

## PASTOR'S ARTICLE (CONTINUED)

and service. Keep coming to witness and experience the and experience the work of God in your local church.

4. CLEAR THE PATH. Remove any outward or practical obstacles to doing #1-3. This will mean making changes. We have all had to make practical changes in our priorities, hobbies, and schedules to go after God and seek to learn and do His will. What will this look like for you? Looking back, by God's grace, I gave up my Sunday morning shift at work so that I could come to church and hear God's Word. I stopped hanging out with certain friends. I stopped engaging in certain activities. If we want change, we have to make changes. Those things did not save me, make me a better person, or make me more spiritual! NO! They were simply the removal of practical obstacles to seeking God. These were early steps of embracing God's providence in my life. What steps will you take? What obstacles can you remove? What changes do you already know that you need to make as you seek God from a sincere heart?

5. ASK. Ask your questions. If you are learning the Bible and seeking God, you will definitely have questions. Ask one of our pastors in person or via email. We are here to help you. Our calling is to help people come to God, live for God, and grow in their relationship with God. Everyone who seeks God has questions; please do not be afraid or intimidated to come and ask. God has put us here to serve you in spiritual matters.

6. PRAYER. Begin crying out to God in prayer for help, wisdom, and guidance. When we first start praying, we do not know how to do it or what to ask for. When I first began praying, I simply called out to God for HELP. I pleaded with God to help me even though I did not fully grasp what He was doing or what I needed from Him. Jesus knows what we need better than we do. He sees our hearts, knows our sorrows, sympathizes with our weaknesses, and He sincerely desires to help us. As you LISTEN more and more to God through the Bible, be sure to also TALK more and more to God through the avenue of prayer.

7. URGENCY. Consider the importance and urgency of things. We are dealing with eternal, not temporal things; spiritual, not physical things; heavenly, not earthly things; and finally, personal things of the heart, not superficial things of outward religion. TODAY is the day of salvation; NOW is the time to seek God. "Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain.<sup>2</sup> For he says, 'In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:1-2).

## ONLINE GIVING

If you would prefer to give online, please scan the QR code for a secure online giving option.



## NEED HELP?

Need help with a practical need? Your deacon is here to help make the resources of the church available to you. Email our secretary Jenn if you do not know who your deacon is ([secretary@NorthHarford.org](mailto:secretary@NorthHarford.org))

Danny Akers [daneakers@gmail.com](mailto:daneakers@gmail.com)

Lew Carter [joppatrans1@gmail.com](mailto:joppatrans1@gmail.com)

Mark Evans [evansmark@yahoo.com](mailto:evansmark@yahoo.com)

Dave Good (Chairman) [davidpgood@aol.com](mailto:davidpgood@aol.com)

Wayne Hudson [quallybear.usmc@gmail.com](mailto:quallybear.usmc@gmail.com)

John McDonald [jmcdonald47@yahoo.com](mailto:jmcdonald47@yahoo.com)

Need a pastoral visit for prayer, comfort, or encouragement? Do you need Christian counselling or guidance? Do you have a theological question? Your pastors are here to help. Don't be afraid to text, call, or email us. We are here for you. Either contact us directly or schedule something through Jenn.

Matt Fortunato (Senior Pastor)  
[pastormatt@NorthHarford.org](mailto:pastormatt@NorthHarford.org)

Anthony Wilson (Associate Pastor)  
[pastoranthony@NorthHarford.org](mailto:pastoranthony@NorthHarford.org)

Jeremiah Brown (Pastoral Intern)  
[Jeremiah@NorthHarford.org](mailto:Jeremiah@NorthHarford.org)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

North Harford Baptist Church  
4008 Old Federal Hill Road  
Jarrettsville, MD 21084  
(410) 836-6994  
[www.NorthHarford.org](http://www.NorthHarford.org) | [info@NorthHarford.org](mailto:info@NorthHarford.org)

Scan the QR code or email Jenn at [info@NorthHarford.org](mailto:info@NorthHarford.org) to sign up for weekly Bible Devotions from Pastor Matt.



### Nursery Workers – December 28<sup>th</sup>

I AM (Crib)-Lynette Winzenried and you? (we always have 2 workers)

II AM (Toddlers) – Maria Minichiello and Julia Minichiello

PM – Combined I/II – Dave Good and Linda Perrine

**Prayer Intercessor** – December 28<sup>th</sup> – Gerry Cicone

**Greeters** – December 28<sup>th</sup> – Jennifer Evans and Andrew Evans

**Ushers** – December 28<sup>th</sup> – Malik Baker-Gore, Bob Burman, Frank Cicone\*, Jim Feldbush, Gary McAllister, and Tom Neunaber\*

**Today's Ushers** - Kyle Campanella, Bob Doss, Jim Dougherty, Andrew Evans\*, Eric Heinze, and Vince Minichiello\*

\* ushers who greet in the lobby

## NORTH HARFORD BAPTIST CHURCH

*To live for Jesus and not ourselves.*

December 21, 2025



## CHRISTMAS EVE

**Cookies and Caroling**

at 6:30 PM



## READING THE BIBLE IN 2025

This week's readings are:

- Hebrews 1-3
- Hebrews 4-6
- Hebrews 7-9
- Hebrews 10-13
- 1 John

Proverbs 30:29-33

Proverbs 31:1-9

Proverbs 31:10-31

Psalm 22-23

Psalm 2, 110

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Sunday	9:30 AM	Sunday School
	10:45 AM	Worship Service* (Church/Facebook)
	5:00 PM	Deacons Meeting (Rm. 24)
	6:30 PM	Evening Worship* (Church/Facebook)
Wednesday	6:30 PM	Christmas Eve Cookies and Caroling
Thursday		Church Office Closed - <b>Merry Christmas!</b>
Friday		No Youth Group

\* Nursery Provided (birth-3 years old), Downstairs in Rooms 8 and 9

## MORNING WORSHIP

Call to Worship and Announcements

*Joy to the World*

Reading: Galatians 5:22-23, Fruit of the Spirit

*O Come, All Ye Faithful*

*Angels We Have Heard on High*

Offering

**SERMON:** Finding Joy in 2026

Luke 2:8-12, (Pew Bible Page 1337)

*Jesus, Name Above All Names* | Baptism

Closing Prayer | Receiving Line

## EVENING WORSHIP

Welcome

Reading/Prayer: Matthew 22:36-40, Love Your Neighbor

*Rock of Ages*

Reading & Prayer: John 13:35, Have Love

*In Christ Alone*

**SERMON:** Christian Friendship

Philemon (Pew Bible Page 1635)

Lord's Supper\* | Doxology | Closing Prayer

\*Baptized believers may participate in the Lord's Supper

## VISITING WITH US?

We are glad to have you with us this morning, and we hope God speaks to your heart through the great and wonderful truths of the Bible. Please visit the ***Guest Resources*** desk in the lobby, where you will find a variety of free gifts for you, including a study Bible for adults and a study Bible for teens. Email us at [info@NorthHarford.org](mailto:info@NorthHarford.org) if you have any questions or special prayer requests.

## UPCOMING PRAYER SERVICES

### PRAYER MEETING

Our next Prayer Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, from 6:30 to 7:15 PM, in the Fellowship Hall for a time of prayer. The pastor will lead a time in the Word to stir our hearts to prayer. Then, each table will have a prayer time focused on God's glory in the world, our outreach and evangelism efforts, salvation for the lost, and the health of the church. No one will be forced to pray. Nursery will be provided.

### FIRST FRIDAYS PRAYER VIGIL FOR AMERICA

Join us in the Youth Café from 6-6:45 PM every FIRST FRIDAY of the month for a time of focused prayer for America. Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, is the next one.

## WHAT TO KNOW THIS WEEK

### DEACONS MEETING

The deacons will meet today at 5 PM in Room 24.

### CHRISTMAS EVE COOKIES AND CAROLING

We will have our annual Christmas Eve Cookies and Caroling at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Come for a relaxed celebration with singing and cookies! *If you'd like to bring cookies for this event, please sign up in the lobby.* Invite others!

### MERRY CHRISTMAS

The church office is closed on Thursday for Christmas.

### NO YOUTH GROUP

There is no Youth Group this Friday. Enjoy the extra time with your family.

## ON THE HORIZON

### CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The church council meeting that was cancelled last Sunday due to snow is rescheduled for January 11<sup>th</sup> at 5 PM in Room 1.

## CHURCH NEWS

### FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

Follow our Facebook page @HarfordNorth where Pastor Matt is now sharing DAILY encouragement and Bible verses. Like, share, and comment on these posts to help grow our Facebook presence in the community.

### VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

We have 4 opportunities for serving.

1. We need one more greeter to help welcome guests. Let the church office know if you are interested.
2. We need more volunteers to provide meals for our Home Care Ministry. Contact Verla Evans.
3. We have 3 openings to work in the nursery. See Lynette Winzenried to volunteer.
4. We need 1 or 2 more ladies to serve on the Kitchen Committee. See Sallye Hoover for details.

## PASTOR'S ARTICLE

### HOW TO SEEK GOD NOW

Has God been working in your life? Has He been drawing you to church and to the Bible? Has He been showing you the futility of materialism and the reality of eternity? Has God been opening your heart to matters of the soul and true spirituality? There is no time like the present to act on what God is doing by responding in faith. God draws us and calls us, but we must respond with faith in the heart. In other words, we must seek God. In this article, I want to

## PASTOR'S ARTICLE (CONTINUED)

outline seven specific aspects of seeking God.

1. TRUST. Depend on God, not yourself. God promises, "You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). But we cannot find God based on our own strength, wisdom, or inborn spirituality. God also teaches that nobody seeks God on their own. "As it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> no one understands; no one seeks for God'" (Romans 3:10-11). Left to our own devices, we would never seek God. The good news, however, is that God will intervene in our lives and cause us to seek Him. God reaches out. God shows up. God draws us to Himself. So, as you embark on seeking God, you must seek Him by trusting in His providence and guidance, not trusting in your religion, feelings, intelligence, or good deeds.

2. RECEIVE. Bible, Bible, Bible, Bible! Begin to saturate yourself with the Bible, God's holy and inspired Word. (A.) Keep coming to church to HEAR the Bible preached, which is the primary way God uses the Bible to give grace to our hearts. (B.) Go home and carefully READ the Bible and think about it. Practically, the way we trust God when seeking Him is to seek Him in His Word to us, the Bible. The Bible is the living and abiding Word of God to us, and through its teachings and power, God will do His work in your life and bring you into a relationship with Him. (C.) Learn as much as you can about the Bible's central message, THE GOSPEL of Jesus Christ. Only the biblical gospel can save our souls and reconcile us to God forever. "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). We are sinners who deserve judgment, but Jesus died for our sins to deliver us and gift us the gift of eternal life. Whatever you do: LEARN THE TRUE GOSPEL!

3. EXPERIENCE. Continue to be around the Christian fellowship for encouragement in the right direction. God puts true churches in different communities to be a lighthouse and refuge for the people. We are a lighthouse of God's truth. We are living examples of helpless sinners saved by grace. We are walking and talking evidence of God's love and power. We are not at church because we are good, and we are not trying to do good to earn our way to heaven. Rather, we are at church because we are sinners in need of divine mercy, and we have already acquired access to heaven as God's gift of salvation in Jesus. He died for our sins and rose to eternal life. We put our faith in Him for forgiveness and salvation, and are depending on God to help us live for Him and grow in our relationship with Him. This is what you need to be around when seeking God. Otherwise, you might inadvertently adopt a warped idea of God, church, salvation, or Christian living. True churches are biblical communities of faith for love, learning, worship,

(continues to the next page)



#### **GIFTS FOR WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS**

For Christmas, the Girls in Action (GA) class has packed treat bags for the widows and widowers. They are in a basket in the lobby. Merry Christmas from the GA girls.

#### **THANK YOU**

Thank you to everyone who donated items and cookies to the Baltimore Rescue Mission and to those who delivered two truckloads. We exceeded our goal of 250 dozen cookies by about 50 dozen and were able to put 14 cookies in each bag and give a nice tray of cookies for the women and children to enjoy at the Karis Home. Pray that the Lord would use these donated items to draw those who receive them to Christ.

#### **CHRISTMAS CARDS**

We have a tradition at NHBC of exchanging Christmas cards with one another to raise money for missions. The youth organize this effort each year by sorting and hand-delivering the Christmas cards before and after church. You can also pick up your cards in the Fellowship Hall. Please place your cards on the designated table in the Fellowship Hall from now through December 21<sup>st</sup>. Label them with the names of those in the church you wish to send a card to. Cost: 10¢ each, 3 for 25¢, 12 for \$1, and 60 for \$5. A Word document and a PDF of labels are available on our website's password-protected members' page, which you can print and use for your Christmas cards. The labels include members and visitors and are designed for 2 5/8" x 1" address labels (Avery 5160). Please let the church office know of any errors. We make every effort to make it as complete and convenient as possible. Any errors are unintentional.

#### **LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING**

Lottie Moon was a missionary to China from 1873 until her death in 1912. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering was established in her memory to raise money to support missionaries overseas through the Southern Baptist's International Mission Board. 100% of your gifts given to this offering go to the missionaries. You may put your Lottie Moon Christmas Offering in the designated envelope in the lobby and place it in the offering plate.

#### **SISTER TO SISTER CANCELLED FOR DECEMBER**

Sister to Sister will not meet this month.

#### **NEW YEAR'S EVE**

We will not have Wednesday night ministries on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### **YOUTH CHRISTMAS COSTUME PARTY**

The youth, those in grades 7th-12th, are invited to the Youth Christmas Costume Party on Friday, January 2nd, from 7-9:30 PM. Youth can dress up in a costume if they wish. There will be games, food, and fun! See Jeremiah Brown if you have any questions.

## 2025 Christmas Giving Form

Instead of flowers, please consider giving to one of these ministries in memory or honor of someone.

**Please place this completed form and payment in the designated box in the lobby or in the church office by December 21<sup>st</sup>.**

**Checks made payable to North Harford Baptist Church.**

If you have any questions, please contact Jeanne Akers.

Please do not put this in the offering plate.

Organization	Quantity	Cost	Other Amount	Total
Mike Christ		\$10		\$
Saron Mack		\$10		\$
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$</b>

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of -or-  In honor of

*Recipient's name*

Given by: (How you want it written in the bulletin)

PURCHASER'S Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(If different than the name to be shown in the



Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of -or-  In honor of

*Recipient's name*

Given by: (How you want it written in the bulletin)

PURCHASER'S Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(If different than the name to be shown in the

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of -or-  In honor of

*Recipient's name*

Given by: (How you want it written in the bulletin)

PURCHASER'S Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(If different than the name to be shown in the

