are still advising me they will send in their letters, so I will update any further information as it becomes available.

Prayerfully submitted,

Bonnie Nadig

Outreach Committee

Submitted by Melissa Ferrie-Healy

"Ve Vant Your Blood!" (Time and goodies would be nice, as well!)

Our annual **Blood Drive will take place Friday January 17th at 12-6 pm** in Robinson Hall. Our primary concern is collecting as much blood as we possibly can during this brief time. The more, the merrier, when it comes to donors! If you are willing and able, we encourage you to sign up for a convenient time slot as soon as possible. If you know of someone else who might be interested in donating blood, please share this date with them. One additional challenge of a January blood drive: all donors must be healthy, and health is never a given during the cold and flu season!

Additionally, we are **recruiting volunteers who would be willing to greet and assist our donors** and Red Cross volunteers. There may be regulations concerning the treats we're able to provide for blood donors. However, as one of our parishioners suggested, it would be a lovely gesture for us to provide simple refreshments for the Red Cross volunteers who will be working on site all day. No restrictions there! Any and all help with these details would be greatly appreciated.

A Personal List of Prayer Concerns

At Harrisena, we are **blessed to have lists of church prayer concerns printed in our weekly bulletin and monthly Harbinger**. These lists assist Outreach Committee in keeping abreast of the need to pray with a purpose and send cards of compassion and good cheer. Harrisena also has a Prayer Chain that is dedicated to praying regularly for those in need. *(Your timely updates are greatly appreciated!)*

As the Christian year transitions from old to new, **we would like to challenge you to create a personal list of prayer concerns for yourself, your family, your friends, your community, your world – the possibilities are endless!** It could be typed, or hand-written, in a book, or on a loose sheet of paper, depending on your preference. Try to be as specific as possible, while bearing in mind that one of the most significant outcomes of prayer is the change we experience in our OWN hearts. Then, pray daily for the concerns on your list. Your prayers could simply be a matter of reading through your list each day. Or, perhaps you'd like to have a full-on discussion with God. Perhaps you'd like to journal about these concerns each day. Or, share your concerns and pray as group, with friends or family. There are as many options as there are individuals! Update your list as needed, at least once per month, and see how the year unfolds.

We welcome and encourage your feedback!

2019-20 Outreach Committee Members: **Melissa Ferrie-Healy, Scott Fraser** (on leave) & **Peggy McArthur**. Many hands make light work - *we could use another few members!* Please let us know if you'd be interested in joining us or assisting in any way.



Music "Committee"

Submitted by Melissa Ferrie-Healy

A Missed Opportunity

I believe music is one of God's greatest gifts to His creation. It is a POWERFUL force that enables us to express and connect. **At Harrisena, even without the presence of a choir, music is purposefully woven throughout the fabric of our church services.** In addition to multiple hymns and responses, we have a **Prelude, Postlude, Offertory, Gloria Patri, Doxology** and **music for Communion.**

Music is complex, and can have a variety of functions, depending on the setting and situation. For example, you might hear music at any of the following - 1) A concert 2) A religious service 3) A restaurant or dinner party.

And what would you say is the primary function of music in each setting - A) entertainment B) assisting in worship C) background for conversation

In your opinion, **where does the Prelude fall on that spectrum?** It seems to me that more and more people at Harrisena are choosing "*background for conversation,*" **when the primary intent is worship.** I believe those folks are missing out on a valuable opportunity. (And preventing their neighbors from taking advantage of this opportunity, as well!)

I would kindly suggest that if you're interested in having a conversation with your neighbor, please **enjoy it during the ample time either before or after our formal worship service begins.** If you're still inclined to talk during the Prelude, why not use this time as an opportunity to start a conversation with God? Calm your Self. Open your heart, mind and spirit to His holy presence. "*Be still and know that I am God.*" Welcome Him to the sanctuary of your soul. Then, allow the music to do its work and see what happens. (Please!)



LAST CHANCE to Order Your Poinsettias for Christmas!

I would like to ORDER ___ Poinsettia(s) at \$12 each. Please list as follows:

IN MEMORY of _____
_____ OR

IN HONOR of _____

Name _____

Phone # _____

Please make all checks payable to *HARRISENA FLOWER FUND*,
c/o Harrisena Community Church, 1616 Ridge Road, Queensbury, NY 12804

ALL ORDERS must be into the office by **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH!!**



December 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 <i>1st Sunday of Advent/ Communion @9:30</i>	2 Women's Communion /Meal @6:30	3	4 Conversations @7; AA @7:30	5 Conversations @9:30	6	7
8 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion Service 9:30 am Hanging of the Greens Worship	9	10 COUNCIL @7	11 Conversations @7; AA @ 7:30	12 Conversations@9:30; Women's Christmas Party @12- off site	13	14
15 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion Service Regular Worship @9:30	16	17	18 Conversations @7; AA @7:30	19 Conversations @9:30	20	21
22 8:30 a.m. Holy Communion Service Regular Worship @9:30	23	24 Family Service@6 PM Candlelight Service@9:30PM	25 <i>Christmas Day</i> AA @7:30	26 Conversations@9:30	27	28
29 Worship @ 9:30	30	31 New Year's Eve				

December Birthdays:

2- Allan Ferrie; 4- Marian Philo; 5- Patricia Girard; 6- Judy Barcy; 11- Brian Walker; 14- Tatum Chase; 15- Doug Irving; 18- Erik Robinson; 19- Peter Cartier, Robin Dutcher; 20- Brynne Chase, Susan Urrico; 22- Wally Madon; 24- Cindy Farbaniec, Dodi Robinson; 25- Barry Jones; 30- B. Douglas Beck, Stephanie Carte, Melissa Ferris, Natalia Helffrich.



Long-Term Prayer Requests – December 2019

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

In Facilities

Nancy Cathers – Assisted Living, MD
Jane Christensen – Champlain Valley Senior Living, Willsboro, NY
Grace Clough – Seacoast Nursing Center, MA
Scott Fraser – Washington Center, Argyle
Theodore Gusek – Home of the Good Shepherd, Saratoga
Walter Houghton – Hospital in Florida
Jane Lis – Eastern Star Campus, Oriskany
Brett Segedi – Sunnyview Rehab. Center, Schenectady
Geoffrey Stewart – Westchester Trauma Center

At Home

Maria Berg – Mother of Nicole Robinson
Celine & Bob Boulé – Daughter/Son-in-law of Brandy & Wally Madon
Lee Ann Clark – Daughter of Murial Clark
Jill Coleman – Friend of Suzanne Cartier
Kathleen Dumont – Niece of Brandy Madon
Jane Henshaw – Friend of Joanne Beck
Nancy Hoover – Member of Harrisena
Randy Huber – Husband of Cindy Huber
Fabiola Jabaut – Mother of Steve Jabaut
Douglas Jones – Son-in-law of Art Norton
Thomas Kerschner – Relative of Allan Ferrie
Teagan Klingenburg – Student of Melissa Ferrie-Healy
Carmen LeFebvre – Friend of Peg McArthur
Wendy Leyonmark – Sister of Cindy Huber
McCane Family – Relatives of Bob & Phyllis Straut
Christopher Nobile – Son of Jim & Eleanor Nobile
Richard Smith – Member, husband of Donna D. Smith
Sharon Sturdevant – Daughter of Marilyn Somerville
Melanie Swinton – Friend of Sue Ogden

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***Our Heartfelt Condolences** go out to the Family & Friends of **Clifford Satterlee** who died this past month. Cliff was a friend of Jim & Shirley Harney.*



Members and Friends in the Military

Andrew Bigelow (Army), son of Karen Bigelow—serving stateside

Derek Dumas—stateside

Michael Gusek (Army), son of Kathleen & Tim Gusek – serving stateside

Gary Hogan (USAF)

Walter Howard (USMC) – serving on the Japan seas

Joseph Hubbard (Army) – stateside

Wes McQueen, nephew of Dodi/Rev. Robinson- serving stateside

Tony Mitchell (USAF) - serving in Afghanistan.

Tyler Monroe (USAF), son of Cheryl Pagano – serving at Lackland AFB

James Pearson (USAF)

Phillip Riccio (Army), son of Phyllis Riccio -serving in Germany

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

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

