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## PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

The Preliminary Information Form (PIF) constitutes an application for preliminary consideration of a property for eligibility for the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The PIF is **not** the same as a nomination to the Registers, but is a means for evaluating the **eligibility** of a property for listing. The PIF is evaluated by Department of Historic Resources (DHR) staff and the State Review Board and their recommendations regarding the property's eligibility will be provided to the property owner in writing.

### Before Preparing a PIF

Contact DHR's Archivist for assistance in obtaining any information DHR may have on file about your property, such as a previous architectural survey record or eligibility evaluation. You are welcome to use this information in preparing your PIF. Contact DHR's Archivist by phone at (804) 482-6102, or by email at [Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:Quatro.Hubbard@dhr.virginia.gov).

Staff at one of DHR's three Regional offices are available to answer questions you may have as you begin preparing your PIF. Locations and contact information for each office is at [http://dhr.virginia.gov/regional\\_offices/regional\\_offices.htm](http://dhr.virginia.gov/regional_offices/regional_offices.htm). (You also are welcome to ask DHR's Archivist for the contact information.)

### Preparing a PIF

A PIF consists of three equally important parts:

1. **Form:** Complete the attached form to the best of your ability, using your own research about the property to be evaluated as well as any information that DHR has provided. Remember that DHR's Regional staff also are available to assist you. The form may be completed using Microsoft Word software, typed, or hand-written. If using MS Word, the PIF can be submitted via CD, email, ftp, or other file sharing means.

### **Your PIF will not be evaluated if it is missing any of the following information:**

- Property owner's signature
  - Contact information for the person submitting the form (if different from the property owner)
  - Contact information for the City Manager or County Administrator where the property is located
2. **Photos:** Provide color photographs of your property's exterior and major interior spaces, with emphasis on architectural features instead of furnishings. Photos typically include views of the main building from all sides, as well as important ornamental and/or functional details; any outbuildings or secondary resources; and the property's general setting. Submit photo prints on 4" x 6" glossy photo paper and digital images on CD or other file sharing means approved by DHR's Regional staff.
  3. **Maps:** A minimum of two maps must accompany your PIF:
    - **Location map:** This map shows the exact location of your property. The map can be created using Google Maps, Google Earth, Bing, or other mapping websites. A copy of a road map also may be used as long as the property's exact location and physical address are shown on the map. DHR's Archivist can assist in providing an acceptable location map with boundaries.
    - **Sketch map:** This map shows the locations of all resources on your property, such as the main building; any secondary resources (often referred to as outbuildings); major landscape features such as a stream, formal gardens, driveways, and parking areas, and the road on which the property fronts. The sketch map can be drawn by hand, or an annotated aerial view, tax parcel map or survey map may be used.

### Submitting a PIF

Once you have completed the PIF, submit it to the appropriate Regional office. The Regional staff member will inform you when DHR staff will review your PIF and answer any questions you may have about the evaluation process.

**Note:** All submitted materials become the property of DHR and will be retained in our permanent Archive. In addition, the materials will be posted on DHR's public website for a period of time during the evaluation process.

*Thank you for taking the time to submit this Preliminary Information Form.  
Your interest in Virginia's historic resources is helping to provide better stewardship of our cultural past.*



PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 116-5093

Purpose of Evaluation

Please use the following space to explain briefly why you are seeking an evaluation of this property. The Union Baptist Church has been chosen by the ERPO as one of two churches for a partnership project with the Cameron Foundation and Preservation Virginia.

Are you interested in applying for State and/or Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes No X

Are you interested in receiving more information about DHR's easement program? Yes No X

1. General Property Information

Property name: Union Baptist Church

Property address: 212 Terminal Street

City or Town: Hopewell

Zip code: 23860

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: City of Hopewell

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X Site Structure Object

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: Less than one acre

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban X Suburban Town Village Hamlet Rural

Briefly describe the property's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

The church is located on a smaller parcel in a mixed residential/commercial/industrial area of Hopewell. The area has been traditionally known as Davisville, a settlement area associated with Hopewell's African American Community. The lot is flat and includes two recently constructed (less than 20 years old) shed storage buildings. Davisville housing is to the south of the lot and a convenience store/gas station is located directly north. The church has a field on the north side now used for special activities and events. There are bush and tree borders to the northeast and east of the church. The church is located within a tenth of a mile of the busy East Randolph Street (Route 10).

### 3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Gothic-vernacular

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: None known at this time

If the builder is known, please list here: None known at this time

Date of construction (can be approximate): 1947

#### **Narrative Description:**

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire property, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the architectural style, materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions, remodelings, or other alterations.

The Union Baptist Church, located in the Davisville area of the City of Hopewell, was built in 1947. The original rectangular plan building is concrete block wall construction with a wood frame, asphalt shingle clad, front gable, roof. The concrete block has been covering in composite EIFS cladding. The primary elevation features a three-story square-in-plan bell tower. The primary three-bay elevation is symmetrical with the tower centered on the gable and a Gothic style window on either side. The bell tower has an open first level that is topped by a slightly rounded Gothic arch. Each of the three levels on the tower is defined by a simple horizontal molding band. The second and third tower levels feature large rectangular vents (for allowing sound to project from the tower). The tower is capped with a hipped roof with a gold-colored cross at the apex.

The north wall of the church has seven bays defined by Gothic style windows. All of the Gothic style windows feature color glass. All of the windows feature the same design; a combination of three Gothic arches (possibly referring to the holy trinity) with an inset cross. The glass features pink, white, green, black and red colors

The southeast corner of the church has a two-story addition that was built in 1975. The addition is rectangular in plan with a gable roof that intersects the church roof at a right angle. The roof is clad in asphalt shingle. The addition walls are likely frame, now clad in EIFS. There is a primary entrance, sheltered by a one bay portico, facing Harris Street. The windows are very simple, two pane, single sheet set in aluminum, horizontal sliding operation.

The southern side of the 1947 original section features two exposed Gothic Style windows and some that still show inside the 1975 addition interior. The south wall of the addition features three windows on the first floor and four on the second floor. The rear, or east, wall of the church features a two-story fire escape and two separate rear doors for the 1975 and 1947 sections.

The interior of the 1947 section has three primary spaces. At the entrance, there is a short hall that is flanked by two rooms. The rooms are sitting areas for private meetings or waiting areas. The short hallway is closed to the Nave by a set of translucent French doors. The nave has a center aisle with about 10-15 rows of wooden pews on each side. The room has wainscoting and simple trim around doors and windows. The chancel area is on a slightly raised dais and features an area for musicians, a seating area for a chorus and the Pastor's lectern. The rear wall of the chancel features a decorative round color glass window.

Most of the interior of the 1947 section appears to date to the 1960 and 1970s, and later, but the stained glass windows date to the 1950s and some of sections of trim may date to the 1940s.

The interior of the 1975 addition features a large hall on the first floor with an adjacent kitchen and rest rooms. The stair circulation to the second floor is at the front of the building adjoining a small entrance hall. The upstairs has a center hall circulation that terminates into a general use room. There are administrative offices and the Pastor's office is a small suite with office and adjoining conference room.

The north wall of the 1947 section has a builder's date stone, at the lower northwest corner. The stone reads: "Union Baptist Church Erected 1947 G.W. King D.D."

The yard in front of the 1975 addition features a permanent masonry signboard with stepped shoulders.

Briefly describe any outbuildings or secondary resources (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

There are two modern (non-contributing) sheds at the rear, east side, of the church, one is of metal construction and the other is wood frame.

#### 4. Property's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the property, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

##### Significance Overview

The Union Baptist Church was the home institution for Civic and Civil Rights leader Reverend Dr. Curtis West Harris for forty six years. He was ordained in the church in 1959 and became Pastor in 1961. Union Baptist Church traces its history back to 1917 in the area of Hopewell called Georgia Hill. The congregation moved to the current building in 1947. The church has been updated several times over the past sixty years by the intentions of Reverend Harris to improve the building and grow the congregation. The Union Baptist Church is being nominated under Criterion B for the significance of Dr. Curtis West Harris. While Rev. Harris also served congregations in Bermuda Hundred and Ivor, Union Baptist Church was always considered his primary pastorate. Reverend Harris' career in politics and social activism places him at a level of state significance. The suggested period of significance is 1956, when Reverend Harris was licensed as a minister at Union Baptist Church, by Dr. G. W. King, Pastor to 1998, when he was sworn in as the first African American Mayor of Hopewell. He retired from his Pastorate at Union Baptist Church in 2007. The Criterion Consideration G is met by the continuity of significant accomplishments that extend well past the fifty year cut off mark of 1968.

##### Union Baptist Church History Overview

*Based on a published history by Deacon Emeritus James Patterson, Sr.*

Union Baptist Church was founded in 1917 during the era of rapid development in the City of Hopewell. In 1914, the Dupont Corporation had located a large plant on Hopewell Farm (a section of Prince George County), adjacent to City Point. The City was incorporated in 1914. The original frame church stood at Kippax Street and Kippax Place. The frame building could accommodate 500 people and was heated by one centrally positioned pot belly stove.

Reverend J.R. Coleman served as the first pastor and was followed by Rev. A.J. Ryans, Rev. Walter Turner, Rev. W.M.H Shaw, Rev. Spratley, Rev. Sam Wilson, Rev. Isaiah Wilson, Rev. J.J.E. Horne, Rev. Wilton Cook, Rev. Dr. George W. King, Rev. Dr. Curtis W. Harris, Rev. Joshua N. King, and the current Pastor Rev. Dr. Anthony L. Nutt.

The Church went through two evolutions from 1945 to 1947. The first split occurred when there was a dispute on where to build a new church. The choice was between the current site and a site on Winston Churchill Drive. A slight majority of the membership chose the Davisville site. A lawsuit ensued when the Building Committee refused to disburse the \$3000 allocated for construction. The case ended up in the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals on June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1946. The court ruled that the Church had a binding contract to build on the Terminal Street site. Many officers and members left the congregation at this point. In May or June 1947, Rev. Wilton Cook left the church taking many members, leaving 35 members with Union Baptist and a debt of \$10,144.24 to the contractor for building construction. Rev. George W. King assumed leadership and organized to gain membership and raise funds to retire the debt. A white congregation, the West End Presbyterian Church donated \$1500 at one point. By 1956, the church had 100 members and the debt (mortgage) was retired. In 1957 a \$900 gas heater would replace the stove. In 1958, the church made the first major renovation, costing \$10,000. This work included the reworking of the rectangular sash into Gothic style windows and the installation of stained glass. Rev. King passed away in 1961.

Rev. King had ordained Rev. Curtis Harris at Union Baptist Church in 1956. Rev. Harris started his Pastorate at the church in 1961 (his significant accomplishments are outlined in the section below). Rev. Harris made two significant additions to the building; the G.W. King Fellowship Hall in 1975 and the 1990s renovation, which

included the new bell tower. The original 1917 bell is installed in the tower. Harris would go on to be a Civil Rights activist, a City Councilor, Vice Mayor and Mayor.

After Rev. Harris and Rev. Johsua N. King, Sr., Rev. Dr. Anthony L. Nutt became the twelfth Pastor in 2014. Rev. Nutt has updated and modernized the church during his leadership. The form of the building and interior spaces are largely intact to the period when Rev. Curtis led the Church.

### **Reverend Dr. Curtis West Harris Significance Overview**

*Written by Joanne Lucas on the Curtis W. Harris web page (<http://www.curtiswbarris.com/>)*

Rev. Dr. Curtis West Harris was the last of six children born to the late Thelma and Sandy Harris on July 1, 1924 in Dendron, Virginia. He was raised in Hopewell, Virginia and educated in its public schools. After graduating from Carter G. Woodson High School, he continued his education at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia and was eventually employed as a janitor at Allied Chemical in Hopewell. Other education experiences included obtaining a certificate in Clinical Training for Pastors from the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, Virginia; studying at the Urban Training Center for Christian Missions in Chicago, Illinois; and completing various courses at Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia. Dr. Harris also received an Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 1972 and an Honorary Doctor of Law degree in 1983 from the Virginia University of Lynchburg in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Although Dr. Harris' childhood was spent in poverty, he was taught early in life, the value of sharing with the less fortunate. This sharing factor and the selflessness exemplified by his mother were pivotal to his entry into the ministry and to the role he selected to play in the protection of human rights.

In 1959, the late Dr. George W. King and Union Baptist Church in Hopewell ordained Dr. Harris into the ministry. He began his spiritual call at First Baptist Church, Bermuda Hundred in Chesterfield, Virginia where he was pastor for ten years. He also led the congregation at Gilfield Baptist Church, Ivor, Virginia for 33 years; and preached his last sermon as pastor of Union Baptist on Sunday, December 16, 2007 after 46 years as pastor.

Strong social, political, and religious consciousness led Dr. Harris to affiliate with and hold office in the following organizations: Hopewell Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), President; Carter G. Woodson Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), President; Hopewell Ministerial Association, Secretary/President; Hopewell Improvement Association (HIA), Vice President/President; National Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Board of Directors/Vice President; Virginia State Unit of SCLC, President; Moses Life Insurance Association, President; Shiloh Lodge #33 of Virginia Free & Accepted Masons, Inc. (Prince Hall Affiliated), Past Worshipful Master; Union Baptist Sunday School, Teacher/Superintendent; Lily of the Valley Chapter #44 (Order of Eastern Star), Past Worthy Patron; Virginia State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Vice Chairman; Bethany Baptist Association and Allied Bodies, Moderator/Executive Director; Virginia State University Non-Boarding Students, Counselor; Virginia Council on Human Relations, Director; Hopewell City Council, Councilman/Vice Mayor/Mayor, and The National Movement for Civil and Human Rights, Board of Directors.

The civil rights work of Dr. Harris began as early as 1950 when he was elected president of the Hopewell chapter of the NAACP. Ten years later, he was arrested and sentenced to 60 days in jail for his role in a sit-in at a segregated drugstore in Hopewell. In 1961, he became a member of the National SCLC Board of Directors, joined forces with the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and accepted nonviolence as the most practical means to fight racial and social injustice. He was arrested 13 times for acts of civil disobedience during his civil rights career.

Dr. Harris was cited for contempt by the Boatwright Committee of the Virginia General Assembly and accompanied to his trial by Dr. King in 1962. He witnessed the "I Have a Dream" speech at the 1963 March on Washington for Freedom and Jobs, marched 50 miles from Selma to Montgomery to secure voting rights for Blacks in 1965, assisted in the coordination of the Poor People's Campaign in 1968, and beaten in Suffolk, VA during a

peaceful protest in 1969. He was still battling in the war against injustice when he filed a discrimination complaint against Fort Lee, Virginia in 1996; and at the age of 83, Dr. Harris took to the streets in demonstration against the Hopewell City Council's proposal to build an ethanol plant in 2007.

By the 1960's, Dr. Harris had also taken an interest in local politics and ran seven times, unsuccessfully, for a seat on the Hopewell City Council. Finally, in 1983, he forced the city to switch from its longstanding at-large system to a ward system and became the second African American elected to the council. He became the city's second African American vice-mayor in 1996 and was sworn in as Hopewell's first African American mayor in 1998. On March 1, 2012, after 26 years of service to the city and to his constituents in Ward 2, Dr. Harris retired from his seat on the Hopewell City Council.

Ruth Jones Harris, his loving wife of 65 years, passed away on May 22, 2011. The Harris Connection, as Dr. Harris' family fondly calls itself, includes six children--Curtis, Jr. (Fayetteville, GA), Kenneth (Hopewell, VA), Michael (Ft. Washington, MD), Joanne (Virginia Beach, VA), Karen (Fayetteville, GA), and Michelle (Waldorf, MD) as well as three daughters-in-law, one son-in-law, 23 grandchildren, 32 great grandchildren, and three great-great grandchildren.

Dr. Harris, 93, died on Sunday, December 10, 2017, at 11:06 p.m. at The Crossings at Ironbridge in Chester, VA. On Saturday, December 16, 2017, he laid in repose at Carter G. Woodson Middle School in Hopewell, in front of the library named for him. Dr. Harris' life was honored in a homegoing service at First Baptist Church, Hopewell on Monday, December 18, 2017. Chaplain (COL) James Palmer, Jr. officiated and delivered a moving eulogy; the music was rendered by the Union Baptist Church Choir, Hopewell; his daughter, Mrs. Karen Bradford, sang a spectacular rendition of Dr. Harris' favorite Negro spiritual, "If I Can Help Somebody;" acknowledgements were expressed by Rev. W. Darrell Boggs, Mr. Jerrail Brown, Bishop Tyrone Harper, Mrs. Jackie Shornak, Senator Rosalyn Dance, Rev. William Keen, Rev. Dr. Ruby Moone, Lt. Col. R. Michelle Pritchett (daughter), and Dr. Joanne Lucas (daughter); and the video tribute, "Curtis Harris: A Man About Town" was shown. The service was concluded with Dr. Harris' casket being gently lifted onto a horse-driven, uncovered hearse and his funeral procession making a trek down Route 10 in Hopewell to 209 Rev. C. W. Harris Street where Dr. Harris resided for more than 60 years. His final resting place is at Appomattox Cemetery on 703 N. 21st Avenue in Hopewell.

Curtis Harris was deliberate, yet courageous in his life choices with a keen awareness of man's imperfections. The war-torn veteran of Christian stewardship and social justice can be described as one who possessed an open heart that was touched by the needs of all humanity. His tireless effort, humanitarian spirit, and unwavering determination are captured in the lyrics of his favorite Negro spiritual: "If I can help somebody as I pass along; if I can cheer somebody with a word or a song. If I can show somebody they're traveling wrong; then my living shall not be in vain."

### **Reverend Dr. Curtis West Harris Time Line**

#### **1945**

Student at Virginia Union University in Richmond, VA

#### **1946**

February 20: Married Ruth Jones of Hopewell, VA

#### **1950**

Elected president of the Hopewell chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

#### **1954**

Served as president of the Carter G. Woodson School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in Hopewell; Dr. Harris and the association were involved in recruiting Black teachers for Woodson

**1956**

July 13: Licensed as a minister at Union Baptist Church, Hopewell, VA by Dr. G. W. King, Pastor  
Became Worshipful Master of Shiloh Masonic Lodge #33 (Prince Hall Affiliated) in Hopewell  
Became a member of the Grand United Order of Moses, Inc., Hopewell No. 674; later elected president

**1959**

April 15: Ordained as a minister at Union Baptist Church, Hopewell, VA by Dr. G. W. King, Pastor  
Called to pastor at First Baptist Church, Bermuda Hundred in Chesterfield, VA

**1960**

Resigned as a janitor at Allied Chemical in Hopewell to pursue his career in the gospel ministry  
Organized the Hopewell Improvement Association (HIA), an affiliate of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and was elected vice president Arrested\* along with 75 others and sentenced to 60 days in jail for staging a sit-in at the segregated Georges' Drugstore in Hopewell---the charge was trespassing [\*Dr. Harris was arrested 13 times for civil disobedience]  
Protested against the segregated swimming pool and city-owned cemetery in Hopewell---the swimming pool was closed and later filled in and cemented rather than integrate and the city-owned cemetery was integrated

**1961**

Became a member of the National Board of SCLC while Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was president; and accepted Dr. King's nonviolent approach to fight racial and social injustice with the use passive resistance  
Cited for contempt by the Boatwright Committee of the Virginia General Assembly for not revealing the names of other SCLC members nor responding to the questions asked by the committee Called to pastor at the Union Baptist Church in Hopewell, VA and the Gilfield Baptist Church in Ivor, VA

**1962**

March 29: Accompanied by Dr. King along with more than 100 Virginia ministers and laymen to his contempt trial (Boatwright Committee) in Hopewell

**1963**

Elected president of the Virginia State Unit of SCLC, and served until 1998  
Became Worthy Patron in the Lily of the Valley Chapter #44 of the Order of Eastern Star (Prince Hall Affiliated) in Hopewell Led a march against discrimination and was arrested in Danville, VA---the charge was inciting people to riot Summer: Dr. Harris' two sons, Curtis, Jr. and Kenneth, integrated Hopewell City Public Schools as the first Black students to attend Hopewell High School

August 28: Marched with Dr. King in the March on Washington and witnessed the delivery of the "I Have A Dream" speech that inspired the passing of the 1964 Civil Rights Act---and was accompanied by his sons, Curtis, Jr. and Kenneth

September 24 - 27: Hosted the Seventh Annual SCLC Conference  
at Virginia Union University in Richmond, VA as president of the VA State Unit of SCLC

**1964**

May 10: Announced his candidacy for a seat on the Hopewell City Council  
Became the director of the Virginia Council on Human Relations

**1965**

March 7 - 25: Marched with Dr. King from Selma to Montgomery (a 54 mile trek) in support of the passing of the 1965 Voting Rights Act; acted as a human shield for Dr. King during the march July 2 - 3: Hosted the first annual convention of the VA State Unit of SCLC in Petersburg, VA; Dr. Harris was president of the VA State Unit



of SCLC, and Dr. King was convention keynote speaker

### **1966**

August: Led a peaceful demonstration to prevent the building of a landfill in Rosedale, a Black Hopewell community, and was confronted by the Ku Klux Klan on the steps of city hall; despite the opposition of Black Hopewellians, the landfill was established in Rosedale

### **1967**

Cross erected in Dr. Harris' yard, but it did not burn Bottle bombs thrown through the picture window of Dr. Harris' home, and through the window of his restaurant, Harris' Snack Bar---neither bomb exploded Sent a telegram to Gov. Mills E. Godwin requesting protection after three terrorist attacks on his home

### **1968**

Assisted with the coordination of the Poor People's Campaign in Washington D.C. as a means of uniting people who have a common plight, regardless of race Promoted a self-help program, with the support of SCLC, in the Wye area of Waverly, VA; the Wye was an impoverished Black area with no water, no gas, no indoor toilets, makeshift electrical lines, and many illiterate residents Selected to serve on the Virginia Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights which addressed the federal role in the desegregation of public schools

April 4: Dr. King assassinated in Memphis, TN

April 9: Attended Dr. King's funeral in Atlanta, GA

### **1969**

Testified before a Congressional Committee on Hunger in Virginia Arrested after being beaten in Suffolk, VA for protesting discrimination Resigned as pastor of First Baptist Church, Bermuda Hundred in Chesterfield, VA after 10 years of service President of Hopewell Ministerial Association

### **1971**

Outstanding Citizenship Award (Virginia Council on Social Welfare)  
Citizen of the Year Award (Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Delta Omega Chapter)  
Outstanding Services and Deeds to Mankind (Gilfield Baptist Church, Ivor, VA)  
Outstanding Services Rendered (Union Baptist Church, Hopewell, VA)  
Man of the Year Award (National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women, Petersburg, VA Chapter)

April: Along with this wife, Ruth J. Harris, they became advisors for a community youth gospel group, the Flames of Glory

July 4: Dr. Ralph D. Abernathy, national SCLC president spoke in honor of Dr. Harris at Gilfield Baptist Church in Ivor, VA

### **1972**

Awarded an Honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the Virginia University of Lynchburg, Lynchburg, VA

### **1978**

Dedicated Service Award (President, Board of Visitors, and Faculty of Virginia State University)  
Parade Marshall for the Hopewell Christmas parade

### **1979**

Reorganized the Virginia State Unit of the SCLC

August 14 - 17: Hosted the 22nd National SCLC Convention at New Calvary Baptist Church in Norfolk, VA

**1981**

Rosa Parks Award (SCLC, National Board)

Inspirational Award (SCLC, Virginia State Unit)

A member of the board of directors for The Community Action Program for Reading, Inc. in Hopewell, VA funded by Reading is FUNdamental (RIF), Inc., a national non-profit organization designed to motivate students to read by making inexpensive books available to children

**1982**

Centennial Community Recognition Award (SCLC, Virginia State Unit)

Certificate of Appreciation (Floyd E. Kellam High School, Virginia Beach, VA)

Community Spirit Award (Tabernacle Baptist Church, Petersburg, VA)

Citizen of the Year (Petersburg Consistory #144, 32 "833" Masons)

**1983**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Award (SCLC, Virginia State Unit)

Alumni Award (Carter G. Woodson High School Alumni, Hopewell, VA)

Forced Hopewell to replace its longstanding at-large system for electing city council members with a ward system

Awarded an Honorary Doctor of Law degree from the Virginia University of Lynchburg, Lynchburg, VA

**1984**

Recognition of Excellence (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)

Majestic Leader Award (The Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention, Landover, MD)

**1986**

Elected to the Hopewell City Council after seven attempts (began running for the Hopewell City Council as early as 1964) due to the establishment of the ward system established in 1983

**1987**

Led a march in Colonial Heights, VA against discrimination

**1989**

Outstanding Achievement Award (Citizens of Hopewell)

**1990**

Marched on Ft. Lee against discriminatory practices in employment

Support of Children Award (Hopewell School Board)

August 6: Hosted the 33rd National SCLC Convention in Richmond, VA as president of the V State Unit of SCLC

**1992**

Unmatched Determination Award (SCLC, National Board)

Martin Luther King, Jr. Legacy Award (Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity)

Appreciation Award (SCLC, Emporia/Greenville Chapter)

**1994**

Elected vice mayor of Hopewell

Resigned as pastor of Gilfield Baptist Church, Ivor, VA after 33 years of service

**1995**

Certificate of Service (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights)

Lifetime Service to Fellowmen Award (Surry County Citizens Forum)

**1996**

Filed complaint with the TRADOC, the command center for Ft. Lee, and identified the discrimination as an example of "what's going on in the United States Army" across the nation

**1998**

July 7: Sworn in as the first Black mayor of the City of Hopewell, VA  
The "Real Dream" Award (Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Life Institute)  
Resigned as president of the Virginia State Unit of SCLC

**2000**

February 2: American Century Award (The Washington Times Foundation)  
April: Released the report, Unequal Justice: African Americans in the Virginia Criminal Justice System, as a member of the Virginia Advisory Committee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights

**2001**

Selected for Dominion Strong Men & Women: Excellence in Leadership

**2003**

February 27: Interviewed by Brian Ward for the University of Florida Oral History Program for the Southern Regional Council Project  
March 20: Interviewed by Media Consultants Global, Inc. of Richmond to be included in the Voices of Freedom, the videotaped oral histories of leaders in the Civil Rights Movement in VA; the oral histories are a part of the Virginia Commonwealth University Digital Library

**2002**

Commissioned Paul DiPasquale to work with the Martin Luther King Foundation of Hopewell, VA to design and produce a bronze monument in honor of Dr. King's historic civil rights visit to the Hopewell courthouse on March 29, 1962

**2004**

April: Ceremony to unveil the completed bronze statue erected to Dr. King on the Ashford Civic Plaza in front of the courthouse in downtown Hopewell; Martin Luther King III attended the ceremony

July 10: Honored on his 80th birthday at the Marriott in Richmond during which the superintendent of Hopewell Public Schools announced that the Carter G. Woodson Middle School Library would be dedicated to and named for Dr. Harris

**2005**

Elected National Vice President of SCLC

March: Attended the 40th anniversary celebration of the 1965 Selma to Montgomery March in Alabama

**2006**

Secured a \$3000 grant from the R.G. Reynolds Foundation to support a National SCLC membership drive

**2007**

February 20: Public Life Unveiled, a program sponsored by Hopewell Public Schools, to reveal a showcase in the Curtis W. Harris, Sr. Library in Carter G. Woodson Middle School; the showcase highlighted the public life of Dr. Harris

Marched against a proposed ethanol factory being built in Hopewell, VA; protest was supported by the National SCLC with the presence of its president, Charles K. Steele, Jr.

December 16: Retired as pastor of Union Baptist Church after 46 years of service; Gov. Timothy Kaine was keynote speaker for the retirement banquet, Rev. Stephen Hewlett officiated the service where Dr. Harris delivered his final sermon, and the Flames of Glory reunited to render the music; Dr. Harris is now Pastor Emeritus of Union Baptist Church

## **2008**

April 25 & 26: Attended the Civil Rights, Civil Duties in the Pursuit of Family, Happiness & Peace Conference and Prayer Breakfast at Howard University in Washington D.C.

## **2009**

May: Established the C. W. Harris Empowerment Center (CWHEC), a non-profit organization to spread the love of God and to meet human need through a series of free workshops on various topics

July 25: CWHEC hosted an empowerment workshop entitled Know Your Rights on the Job with Herbert Brown, director of the Norfolk office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, as expert guest

September 11: Dr. Curtis W. Harris Solidarity Lunch opened the 19th annual Southeast Community Day Parade and Festival in Newport News, VA; Southeast Community Day was founded and organized by Andrew Shannon

September 19: CWHEC hosted an empowerment workshop entitled Know Your Rights-Part II with Rudy McCullom, a Richmond attorney, as expert guest

November 7: CWHEC hosted an empowerment workshop for teenagers entitled Why Go To College with an expert panel that included Karen D. Harris, Lavern Myrick-Simms, and Rex Patterson

## **2010**

May 4: Relected to the Hopewell City Council after 24 years in office

November 29: Suffered a stroke while attending the funeral of Congressman Bobby Scott's mother in Newport News, VA and hospitalized at Riverside Regional Medical Center

## **2011**

January 22: Heralded by the Unity Ride and Rally from Newport News to Hopewell organized by Andrew Shannon in support of Dr. Harris' recovery from illness

January 21 & 22: Virginia General Assembly passed a resolution commending Dr. Harris as one Virginia's most celebrated religious, social, civic, and political leaders

May 22: Ruth Jones Harris, Dr. Harris' wife, passed away after 65 years of marriage

July 23: Dr. Curtis W. Harris and Ruth Jones Harris Day: Feeding 5000 and Community Celebration organized by Andrew Shannon honored Dr. Harris and his late wife, Ruth

September: Henry McCoy of Petersburg, James Moore of Hopewell and Iris Walker of Hopewell added to the CWHEC Board of Directors; Dr. Harris remained president of the non-profit organization and Joanne Lucas became secretary-treasurer

## **2012**

January 19: Attended the 2012 Strong Men & Women festivities at the Marriott in Richmond

January 24: Attended President Obama's State of the Union Address in Washington D.C. on an invitation from Senator Mark Warner (D-VA)

February 4: CWHEC hosted an empowerment workshop entitled Felony Disfranchisement: Regaining the Right to Vote with Rick Newman, the Hopewell Commonwealth's Attorney, and Theodore Hawkins, a convicted felon who regained his voting rights, as expert guests

February 25 & 26: Honored at Black History Month programs in Petersburg and Dinwiddie, VA

March 1: Retired from the Hopewell City Council after 26 years of service

July 1: Celebrated his 88th birthday in the home of his son/daughter-in-law, Kenneth/Renate, with family and friends

July 27: Honored by Bethany Baptist Association and Allied Bodies at Good Shepherd Baptist Church in Petersburg, VA for 45 years of service to the organization in the roles of secretary, Vice Moderator, Moderator, and Executive Director

September: Dr. Harris dissolved, CWHEC, his non-profit organization

### **2013**

January 30: Attended the 2013 Strong Men & Women in Virginia History festivities at the Marriott in Richmond accompanied by Mrs. Iris Walker, a family friend

May 17: Attended the graduation of his daughter, Joanne, who received her PhD from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA

May 21: Attended the May Day Assembly at Hopewell High School to observe the giving of the 2013 Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Foundation, Inc. Scholarship

July 1: Celebrated his 89th birthday with family and friends

July 6: Attended the Wyche, Jones, Tharpe Family Reunion (Ruth's family) in Hopewell, VA

August 28: Attended the Let Freedom Ring Ceremony on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom accompanied by his son, Michael, and his grandsons, Bodie and Loc

November 17: Attended the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Gilfield Baptist Church in Ivor, VA where he pastored for 33 years from 1961 to 1994; he was accompanied by his daughter, Joanne

### **2014**

January 2: The papers and other historical materials of Curtis and Ruth Harris were donated to the Earl Gregg Swem Library at The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA by their children

February 5: Attended the 2014 Strong Men and Women in Virginia History festivities at the Marriott in Richmond accompanied by Mrs. Iris Walker, a family friend February 6-13: Given a Facebook tribute by his son, Michael, in a series entitled: "DR. CURTIS W. HARRIS, SR.: MY Father, MY Hero, MY Friend," in celebration of Black History Month

February 11: The Hopewell City Council voted to rename Terminal Street, Rev. C. W. Harris Street; for 57 years, Curtis and Ruth Harris lived at 209 Terminal Street, a street in Hopewell which now bears his name; the council also voted to rename Booker Street (which intersects Terminal), Ruth Harris Way in honor of Curtis' late wife, Ruth

June 15: The Street Sign Ceremony hosted by the Hopewell City Council was held at Union Baptist Church to pay tribute to Rev. Dr. Curtis W. Harris and his late wife, Dr. Ruth J. Harris; Herbert Bragg, Hopewell's Director of

Intergovernmental and Public Affairs was master of ceremony, music was rendered by the Harris Connection Singers and statements were made by Dr. Anthony Nutt, Union Baptist pastor, Mayor Michael Bujakowski, Vice Mayor Jasmine Guy, City Manager Michael Haley, Councilwoman Brenda Pelham, Councilwoman Jackie Shonak, State Senator Henry Marsh and Dr. Joanne Lucas, Dr. Harris' daughter; letters were read from Governor Terry McAuliffe, U.S. Senator Mark Warner and U.S. Senator Timothy Kaine; and the ceremony concluded with unveiling the street signs followed by refreshments in the UBC fellowship hall

July 1: Celebrated his 90th birthday with family and friends

## 2015

January 19: Spoke at Brighter Living Assisted Living where he was a resident for the celebration of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; shared memories of the 50 mile march from Selma to Montgomery for voting rights in 1965

March 4: Highlighted at the Radio One Incorporated Virginia Legends Luncheon held in the Virginia War Memorial located at 621 S. Belvidere Street, Richmond, VA 23220 to educate students and the community about Dr. Harris' work of paving the way for a better education system, justice system and civil rights for all people.

June 20: The Harris Connection hosted a Father's Day Celebration at the Hampton Inn in Hopewell, VA with food catered by Mr. B's; the celebration paid tribute to Dr. Harris and all of the daddies in the family

July 1: Celebrated his 91st birthday with family and friends

## 2016

January 20: Presented the Lifetime Leadership Award by the Children's Home of Virginia Baptist, Inc.

July 1: Celebrated his 92nd birthday with family and friends

August 13: Attended the Wyche, Jones, Tharpe "Throw Back Picnic" (Ruth's Family) at Hadad's Lake in Henrico, VA

November 24: Celebrated Thanksgiving with his family at The Crossings at Ironbridge in Chester, VA where he is a resident; the festive occasion was planned and implemented by his grandchildren, Dee and Crystal

## 2017

February 25: Attended It's A Family Affair at Union Baptist Church in celebration of Black History Month and the church's 100th Anniversary; the Flames of Glory gospel group reunited to render the music

July 1: Honored at, Life and Legacy of Rev. Dr. Curtis West Harris, a program initiated and planned by Dr. Phyllis Byrd and hosted at Union Baptist Church in celebration of his 93rd birthday; the program featured echoes from Felecia Brown Irving, Avon Miles, Henry Marsh, Marlene Goodwyn, Jackie Shornak, Addie Hall Scott, Wendell Wellons, Gloria Hewlett, and William Keen/a poem written and performed by Mae Pettaway/a video tribute entitled "Curtis Harris: A Man About Town" styled by Joanne Lucas/and music rendered by the Flames of Glory; the thoughtful occasion concluded with a cookout on the church grounds supervised by Al Gilliam

July 2: Joined his family, the Harris Connection, at the Hampton Inn in Hopewell for a catered breakfast in remembrance of his late wife, Dr. Ruth Jones Harris; 48 members of the Harris Connection were in attendance for fun, laughter, "Ruth Memories," and a video entitled "RUTH: Harris Connection Matriarch" styled by her daughter, Joanne

December 10: Dr. Harris, 93, was granted his wings at approximately 11:10 p.m. in his room at The Crossings at Ironbridge in Chester, VA

December 16: Dr. Harris laid in repose at Carter G. Woodson Middle School in Hopewell, in front of the library named for him, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

December 18: Dr. Harris' life was honored in a homegoing service at First Baptist Church, Hopewell; Chaplain (COL) James Palmer, Jr. officiated and delivered a moving eulogy; music was rendered by the Union Baptist Church Choir, Hopewell; his daughter, Mrs. Karen Bradford, sang a spectacular rendition of Dr. Harris' favorite Negro spiritual, "If I Can Help Somebody;" acknowledgements were expressed by Rev. W. Darrell Boggs, Mr. Jerrail Brown, Bishop Tyrone Harper, Mrs. Jackie Shornak, Rev. William Keen, Rev. Dr. Ruby Moore, Senator Rosalyn Dance, Lt. Col. R. Michelle Pritchett (daughter), and Dr. Joanne Lucas (daughter); the video tribute, "Curtis Harris: A Man About Town" was shared; to conclude the homegoing, Dr. Harris' casket was gently lifted onto a horse-driven, uncovered hearse; his funeral procession made a trek down Route 10 in Hopewell to 209 Rev. C. W. Harris Street where Dr. Harris resided for more than 60 years; Dr. Harris' final resting place is at Appomattox Cemetery on 703 N. 21st Avenue in Hopewell

**5. Property Ownership** (Check as many categories as apply):

Private:  Public\Local  Public\State  Public\Federal

**Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property** (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Rev. Anthony L. Nutt, D. Min, Pastor  
organization: Union Baptist Church  
street & number: 212 Terminal Street  
city or town: Hopewell state: VA zip code: 23860  
e-mail: unionbaptistchurch6@verizon.net telephone: (804) 458-9180

Legal Owner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**•• Signature required for processing all applications. ••**

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Josie Craighead  
Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Information** (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title: Marc C. Wagner, Architectural Historian  
organization: Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
street & number: 2801 Kensington Avenue  
city or town: Richmond state: VA zip code: 23221  
e-mail: marc.wagner@dhr.virginia.gov telephone: (804) 482-6099

**6. Notification**

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator or City Manager.

name/title: \_\_\_\_\_  
locality: \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number: \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town: \_\_\_\_\_ state: \_\_\_\_\_ zip code: \_\_\_\_\_  
telephone: \_\_\_\_\_