

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

*“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.”* Romans 5:1-2 NLT

**Christmas is a season of affirmation.** When we affirm our faith in Jesus the Christ, we are saying **yes** to the transforming love of God. **We affirm God's unfailing love** for each one of us and for the world. **We declare the fulfillment of God's promises:** the promised coming of the Messiah, the coming of Jesus being born in Bethlehem, the promised return of the risen Christ in final victory, and the continual coming of Christ into the lives and hearts of believers. **We affirm the already and the not yet!** WOW!

Dr. Howard Thurman gives us some powerful insights about the Christmas season. He invites us to focus our eyes, our hearts, and our minds on God. When we **focus on God**, we discover that the **true meaning of Christmas** is expressed in the **sharing of one's graces** in a world in which it is so easy to become callous, insensitive, and hard. Once we become **grace-filled**, our intentions, our thoughts, our beliefs, our words, and our deeds become the real tangible **affirmation of God's love** in this world. **Every day is Christmas** and every night is freighted with anticipation of the dawning of fresh, holy adventure. **Christmas is a season of affirmation!**

*I affirm my faith in the little graces of life:  
The urgency of growth, the strength of laughter,  
the vitality of friendship.*

*I affirm my confidence in the dignity of humanity:  
Our fortitude in despair, our strength in weakness,  
our love in hatred.*

*I affirm my joy in the experience of living:  
The fragrance of nostalgia, the scattered moments of delight,  
the exhilaration of danger.*

*I affirm my need of my fellows:  
The offerings of faiths, the gifts of variety,  
the quality of difference.*

*I affirm my hunger for God:  
The desire for fulfillment, the ache for understanding,  
the sense of peace.*

*Christmas is my season of affirmation.*

Adapted from **“The Mood of Christmas”** written by Dr. Howard Thurman

May you affirm the love of God this Christmas Season. May you come to know the God of love and experience the love of God.

In Christ's service with you.

Shalom,  
Dr. Natalie C. Wimberly

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Christmas time at Harrisena has always been a very special time for me. **The Women's Communion Meal** was always a way to start the Christmas season with family and friends. I always looked forward to the reading of the story of Christ's birth; **sharing communion** with the other women of the church community and special friends was a way peaceful way to start the busy Christmas season.

**Hanging of the Greens Sunday** is a way to get our church ready for the Christmas Season. The church comes alive as the children bring in the wreaths and poinsettias, and we listen to the readings and their meanings. Decorating the Christmas Tree with the Chrismons is a fun time for all. Finally, the **sharing of the delicious Brunch** prepared by our kitchen crew after the worship service!

Finally, the Christmas Eve Service. During this time I can again be reminded of the true reason of Christmas. Hearing the story of Christ's birth and singing the Christmas Carols in our beautiful church is a special time.

As we each light a candle and sing Silent Night, I realize the light that our Heavenly Father brought into this world with the birth of His Son, Jesus Christ.

I hope all of you that are reading this message will come to Harrisena Church and share the true meaning of the Christmas season with our Harrisena Family!

Wishing you and your families, a Blessed and Happy Christmas Season.

*Susan Ogden*

## MISSION COMMITTEE REPORT

**The Mission Committee wants to thank all of you who have brought in food items for Family Services.** We plan to continue collecting food thru the month of December and into January. We also sent a donation to them for the support of the families in need during the Christmas Season. We also continue to donate to Open Door and have sent an additional \$100.00 to support their ode Blue Program.

Thank you for your monthly support! We will continue to find ways to help people where we can.

Mission's Committee: *Mary Alice Clickner, Patty Zacharias, Susan Ogden*

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## **WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

### **Submitted by Melissa Ferrie-Healy**

#### ***Prepare ye the way of the Lord!***

The season of Advent has arrived! As John the Baptist declared in the musical *Godspell*, the time has come to “*Prepare ye the way of the Lord!*” Despite the dwindling hours of daylight we face with the approaching Winter Solstice, we can rejoice in our faith that the Light of Christ will return to shine forth in our dark world. Let us make sure we save a room at our “inn” for Mary, Joseph, and any weary travelers we meet throughout this season of Advent. Let us make sure we prepare a “manger” in our hearts for the little Lord Jesus to lay down his sweet head on Christmas Eve. And let us make it a priority to enjoy every precious moment of this blessed time of year and SHARE THE JOY of the LORD with all we meet!

#### ***Anticipated Advent Joy:***

- 12/2            Women’s Association Christmas Brunch (10:00 a.m.)**
- 12/3            HOPE: Communion (9:30 a.m.)**
- 12/10          PEACE: Hanging of the Greens /Brunch (9:30/11:00 a.m.)**
- 12/17          JOY: Rhapsodies in Blue @ HCC (9:30 a.m.)**
- 12/24          LOVE: Christmas Eve Sunday (9:30 a.m.)**
- 12/24          Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service (11:00 a.m.)**

#### ***Help Wanted:***

- **Advent Readers:** Would you and your family (or a friend) like to share a simple reading and light the Advent candles at one of our Advent Sunday worship services – or on Christmas Eve? *Look for the sign-up sheet AND READINGS in the Education Building, outside Robinson Hall.*
- **Lay Leaders:** Have you sensed God calling you to Lay Ministry? If you would like to explore this urging and learn more, check out the LAY STUDY COURSES offered at <https://www.abc-nys.org/lay-study-program.html> or speak with Rev. Natalie.

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***As always, we welcome your participation and encourage your prayers!***

***Worship Committee Members: Christine Burke, Melissa Ferrie-Healy & Diane Henderson.***



## **THE BAPTISM OF JAMIE JO SMITH**

**On Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, Jamie Jo Smith, was baptized during our 9:30 AM Worship Service!**

**Jamie Jo is the daughter of Dakota Smith and Julia Harris and the granddaughter of Virgil and Shelia Harris.**

**CONGRATULATIONS JAMIE JO!**

**Welcome to the Family of God!**

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## FINANCE REPORT

**Happy Holidays from the Financial Officers.** We want to thank you for the show of support during the budget vote. We promise to continue to work diligently to find ways to improve our finances and lower our expenses. At the November Council meeting, there was a vote to form a strategic planning committee to work for the next year on a 12-month, 2- year, and 5-year strategic plan for HCC. After our strategic planning we will need a steering committee to successfully guide us forward. As part of this work, this committee will dig deep into every way possible to earn, save and plan for our Church's future. **If you would like to join the strategic planning committee, please contact Bonnie Nadig, Janet Wilson, Sue Ogden or Rev. Wimberly.** We look forward to working with you.

Please also remember to fill out your pledge forms and return them to church so we have some idea of what our 2024 income will be.

*We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas!*

## WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Submitted by Doris O'Rourke

We are anticipating the **Women's Communion Brunch on December 2, 2023 at 10:00 A.M.** All women of Harrisena are invited. Bringing friends is encouraged. Bring a dish to share and your tableware please and a five dollar grab bag gift for our game.

We will be working on the **History Project** beginning in January.

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## TIME TO ORDER YOUR POINSETTIA FOR CHRISTMAS!!

I would like to ORDER \_\_\_ Poinsettia(s) at \$15 each. Please list as follows:

*IN MEMORY* of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ OR

*IN HONOR* of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ /Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

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 TUESDAY, December 19<sup>th</sup>!!**



## December 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 5:30 am Prayer: Mission Meal prep.	2 5:30 am Prayer 10 – Women’s Communion Brunch
3 5:30 am Prayer Worship @9:30 <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent</b>	4 5:30 am Prayer	5 5:30 am Prayer; 1- Conversatio n	6 5:30 am Prayer AA @7:30	7 5:30 am Prayer	8 5:30 am Prayer: Mission Meal Prep.	9 5:30 am Prayer
10 5:30 am Prayer <i>Hanging of the Greens</i> Worship @ 9:30	11 5:30 am Prayer	12 5:30 am Prayer; 1- Conversatio n	13 5:30 am Prayer <b>Bible Study on ZOOM @10 am</b> AA @7:30	14 5:30 am Prayer	15 5:30 am Prayer Mission Night Meal Prep.	16 5:30 am Prayer
17 5:30 am Prayer Worship Service & <b>Rhapsodies in Blue</b> @HCC @9:30	18 5:30 am Prayer	19 5:30 am Prayer; 1- Conversatio n	20 5:30 am Prayer; <b>Bible Study on ZOOM @10 am</b>	21 5:30 am Prayer	22 5:30 am Prayer Mission Meal prep.	23 5:30 am Prayer
24 5:30 am Prayer Worship @ 9:30 & 7 pm	25 5:30 am Prayer	26 5:30 am Prayer; 1- Conversatio n	27 5:30 am Prayer; <b>Bible Study on ZOOM@10 am</b>	28 5:30 am Prayer	29 5:30 am Prayer Mission Meal prep	30 5:30 am Prayer
31 5:30 am Prayer Worship @ 9:30						

**JOIN US FOR SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP @ 9:30 a.m.** in the Harrisena Community Church sanctuary. You can also join our worship service via livestream at [Harrisena.org](http://Harrisena.org). Click on the **FACEBOOK** link at the top right-hand side of the website to the livestream of the service.

**December Birthdays:** 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, Robert Tucker, Jr.; 30) Stephanie Carte, Melissa Ferris, Natalia Helffrich.

**CELEBRATION FRIDAYS!!** Send your special events and celebrations to the church office for our **CELEBRATION FRIDAY** email publication. This is our way of sharing the blessings of God with each other as we live filled with gratitude for all that God is doing in our lives.

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**Long-Term Prayer Requests – December**

*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**  
**Francis Howard – Health & Rehabilitation Center**  
**Manu Malkani – Fort Hudson Health Center**  
**Art Norton – Slate Valley Center**  
**Marilyn Somerville – Coburn Village**

**At Home**

**Laura Avent – member of Harrisena**  
**Kathleen Dumont – Niece of Brandy Madon**  
**Rev. Patti Girard – Friend of Harrisena**  
**Randy Huber – Husband of Cindy Huber**  
**Fabiola Jabaut – Mother of Steve Jabaut**  
**Douglas Jones – Son-in-law of Art Norton**  
**Wendy Leyonmark – Sister of Cindy Huber**  
**Ann Malkani – Neighbor of Joanne Beck**  
**Robert Marshall – Friend of the Straut family**  
**Christopher Nobile – Son of Jim & Eleanor Nobile**  
**Gay Smith - Member**  
**Sharon Sturdevant – Daughter of Marilyn Somerville**  
**Fran Tucker – Mother of Robert Tucker**  
**Doloras Van Detta – Friend of Marie Scarselletta**

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*Our heartfelt condolences go out to Sue Ogden, the Ogden Family, and the friends and family of **Charles (Chuck) Ogden**. Chuck transitioned this past week at Glens Falls Hospital. Chuck was well known in this community and a long-time member of HCC. We will miss you Chuck! We are so grateful for the time we had with you.*

*Our love and prayers are with you, Sue and the Ogden Family!*





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### **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 Joseph Hubbard (Army) – stateside**

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

**Tony Mitchell (USAF) - serving in Afghanistan.**

**Kaleb Parker (Army), grandson of Rev. Dr. Wimberly – serving in Germany**

**Griffith Parry (West Point Military Academy), 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 Phyllis Riccio -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**

