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## PASTORAL PONDERINGS

by Rev. Tom Harris

Dear Friends,

As we begin this new year, I am inspired by the words of Isaiah 43:19, *"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."* It can be easy in trying and uncertain times to feel like things are getting worse and that good things are coming to an end. Those feelings are legitimate and real. We need to grieve our losses. Don't rush grief.

At the same time, God is always doing something new. Something new is always being born. God is the source of new life, rebirth, and healing. The



question Isaiah asks is critical as we look forward to 2022. Do you perceive the newness? It's there. Do you perceive it?

If you do not perceive it, try looking closer. Try paying attention to the newness of this day. Try noticing and

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## MLK Sunday - January 16 at

**10:00 am:** Join us on

Sunday, January 16 for a special online worship service celebrating the life and message of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther

King. We will have a special message from Keith Snipes, of our Racial Justice Ministry Working Group and special musical guests, Deletta Gillespie and Shelley Ensor. You don't want to miss it!

## MLK SUNDAY

Online on Zoom and Facebook Live  
January 16, 2022  
10:00 am

Join us as we celebrate the life and message of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with a special message from Keith Snipes and special music from Deletta Gillespie and Shelley Ensor.

Learn more at [www.govanspres.org](http://www.govanspres.org)

**GOVANS** Racial Justice  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Ministry

For more information, contact Lea Gilmore, Minister for Racial Justice and Multicultural Engagement ([lea@govanspres.org](mailto:lea@govanspres.org))



## January Calendar

2- Online Worship, 10:00 am  
2 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pickup, 3:30 pm  
3 - Music Mondays, 7:00 pm  
5 - Bible Study with Knox Presbyterian, 12:00 pm  
8 - Young Family Ice Skating (see p. 4), 1:00 pm  
9 - Online Worship, 10:00 am  
9 - Youth Servant Leader Council, 3:00 pm  
9 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pickup, 3:30 pm  
10 - Music Mondays, 7:00 pm  
12 - Bible Study with Knox Presbyterian, 12:00 pm  
16 - Online Worship - MLK Sunday, 10:00 am  
16 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pickup, 3:30 pm  
17 - Music Mondays, 7:00 pm  
18 - Session Meeting, 6:30 pm  
19 - Bible Study with Knox Presbyterian, 12:00 pm  
21 - Church Book Club, 10:00 am  
23 - Worship Time TDB/Sunday School Kickoff for 2022  
23 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pickup, 3:30 pm  
24 - Music Mondays, 7:00 pm  
26 - Bible Study with Knox Presbyterian, 12:00 pm  
28 - Youth Group, 6:30 pm  
30 - Worship Time TDB  
30 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pickup, 3:30 pm  
31 - Music Mondays, 7:00 pm

## January Birthdays

1 - Christ D'Arezzo	22 - Kaycee MacDougall
5 - Robert Wong	24 - Evan Bush
6 - Wayne White	25 - Arianna Shaw
7 - Jane Wilson	28 - Elizabeth Baer
12 - Lisa Beacham	30 - Peter Berry
12 - Anne Owens	31 - Renate Dombrowski
19 - Ruth Williams	31 - Courtney Gover
21 - Jackie Williams	31 - Julie McDill

## Pastoral Ponderings...continued from page one

appreciating a new song. Maybe even when you look at the bare trees of winter, try imagining the new leaves waiting to be born; the new flowers in the cold ground.

This is not an invitation to only feel happy all the time and suppress any feelings of sadness. It is an invitation to find the balance between death and new life, losing and finding, grief and joy. They all exist together. Do you perceive it?

Peace,  
Tom

## Believe in Baltimore Features Local “Culture Coach” and Councilmember

Season Two of Govans’ community podcast, *Believe in Baltimore*, continues this month with two new episodes featuring local leaders and changemakers.

In episode seven, Pastors Tom and Billy discuss leading change in multicultural organizations, coaching, and music with Nikki Lerner. Lerner is a widely celebrated singer, speaker, and culture coach based in the Baltimore area. Learn more about her work at [nikkilerner.com](http://nikkilerner.com).

In episode eight, District Four Baltimore City Councilmember Mark Conway (pictured above) shares his work on the Baltimore City Council, as well as his hopes for our local community. You can read more about Councilmember Conway on his website, [baltimorecitycouncil.com/mark-conway](http://baltimorecitycouncil.com/mark-conway).

All of these episodes (as well as past episodes) will be available at [govanspres.org/podcast](http://govanspres.org/podcast). You can also follow, rate, and review Believe in Baltimore wherever you listen to podcasts (Apple, Spotify, etc.). If you would like to suggest an upcoming podcast episode theme or guest, please email Pastor Billy at [billy@govanspres.org](mailto:billy@govanspres.org).



Pastor Tom, Pastor Billy, and Councilmember Mark Conway  
on the Believe in Baltimore Podcast

## Letter from Pastor Billy

Hello, Govans,

I hope you had a wonderful Advent and Christmastide. I was immensely proud of all of our Govans youth and young families who played a part in our Christmas pageant, Masks in the Manger! Thank you for sharing your acting skills with Govans!



If one of your New Year's Resolutions is to get to know your neighbors, I hope that you'll consider joining Govans' Conversation Corps team. This group of volunteers engages in quarterly one-on-one conversations with neighbors in the York Road area to help our church make better use of the strengths in our context, as well as better meet the needs of those around us. These simple conversations are a powerful tool to keep us connected and foster new opportunities for ministry in our community. Let's talk about how God might be calling you to this important ministry of conversation.

Intergenerational Sunday School will relaunch for the spring 2022 season on Sunday, January 23, 2022. On the first Sunday of the month, Intergenerational Sunday School for families and kids takes place at 11:05 am on the playground. Every other week, Intergenerational Sunday School takes place between the services at 10:05 am. We will gather inside the Education Building in the gallery and/or Sharp Hall (as space is needed/available) for "stations" Sunday school. Each week, we will have new stations to interact with the Bible story for the week (creating a craft, reading, making music, and more). Children and families will be able to choose which stations they would like to explore each week. Families with children ages 1 to 18 are

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## Youth and Young Families Activities:

- Tuesday, January 4: Breakfast to Go for Preschool Parents - 7:30 to 9:30 am
- Saturday, January 8: Young Families Ice Skating at Inner Harbor Ice Rink (201 E Pratt Street) - 1:00 pm
- Sunday, January 9: Youth Servant Leader Council Meeting - 3:00 pm on Zoom
- Tuesday, January 18: Preschool Chapel Services
- Sunday, January 23: Sunday School Kickoff for Spring 2022 Season
- Friday, January 28: Youth Group at 6:30 pm
- Saturday, February 12: Young Families Ski Trip to Liberty Mountain - 11:00 am

Contact Pastor Billy ([billy@govanspres.org](mailto:billy@govanspres.org)) for more information.

### Church Staff

**Rev. Tom Harris**, Senior Pastor

**Rev. Billy Kluttz**, Associate Pastor

**Lea Gilmore**,

Minister for Racial Justice & Music  
Director, 1st Service

**Deborah Lewis**

Interim Music Director, 2nd Service

**Pam Wallace**, Office Manager

**Andy Wilson**, Administrative Asst.

**Sylvia Usher**

Sexton

**Pam Ferguson**,

Director of Preschool

**Gwen Lloyd**, Program Director,  
Senior Network

**Govans Presbyterian Church**

5828 York Road Baltimore, Maryland  
21212

410-435-9188

[www.govanspres.org](http://www.govanspres.org)



**THE HERALD &  
BELLRINGER**

*The deadline for  
submissions for the  
February 2022 newsletter  
is January 15, 2022.*

*Please send to Andy  
Wilson*

*([wilson@govanspres.org](mailto:wilson@govanspres.org))  
or call the church office.*

## Govans 101

Every First Sunday  
Following Worship

Whether you are interested in becoming a member, getting more involved, or just learning more about the church, you're invited to a monthly conversation hosted by Govans' pastors. We'll talk about our ministries, what it means to be Presbyterian, our governance and theology, and, most importantly, how you can be a part of it all.

Questions? Email [tom@govanspres.org](mailto:tom@govanspres.org) or  
[billy@govanspres.org](mailto:billy@govanspres.org).



# What's Going On @ Govans?

## YOUNG FAMILY ICE SKATING

Saturday, January 8 at 1:00 pm  
Inner Harbor Ice Rink 201 E. Pratt St.  
Adults \$14 w/rental Children \$13 w/rental  
Scholarships are available.  
Email [billy@govanspres.org](mailto:billy@govanspres.org) for more info



## GOVANS BOOK CLUB

10:00 am on the second Friday of the month  
**Live on Zoom**  
(Note: January meeting is on the 21st.)

Email Bobbie Cook  
([cookbobbie347@gmail.com](mailto:cookbobbie347@gmail.com)) for the  
book selections and the Zoom link.



## YOUNG FAMILIES SKI DAY AT LIBERTY MOUNTAIN

Saturday, February 12 from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Liberty Mountain Resort - Fairfield, Pennsylvania  
Young families are invited to a skiing day with Pastor Billy at Liberty Mountain. Liberty Mountain has terrain perfect for beginner and advanced skiers. Lift tickets are \$84 for adults and \$70 for kids and seniors (over 65). Scholarships are available, email [billy@govanspres.org](mailto:billy@govanspres.org) to request a scholarship. Families with kids ages 1 to 18 are welcome. Non-skiing parents are also welcome to come and watch.



**GOVANS** PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Youth and Young Families



## Online Bible Study

with Knox and Govans Presbyterian Churches  
Wednesdays at 12:00 noon on Zoom  
Everyone is welcome!

ZOOM LINK WILL BE IN THE WEEKLY EMAIL - SUBSCRIBE AT  
[WWW.GOVANSPRES.ORG](http://WWW.GOVANSPRES.ORG)

**Christmas Eve Highlights:** Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make Christmas Eve special at Govans. Thank you to the members of the congregation both online and in-person, and the actors, readers, musicians and singers who put on a great Pageant and Lessons and Carols service. We hope everyone had a Merry Christmas!



## Govans Youth Servant Leaders Give Back to their Community

Govans' Youth Servant Leader program challenges older youth (grades 8 to 12) to become leaders in both our congregation and our community. A one-year commitment to the program includes monthly leadership in worship, service to the church, and service to the community. There is also a monthly Youth Servant Leader Council meeting to process how these commitments are going and reflect how participants are growing as leaders. This year, the theme of the program is "liturgy and leadership." Each month during our servant leader council meetings, we are studying a different aspect of Christian worship and what it teaches us about Christian leadership. After one year of service in the YSL program, youth are invited to join the congregation as a member.

This year's youth servant leaders have recently chosen their service projects:

- Kaylyn Parks will be serving on the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance's Project VITAL Youth Advisory Board. Project VITAL works to green and restore vacant lots in Baltimore to improve health outcomes for adolescents.
- Matthew Moore and Claire Wilson will be sending cards to homebound and geographically distanced members and friends of Govans Presbyterian Church. Claire Wilson will also be volunteering to help with signage and outreach for the church.
- McKenna Traynham will volunteer with the Senior Network of North Baltimore to make wellness phone calls to local older adults.

Please pray for all of these youth as they serve others and grow as Christian Leaders in 2022. If you have questions about the YSL program or would like to learn more, please email [billy@govanspres.org](mailto:billy@govanspres.org).



### Letter from Pastor Billy (continued from page 3)

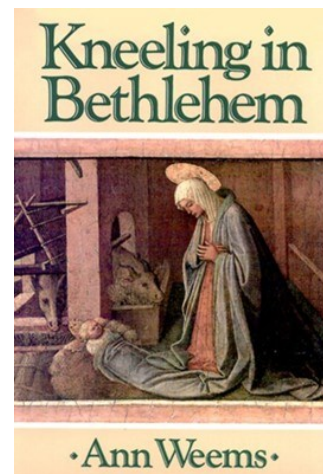
welcome and adult volunteers (of all ages) are needed, as well. Please email [billy@govanspres.org](mailto:billy@govanspres.org) if you have questions or ideas.

I'll leave you with a quote from Ann Weems's classic book of Advent and Christmas poetry, *Kneeling in Bethlehem*. In her poem "It is Not Over," she reminds readers that Advent is about Christ's birth in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago, but it is also a reminder that God continues to show up and make a home among us today. Weems writes:

*It is not over,  
This birthing.  
There are always newer skies  
Into which  
God can throw stars.*

I hope that your heart is open for God's new-flung stars this Epiphany as we watch for the magi to lead us again to respond to God's mystery with wonder and awe.

Peace, Pastor Billy





## WHY I JOINED GOVANS' RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

by Julie McDill

I joined Govans Presbyterian in 1996 when my husband and two children moved here from Cleveland. Govans has been a moral and spiritual compass for our family over the years. The Racial Justice Ministry is one of many efforts Govans has undertaken to understand and engage in the community around us, and this emphasis on active and involved faith is exactly why we chose Govans as our family's church home.

I share with Adam Allen the role of Co-Chair of the Racial Justice Ministry Working Group (RJMWG) - a group of congregation and community leaders actively working with our Racial Justice Minister, Lea Gilmore to create and implement programming and more. Adam and I have the responsibility to guide the committees established to address the ministry's goals and to communicate the ministry's goals and activities to the rest of the congregation.

Govans' racial justice ministry intends to provide a safe environment for our faith community to learn about the systemic nature and impact of racism in the United States, as well as in our own church and hearts. Specific opportunities for growth have included book studies, presentations and engagement with local brown/black leaders in the community.

An understanding of how racism is continuing to mar our society and limit our black brothers and sisters will compel us to strive to address and dismantle that communal and personal racism.

In the context of the Govans' community this means we will listen to all racial groups, seeing all as equal. Individually and collectively, we will speak up when we see or hear a racist comment or action. Stand beside and actively support those fighting for change, advocate for a just society. In addition, we will continue to educate

ourselves about racial justice (or the lack of it) in our community. And doing all this with a spirit of love.

As an anti-racist church, we will understand and confront racism. We build the body of Christ by 'speaking the truth in love.' The history of the United States must be examined and owned by the church so that we can address the past and current practices of racism that go against the very Scriptures we are called to follow.

What has this work meant for me? Well it has been truly eye opening to learn about the systemic nature of racism alive and well in our community now. No one is exempt or immune - it is part of the air we breathe, the business and government rules we all live by. I believe that shining a light on this issue and finding ways to address it is one of the most important things that I and Govans can do for the long term health of our church, the Govans community and Baltimore.

If you have any questions or would like more information about the racial justice ministry, please contact Lea Gilmore, [lea@govanspres.org](mailto:lea@govanspres.org), and/or find us on the web at [www.govanspres.org/what-we-do/racial-justice/](http://www.govanspres.org/what-we-do/racial-justice/).

### JANUARY MISSION OFFERING - CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY

**HOUSING:** Cornerstone Community Housing (formerly Earl's Place) has a twofold mission. They are dedicated to helping men experiencing homelessness rebuild their lives and to changing community attitudes toward homelessness through outreach and education. Learn more at [www.cchbaltimore.org](http://www.cchbaltimore.org).

\*\*\*All donations marked "Mission Offering" during January will be donated to Cornerstone Community Housing.\*\*\*



## Letter from Butoke in the DR Congo:

Christmas Message from Dr. Jean:

*On behalf of the whole Butoke family, on behalf of the community of Kasai Central, especially those of the hinterland of the city of Kananga and that of the community of Tshikaji, Tshimbundu and surroundings, we come to send you our best wishes for the birth of Jesus Christ, our model of life and the New Year 2022.*

*Thank you to our God because throughout the year, marked by unrest of war, war of militias, Corona virus, Ebola disease and others our God has protected us from all these plagues and here is today at the door of the new year. May this New Year bring longevity, peace, joy, happiness, hope, life in the image of Jesus Christ to everyone. We, the vulnerable of Butoke, we who depend on you for our survival, we say thank you for financial, moral and spiritual assistance, we sincerely say thank you for the assisted community of Kasai Central and for Ongd Butoke.*

*Dans son Amour,  
Dr. Jean Lumbala*

\*\*\*Govans Mission Partner, Friends of Butoke, Inc. is a small NGO that began informally in 2005 to support Butoke in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Butoke ministers to the nutritional, food security, educational, emergency and primary health care needs of the area's poor people. Butoke was founded by Dr. Cecile DeSweemer, who passed away in 2018 after a long period of failing health. Dr. Jean Lumbala Muamba, her adopted son and long-term partner, is Butoke's Executive Director. The name "Butoke" means light in Swahili.



### GOOD NEWS FROM HAITI:



Pelancia (above) has graduated with a degree in Development Science thanks to a generous donor from Govans.



YouseOdly (above) has returned to Les Cayes for her internship after the disruption caused by the earthquake.

### Mariners News:

Patsy Owen has graciously offered to host our January dinner meeting. She's planning it for January 22. Her home is in Cedarcroft, very close to the church. No main dish has been decided yet but I'm sure it will be wonderful. **We welcome everyone, we love to eat and enjoy chatting.** It's not fancy, just casual and fun. Most of our dinners are either on the 2nd or 3rd Saturday of the month, the host gets to choose. We all bring a dish to share and leave having eaten way too much. It's OK if you can't make it to every dinner, just come when you can. Please give Patsy a call or email and let her know you are coming: cell 443-895-8080 or email ptdv@verizon.net. Her address is: 402 Hollen Rd. Baltimore, MD 21212. Please call or email Kit Clark if you have questions about Mariners. (410-493-3987) (baltokit@gmail.com)

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*"Govans Presbyterian Church is a theologically progressive community empowering people to make the world better."*

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Racial Justice  
Ministry

For more information, contact Lea Gilmore, Minister for Racial Justice and Multicultural Engagement ([lea@govanspres.org](mailto:lea@govanspres.org))

