

Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church – March 26, 2023

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Church in person at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. | Livestream on YouTube at 11:00 a.m.



Opening Music

(9:30) “Étude in F minor, Op. 25, No. 2”
Wade Meyers, piano

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

(11:00) “Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley”
Christian Women Fellowship

Welcome

Welcome to all! Please register your attendance with the QR code on the back of the bulletin, or with the online link, or on paper in the church Gathering Space. Need help? Ask any usher.

Call to Worship [*responsive*]

Return to the Lord your God,
for God is gracious.
Confess to the Lord your God,
for God is merciful.
Repent to the Lord your God,
for God is slow to anger.
Praise the Lord your God,
for God abounds in steadfast love.
Worship the Lord your God.
Together, let us worship God!

Opening Prayer

Hymn [*stand*]

“O, For a World”

Glory to God, #372

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession [*together*]

Lord, you showed us true humility by becoming one of us,
yet too often we practice pride.
You cried alongside your friends,
and too often we rush past the pain of others.
You loved those who were weak, despised, or cast out,
yet we love those who are strong, respected, or popular.
You freely forgave and healed,
and we hold grudges and cause pain.
You prayed that we would be united with each other,
and we focus on the differences that separate us from other believers.
Forgive us, Lord, so that we will shine with your glory. Amen.

[*Silence for Personal Prayer*]

Assurance of Pardon

We Listen to God's Word

Children's Message

Carolyn Hayes

*Children and youth leave for class. Children can be picked up after church
in Room 30/31 or Room 32/33. At 11:00, youth will be released from class to find you.*

Sung Response [*seated*]

"We Are Standing on Holy Ground"

Glory to God #406

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

Acts 6:8–15

Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. ¹⁰But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. ¹¹Then they secretly instigated some men to say, 'We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.' ¹²They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. ¹³They set up false witnesses who said, 'This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; ¹⁴for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us.' ¹⁵And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Acts 7:1-2, 51-60

⁷Then the high priest asked him, 'Are these things so?' ²And Stephen replied:

"Brothers and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to our ancestor Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran.

⁵¹ You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are for ever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. ⁵²Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. ⁵³You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it."

⁵⁴ When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. ⁵⁵But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶'Look,' he said, 'I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!' ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them.' When he had said this, he died.

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Elder Shani McIlwain

We Respond to God's Grace

Hymn [*stand*]

"God of Grace and God of Glory"

Glory to God #307

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

(9:30) "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"
Wade Meyers, piano

(11:00) "The All Weather Friend"
Christian Women Fellowship

Sung Response

"God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending"

Glory to God, #716

God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store:
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door,
gifted by you, we turn to you, offering up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

We Depart for Service

Announcements

Sending Song [*stand*] "I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me" Glory to God, #700

Passing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Closing Blessing

Closing Music (9:30) "Toccata in G Major" GIOVANNI MARTINI
Wade Meyers, organ

(11:00) "When the Storms of Life are Raging, Stand By Me"
Christian Women Fellowship

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Participating in the service:

Elder Shani McIlwain, National Capital Presbytery Moderator, Guest Preacher
Mr. Wade Meyers, Director of Music and Worship Arts
Ms. Carolyn Hayes, Director of Children and Young Families
Rev. Mary Austin

The Call to Worship and the Prayer of Confession are adapted from the Worship Sourcebook.

The flowers in the sanctuary were given by Roger Burkhart in memory of Nancy Burkhart.

Thank you for
worshipping with us!

gpchurch.org/guestbook

