



January 1  
Sunday School 9:45AM  
Morning Worship 11:00AM

January 4  
NO CHURCH ACTIVITIES

January 8  
Sunday School 9:45AM  
Morning Worship 11:00AM

January 11  
AWANA Resume 6:15PM  
Youth 6:45PM  
OASIS 6:45PM

January 15  
Sunday School 9:45AM  
Morning Worship 11:00AM

January 18  
AWANA 6:15PM  
Youth 6:45PM  
OASIS 6:45PM

January 22  
Sunday School 9:45AM  
Morning Worship 11:00AM

January 25  
AWANA 6:15PM  
Youth 6:45PM  
OASIS 6:45PM

January 29  
Sunday School 9:45AM  
Morning Worship 11:00AM



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Harlem, GA  
Permit No. 8

Rev. Carson Britt  
Pastor  
Evan Powell  
Minister of Youth and Children  
Rebekah Dickerson  
Minister of Music and Media  
Ashley Driggers  
Administrative Assistant

Happy Anniversary

01-23 Chris & Tiffany Gurley  
01-26 Terry & Carol Carter

\* Please call the Church Office if your anniversary is not listed.

Happy Birthday

01-04 Kathy Maharrey	01-26 Reese Stolte
01-04 Mary Bradford	01-27 Kyle Knight
01-04 Gary Wilkes	01-28 Preston Ellis
01-08 Casey Allen	
01-10 Benjie Moore	
01-14 Tiffany Gurley	
01-16 Amber Lewis	
01-17 Terry Cooper	
01-18 Kelly Hawkinberry	
01-18 Taylor Allen	
01-19 Claudia Rodriguez	
01-20 Gwen Hardy	
01-25 Kathy Holley	
01-26 Parks Ellis	

\* Please call the Church Office if your birthday is not listed.

FINANCIALS  
as of December 25, 2022

Actual Expenses YTD \$400,035  
Actual Received YTD \$388,721

Deacon of the Month

Steve Camp  
706-836-3943

\*For more information please see church staff.

# CONNECTIONS

January 2023

## THE PASTOR'S DESK

Over the past several weeks I've been thinking more about the things, moments, and people that I cherish. Since becoming a father I've become much more aware of the need to cherish the time I have with my children. I recently heard someone say, "Parents only get 18 summers with their children." While this may not necessarily be true of all families, the premise behind the statement still stands. Time is precious and we should cherish every moment we have with the ones we love. During the Christmas season this reality has weighed heavily on my mind. I am often guilty of glancing at my phone a little too often. Occasionally I don't want to get down on the floor to play with my children. But in recent weeks, I have become more aware of the reality that one day my children will no longer want me to play on the floor with them. Certainly it is important to cherish them and the time I have with them.

My reflections went further than my children. Last month Jennifer and I celebrated 13 years of marriage. And in that I was convicted of the reality that I don't cherish my wife as much as I should. I don't cherish her thoughtfulness, her kindness, her love, and so much more. I often fail to express how much she means to me. And once again, I am often too busy looking at my phone or the television to take the time to cherish the wonderful woman the Lord has blessed me with.

We've just come out of the Christmas season - a season that is marked with receiving things...many of which will soon be forgotten. Some of these gifts will break. We will outgrow others. And, as I think about all of this, I have become fully aware that I am often guilty of cherishing the wrong things. I am often guilty of holding too tightly to my stuff, my money, my titles, and my time. I can't help but wonder if perhaps I'm not the only one guilty of this. So I ask, what do you cherish?

As we begin a new year, set new goals, make new resolutions, let me challenge you to consider what it is that you cherish the most. Perhaps one of your goals for 2023 should be to evaluate and reprioritize our treasures. And as wonderful as it will be for each of us to cherish our spouses, children, grandchildren, and friends a bit more in this coming year, I would propose for you that at the very top of your list should be Christ Jesus. Paul tells us in Philippians "But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ" (Phil. 3.7-8, NIV). Paul makes clear that to know and be known by Christ is the most valuable of all things. All of those Christmas gifts and all of the stuff that fills our lives are, according to Paul, "garbage" compared to being in relationship with the Savior of the world. Christ truly is the treasure!

As you move into the New Year I challenge you to consider the things that you cherish the most. I pray that we can each commit to cherishing Christ above all else. For He alone is Worthy!

Happy New Year!

Press on!  
Carson

## Church News

### B.L.A.S.T

• Will not meet January 1st, but will meet the remaining 4 Sundays of the month.

### YOUTH MINISTRY

Wednesdays | 6:45PM



### HBC LUNCHEON



**JANUARY 15**  
PORK LOIN & FIXINGS



A couple of weeks ago, during Carson's sermon he discussed the idea of being blessed by being humbled by God. As he stated, it's not something we look for or forward to... it's really not even something we want to talk about. This idea that being brought low in a given situation could be a blessing is laughable by the world's standards; and yet, is prevalent throughout Scriptures. From Abraham having to recognize his need for God in order to provide a son that led to the birth of the nation of Israel, to No-

ah having to endure ridicule as he built an ark for decades; from Moses disregarding his Egyptian palace upbringing to bring the people of God out of captivity, to Hosea taking a wife of ill reputation in order to demonstrate God's love to Israel. From Elisha, son of a wealthy land owner burning his plows to follow the man of God, to Matthew and Zacchaeus giving up their wealth to follow after Christ. And then there's Paul, surrendering the power and prestige of Jewish religious leadership in order to preach and teach about the One whose followers he had once persecuted and killed. Time after time after time, we see Biblical strength and blessing found in those who first were brought low, humbled by a God who only wanted to offer them more than they could have ever dreamed of.

I have felt this phenomenon in my own life. The arrogant, self-righteous child in me was brought low by a God who loved me enough to help me truly meet Him through heart-breaking circumstances, whenever my pride needed to be challenged and my faith renewed. By being a single mom fully dependent on God to survive, to learning how to lead others by first being a follower, to trusting Him through challenges of family medical crises and burdens, time and again God has taught me that it is when I am humble, when I am completely surrendered to whatever He has for me, that He blesses me beyond belief. Had I not felt the hurt of single parent-hood, would I truly appreciate the blessing of a godly marriage and beautiful children who are more than I ever thought possible? Had I not learned to operate on the sidelines of ministry, would He ever have allowed me to lead? Had financial or medical struggles not made me fully reliant on Him, would I be willing to give to Him in health as well? I see His hand daily in my need to surrender, to be humble to whatever He might bring my way. For it is only when I have raised my hands and said, "God, I can't do this – but You can!" have I seen Him move mountains and provide miracles and teach me new and marvelous things.

Christ's birth gave us the ultimate example of blessing through humility. As Carson quoted from Philippians 2: *"Christ, Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!"* Had Christ not been willing to come as a humble baby and put down His heavenly crown for that short amount of time, we could not be saved from our sin. Oh, to be more like Jesus! To be willing to be humbled in order to be blessed and be a blessing to others.

*<sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. <sup>7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. – 1 Peter 5:6*

-Rebekah

### Women's Ministry:

In putting my thoughts together for this article, I was reminded of a question my youngest granddaughter, Clara, asked me last Fall. Clara is not a football fan of any college team. She just doesn't care for football.

While visiting Clara and her family in MA, this past October; I was watching a few minutes of my favorite college team and Clara asked, "Nanny, what would you do without football?" My first thought was "ouch" there are lots of things I would do without football; #1 being spend time with you!

At this time of year I ask you: "What would you do without Christmas?" Thankfully we don't have to answer that question. We can thank God for sending his son as a babe in a manger who grew up as a perfect man, then died on a cross to cover ALL of our sins and if we choose to accept Him as our Lord and Savior we will have eternal life. Thank you God for Christmas!

Ladies as we look ahead to the New Year; we will enjoy fun times of fellowship, more field trips and reaching out to others. If you have ideas please tell me and we will do our best to make them happen. As women eager to minister to others, perhaps a goal for the ladies of HBC for 2023 could be: to see the people we meet through the eyes of Jesus (without any judgement, but with care and concern and a desire to help if there is need).

As we begin a New Year may we all remember the words of Micah 6:8, "He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God."

Happy 2023 and May God Bless You  
Kathy



I know that this article is supposed to be for the January newsletter, but it's hard to get my head around the New Year at this point, with so much still left to go in 2022... Full Disclosure – it's Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup> as I'm writing this article. There's still 6 more days until Christmas and 12 more days of the month left... so forgive me if I'm having a hard time mentally making the jump to January 2023. This past weekend our church just finished up a great weekend – two nights of "The Worst Christmas Play Ever", a quirky (hopefully humorous) dinner theatre that highlighted the message of God's sovereignty and His ability to redeem unfortunate circumstances and turn them for our good.

Because this really big event JUST finished up, I wanted to offer a formal word of thanks to a whole bunch of folks. To the actors – Scott Williams, Kyle Knight, Amanda Jones, Brett Rogers, Leslie Arnold, Taylor Camp, Blake Allen, Preston Ellis, Karlee Tharpe, Katie Powell, Ansley Guy, Brenner Allen, and Abigail Bryant – thank you all so much for your willingness to be used by God in a powerful way... He took your collective talents and made something so wonderful out of it. Thank you to Mark Whitaker and Whitaker Electric for helping us string those awesome lights and creating a super cool atmosphere for the dinner theatre. Thanks to Rebekah Dickerson for lining up some awesome musicians, including our own Mrs. Edee, and for planning out the lighting and sound details. Speaking of lighting and sound details, thanks to Alan Hall and Ryan Guy for manning the sound and light booth, and thanks also to several youth students – Chase Stolte, Elijah Rodriguez, Brenden Morrison, Karter Jones, and Kami McFarland – for your help as "stage hands" and for other unique and important roles you played in The Worst Christmas Play Ever! Thanks to Gwen Hardy and Michael Bryant for your help with the "registration table" each night as well as to Tony and Dianne Mundy, Don and Joy Ray, Randy and Marci Sawyer, and Mandy Rhodes for help with decorating, clean up, and welcoming guests. Thanks to Daniel Dickerson for his labor of love... painting the stage pieces. And finally, thanks to Carson Britt for his leadership, courage, and vision as he led us into uncharted waters... with great results in the end no less!

Ok, ok. Those words of gratitude took up the vast majority of available space I have for newsletter articles, but before I wrap up, I do want to offer one short thoughtful message for all those anxiously awaiting January 1<sup>st</sup> and beyond. Here is a prayer straight from Scripture that I think we would all be wise to pray for ourselves each day of this brand new year.

"God, help me to be strong and courageous in light of what is to come. Uncertain though the future may be, you are certain. You are with me wherever I go; You will never leave me nor forsake me, and You will establish my footsteps. Help me to obey all of Your law in its fullness, and let me not depart from the ways of righteousness. Provide me with focus, Lord, and allow my gaze to remain steadfastly on You, never turning to the right or to the left. Help me to be attentive to the external factors I allow to influence my mind and heart, and keep a safeguard on my mouth. May I forever meditate on the splendor and wonder of Your Word. Oh God, help me to be strong and courageous. And always remind me from whom my strength comes. Amen" (Joshua 1:5-9)

-Evan

## COFFEE WITH CARSON



**All retirees are invited to join Carson at  
Red Oak Manor for breakfast!**

**Tuesday, January 24th  
8:30AM**

**Let us know if you are coming!**  
706-556-6439 or church@harlembaptist.org