



THE MAINSTREAM

SUNDAYS

WORSHIP IN PERSON
9:30 & 11:00 AM

WORSHIP BY LIVESTREAM
11:00 AM



THIRD QUARTER | 2025



*From the Heart of
Rev. LeAnn Hodges*

FIRM FOUNDATIONS

Dear GPC Members and Friends,

When I work with congregations experiencing a lot of change, one of the first things that we do is identify who they are at their core. What specifically is that community of faith called by God to be in this moment in time? At GPC, we have been doing that work over the past two years, and in June the Session met to clarify the congregation's values, drawing from the work of last year's Jumpstart process.

Below is our existing **Mission Statement**, which still feels relevant:

Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church is called by God to be a global, caring community of faith, centered in Jesus Christ, training people to share His life everywhere we go.

Our **top three priorities** are as follows:

- To worship the Lord with heart, soul, mind, and strength
- To engage our neighbors in central Montgomery County
- To equip each generation for Christian discipleship

Based on the Jumpstart Report, these are our **values**:

1. **We are Christ-Centered:** We are centered in Christ through scripture, and we seek to reflect God's

love in all aspects of our life together. Faith and discipleship are central to our identity.

2. **We are the Body of Christ in Community:** We are a multi-ethnic, multi-generational community who embraces diversity in worship, leadership, and fellowship. This is our strength and our calling.
3. **We are the Body of Christ in Service:** We are committed to being a caring community who engages with neighbors locally and globally through our ministries, partnerships, and acts of service that reflect God's love.

As we move into the fall, anticipating the arrival of a new pastor, you are all invited to reflect on the various ministries and activities where you invest your time and money. Do they align with the mission and values of the congregation? If not, what might you celebrate with thanksgiving and let go of? What is bearing fruit that might flourish with some attention? And what is emerging that might not have been anticipated?

May our foundation be in Christ, who is the cornerstone, and might we be good stewards of all that we have been given.

In Faith and Hope,
REV. LEANN HODGES
TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

WAYS TO CONNECT



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EQUIPPING DISCIPLES

Wow! The last several months have been fabulous—July in particular. VBS was great! Our theme was our Faith Family Forest. Using the idea of trees



in the forest along with the idea of a family tree, we talked about how the matriarchs and patriarchs of the Old Testament taught their children, who taught theirs, and so on and so on. We studied Abraham and Sarah, Moses, Ruth, David, and Esther and saw how each of these stories illustrates the people of God having faith in God and how they love and care for their families and their communities. We also talked about how God created the world and all its inhabitants to be in relationship with one another and God. In science, we took special care to talk about how trees are an important part of any ecosystem, providing food as well as shelter, and putting important nutrients into both the soil and the air. And we just plain had fun!



This month also saw Children's Ministry undertake the *Do Justice* study and a piece of the *Follow Me* curriculum that we used a couple of years ago. As part of this study, on Sundays that we have Sunday School we stop at the church library and visit Carolyn & Irene Coleman's racial and social justice children's books. We encourage the kids to check out a book, read it with their parents, and return it the following Sunday.



We also welcomed Gayle Luckenbaugh as the Interim Children's Ministry Coordinator. This is nothing new for Gayle; she has often stepped up and led Children's Ministry when people have been called to do other things, and has unfailingly done a great job. She will work with GPC at least through the end of the program year.

And thank you all for the last nine years—they have been amazing!

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESUMES ON SEPTEMBER 14

—CAROLYN HAYES
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN
AND YOUNG FAMILIES



Highlights from our Fishing Derby Day



SUMMER ★ YOUTH HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights from our Youth-Led Worship Service

As summer ends, we look ahead to fall!

Youth Events:

Sept. 3 | Parent Dinner & Meeting | 7pm
Sept. 7 | Youth Breakfast Fall Kickoff | 11am
Sept. 13 | Volunteer Training | 9am-12:30pm
Sept. 26-28 | Fall Retreat

College Events:

Sept. 2 | Bi-weekly Bible Study | 6:30pm
Oct. 4 | Harpers Ferry Highland Games
Dec. 14 | Christmas Market Event

*For more information on Youth & College events,
contact Carrie Larsen.*

MUSIC NOTES

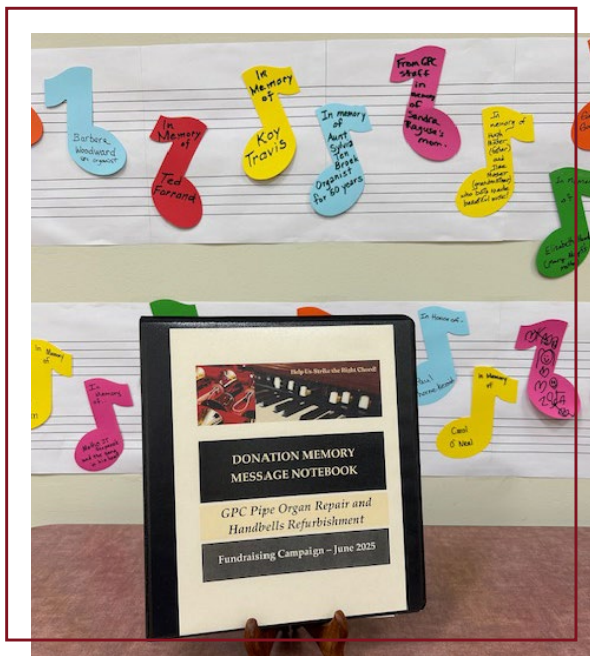
*You Helped Us Strike
the Right Chord!*

I'm thrilled and humbled to announce that as of August 12 the organ and handbell fundraising campaign has netted \$48,545.98! That amount, which well exceeded our goal of \$35,000, represents contributions from 82 individuals and two groups. Because of your generosity, we now have the funds to completely refurbish the organ and the handbells. The money we received in excess of the goal will be used to support and develop the Music Ministry at GPC.

I would especially like to thank Lucille Baur for her tireless work on behalf of the fundraiser. She brought her professional experience, creativity, and passion for the Music Ministry to help GPC achieve the donation goal. Thank you, Lucille!

The handbells will be sent out to be refurbished in May 2026. They will be out for the summer and back in time for the fall 2026 season.

The organ is scheduled for repairs to commence on September 15. It is still to be determined how long the refurbishment will take. Once the organ has been refurbished and reinstalled, we will plan a celebration, which will include the recognition of donors, honorees, and/or memorials.



The Joy Singers

In addition to the Joy Chimes and Joy Ringers, the Joy Singers will return in the fall. I am excited to share that some of the Youth have volunteered to work with the children to make this year's family Christmas Eve service a truly memorable worship experience. We will begin planning for that service in early fall.

The choir is open to children in Grades K-5. We will rehearse after the 11:00 service as we did last year. In addition to Christmas Eve, they will sing in worship several times during the year. The rehearsal and worship schedule has yet to be determined, but when the children do sing, it will be at the 11:00 service. The expectation is that if they wish to sing in worship, they will participate regularly in choir rehearsals.

As before, we will sing, play instruments, move, and play games during our time together in rehearsal. Be on the lookout for a detailed schedule, which will be sent to all families in late summer or early fall. Any questions that you might have may be directed to Gayle Luckenbaugh or to me, as we will be working together closely with the choir.

Intergenerational Handbell Choir Forming

Many of you have been waiting for this, and the time has arrived! In September, GPC will start an intergenerational handbell choir. Rehearsals will be on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 6:35 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The group is geared to beginner musicians. No experience playing handbells is required or expected. If you are a novice music reader, have no fear; there are strategies to make playing handbells accessible. Learning to read notes (at least the few that you will need to know), rhythms, and proper handbell techniques will all be part of the curriculum. It is my hope that this choir will be a low-pressure, enjoyable learning experience for all. My plan is for the choir to participate in worship three times during the year. If you are interested or have questions, please reach out to me via email (*call the church office*) or speak to me on any Sunday morning. I look forward to undertaking this adventure with you.

—KATHERINE WILLIAMS
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The PNC is very happy to report that a call has been extended for the position of Senior Pastor and accepted. We are enthusiastic and unanimous in the selection of this candidate and cannot express strongly enough how blessed we feel that GPC will have the opportunity to have this individual standing with us as we turn the page onto the next chapter for GPC.



We are currently finalizing the Terms of Call with the candidate, which will then be submitted to the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry Administrator, and an examination of the candidate will be scheduled and conducted. The name of the candidate is required to be kept confidential until the candidate has successfully passed the examination, been approved by the Committee on Ministry's Congregational Transitions

Commission, and the PNC is given the go-ahead to share the candidate's identity and background with the congregation and proceed with presenting the candidate for congregational approval.

Although the official process takes the exact schedule out of our hands, we hope to be able to have our candidate meet the congregation and preach a sermon sometime mid-August to early September, followed by a congregational meeting and vote. Depending on that vote, the candidate would step into the position as soon as possible after that meeting, allowing time for relocation.

The PNC is extremely grateful for God's guidance and hand in this discernment process, and we thank you for prayers as we navigate the examination and hiring process. Please continue your support as our approved Senior Pastor joins GPC, and for our congregation's journey of faith.

—LAURIE GIRA
PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

NEW SENIOR PASTOR COMING TO GPC SOON ... EVERYONE NEEDS A DIRECTORY PHOTO AND A NAME TAG!

Please ensure that our new pastor won't have to guess who you are! That is best accomplished by wearing your name tag at every GPC service and having your picture in our website's online directory! As we get closer to welcoming a new pastor, it's even more important.

Plus, it's easy. Many folks already have name tags, but some have fallen out of the habit of wearing them each week. If you need one, just fill out the name tag request form at the Welcome Desk. That's also where you may pick yours up. Many name tags are still waiting to be claimed.

For photos, you have three options: 1) add a photo yourself (directions and a video are on the Online Directory page of our website at gpchurch.org); 2) email a single or family photo to GPC's Office Manager, Sue Goodyear, at office@gpchurch.org that she will post; or 3) have your photo taken in Lindsay Hall after services and we will post it for you.

When we see your smiling face in person, we also want to see a **name tag** under that smile, and when we see your name in our online directory, we also want to see your smiling **photograph** above it!

—LUCILLE BAUR
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

ENGAGING WITH GPC . . . COMMITTEES, MINISTRIES, AND MORE!

This year, we are taking a closer look at how much more fulfilling your spiritual and social experience can be by becoming more engaged with GPC! Hopefully you've enjoyed a little slower pace this summer, so now is a good time to start thinking about gearing up for new opportunities to serve this fall!

We like to say that "There's a World of Opportunities to Engage with GPC!" and by serving we can make the world a better place! Read through the list below for activities coordinated by GPC's committees and ministries, along with the names of the chairs, who can provide more information. Call the church office or email office@gpchurch.org for contact information for the person who can help match your time and talents to your choice of service opportunities. (All information is correct as of August 2025.)

—LUCILLE BAUR
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Annette Ward, Chair
1st Tuesday, 7:00 pm, Zoom

- GPC Outdoor Spring Cleanup Day
- Special projects, such as fixing up the Manse for its next occupant
- Other projects throughout the year for folks with skills in small repairs or painting

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Lucille Baur, Chair
3rd Monday, 2:00 pm, Zoom

- The Mainstream newsletter
- Church brochures
- Editing of all copy on our website
- Editorial support for all copy created for public distribution
- Name tags/online directory photos
- Print and online advertising
- Editorial support for publicizing committee and church events
- Oversight of GPC website and App
- Writing support for bulletin and mid-week email announcements
- Interior & exterior signage, including exterior banners
- Historical GPC photographs display

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Denise Schleckser, Chair
3rd Monday, 7:00 pm, Zoom

- Little Free Pantry
- Food Pantry support for Epworth UMC
- Rebuilding Together Montgomery County (RTMC)
- SOME (So Others Might Eat)
- The Lord's Table
- Gaithersburg HELP
- KindWorks (various projects)
- Summit Hall Elementary School
- "Let's Read" Literacy Tutoring Program (in partnership with Epworth UMC)
- Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) Mission Trips
- Prison Ministry
- Lenten projects
- Christmas Giving Tree
- Interfaith Works Women's Shelter
- Interfaith 5K – Labor Day Weekend (contact Sandy Menzies)
- Blood Drive
- Rockville Pride Day



CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE

Laurie Wallace-Lanham, Chair
2nd Tuesday, 7:00 pm, Zoom

- Very Important Presbyterian Seniors (VIPS)
- Sunday Morning Coffee Hour
- Men's Breakfast Group
- Creation Care Committee
- Library Committee
- Table Fellowship
- Craft Group
- Receptions for funerals and baptisms
- Employment Support Group
- Missionary Support

EQUIPPING DISCIPLES COMMITTEE

Tom Bahls, Chair
2nd Tuesday, 7:00 pm, Zoom

- Adult Education
- Children's Ministry
- Youth Ministry
- Families Ministry

FINANCE COMMITTEE

David Bartley, Accounting Manager
2nd Thursday, 11:00 am, Zoom

- Leads preparation of annual operation budget
- Provides for audits and financial reviews
- Monitors the use of financial instruments for funds
- Recommends movements between funds

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Gary Aller, Chair
Monthly (meetings are closed)

MATTHEW 25 RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

Mary Spencer, Chair
1st Monday, 7:30 pm, Zoom

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Sandy Menzies, Chair
Periodically (varies from year to year)

STEWARDSHIP AND PLANNED GIVING COMMITTEE

Paul Whitehead, Chair
2nd Monday, 6:00 pm, Zoom

- Annual pledge drive
- Annual Living Legacy Fellowship dinner
- Special-purpose capital campaigns
- Seminars/workshops regarding more tax-efficient ways of giving

VITAL WORSHIP MINISTRY

Kofi Kumi, Chair
3rd Monday (usually), 7:00 pm, Zoom

- Ushers
- Lay worship leaders
- Sound/audio-visual
- Music
 - Sanctuary Choir
 - Praise Team
 - Canterbury Ringers
 - Joy Chimes
 - Joy Ringers
 - Joy Singers
 - Intergenerational Ringers
 - CWF (Christian Women Fellowship)
 - CMF (Christian Men's Fellowship)
- Sanctuary flowers
- Communion preparers/servers

DEACONS

Rev. Deb Vaughn, Staff Leader
Monthly (meetings are closed)

SPONSORED GROUPS AT GPC

- Cub Scout Pack 64
Barbara Clark,
Charter Organization Representative or
cubscoutpack64md@gmail.com
- Montgomery Philharmonic
Barbara Oldroyd, Board Member



UPCOMING MINISTRY FAIR!

GPC held its first Ministry Fair in several years last April and will hold the next one on **Sunday, October 12, in Lindsay Hall**. Mark your calendars and plan to attend!

GPC AND EPWORTH UMC TO BEGIN HOSTING “LET’S READ” LITERACY TUTORING PROGRAM



As many of you already know, our former GPC Associate Pastor Norman (Norm) Gordon now serves as the Chief Catalyst for the Germantown Global Connection (GGC), a spiritual community in Upper Montgomery County). GGC originally established the “Let’s Read!” literacy tutoring program that has been serving struggling readers and their families very successfully. Norm was pleased to announce that after years of discussion and much discernment by the GPC and Epworth congregations, a decision was made to partner in providing a fourth tutoring site in Gaithersburg. The new program will serve 2nd Grade readers at Rosemont, Summit Hall, Gaithersburg, and Washington Grove Elementary Schools who need some extra assistance.

Because the staff has already built a strong and trusting bond with the local Hispanic community, the church location for the program was determined to be Epworth, located at 9008 Rosemont Drive. Tutoring will be offered on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 5:15 to 6:45 p.m.

Several GPC members have volunteered at previous “Let’s Read” locations, and the Third Quarter 2024 *Mainstream* included an [article](#) about two of our volunteers—Carole Tukes and Mary Masselink—and their very positive experiences. Reading this article will give you a great sense of what being a volunteer tutor entails, as well as the personal rewards to be gained from tutoring.



Plans are still being finalized for an October start-up for this new program. If you would like to receive additional information or register to volunteer, email Kris Maldarelli at office@gpchurch.org.

—LUCILLE BAUR
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

PLANS FOR THE GENEROUS VON MOSS LEGACY GIFT

Session has approved the first areas of spending from the very generous Von Moss Legacy gift, as follows:

- Replacing the aging carpet in Spencer Hall with a vinyl floor
- Purchasing new computers for our church offices to replace the old ones
- Expanding our advertising budget to help attract more newcomers to GPC
- Increasing the amount of this year’s funding support to local food banks
- Funding additional scholarships to send Youth to Bible camps

Robert & Mary Jane Von Moss were long-time members, having joined GPC in March 1980. She died in April 2017 and he died in May 2024. We are very grateful to them for remembering GPC in their will.

—PAUL WHITEHEAD
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE



DEMONSTRATING FAITH THROUGH GENEROSITY

The theme of this year's stewardship campaign is "Demonstrating Faith Through Generosity." What does that mean for our church and us?

In many ways, generosity is itself an act of faith. It requires trust—trust that what we give will be used well, that our needs will still be met, and that our actions matter in the lives of others.

Consider the parable of the Good Samaritan. A man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho is attacked by robbers and left for dead. A priest and a Levite both pass by without helping. Only a Samaritan—a cultural outsider—stops, tends to the man's wounds, and pays for his care at an inn.

This story is so familiar that we may overlook its deeper challenge. The road from Jerusalem to Jericho was notoriously dangerous. As Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "You start out in Jerusalem, which is about 1,200 feet above sea level. And by the time you get down to Jericho . . . you're about 2,200 feet below sea level. That's a dangerous road." Thieves were known to fake injuries to lure travelers into ambushes. The priest and Levite may have feared for their own safety—or doubted whether their help would make a difference. They probably felt their actions were perfectly reasonable.

But Jesus calls on us to think and act differently. As Dr. King put it, the priest and Levite asked, "If I help this man, what will happen to me?" The Samaritan asked, "If I do not help this man, what will happen to him?" That is the heart of faithful generosity.

This year, I invite you to reflect on how you might demonstrate your faith through generosity—through your time, your talents, and your treasure. Whether it's supporting the church's mission or responding to needs in our wider community, your gifts are a testimony to the faith we share: that God is at work in Gaithersburg, and that we are called to be part of that work.

Let us keep our eyes open for the wounded among us. For those who are hungry. For those who are afraid. And when we see them, may we respond with the same faith and generosity as the Samaritan.

As Jesus commanded: "Go and do likewise."

—AUSTIN CASTELLANOS
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY NEWS

The Racial Justice Ministry (RJM) has continued to meet regularly throughout the summer. In June, RJM facilitated a well-attended NAACP homebuying seminar in Lindsay Hall. The panelists, which included representatives from local government, agencies, lenders, real estate agents, and other housing professionals, presented on a variety of topics intended to empower minority groups to build wealth through homeownership. GPC's Carolyn Coleman, who serves on the NAACP committee that sponsored the symposium, was also in attendance.

If you are interested in receiving updates from RJM about upcoming meetings or activities, or would like to offer suggestions, email Mary Spencer, RJM Chair, at office@gpchurch.org.

—AARON CARUSO
RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY





GPC SPANS the GLOBE

PAKISTAN

GPC benefits from and takes pride in the international diversity of its members. These quarterly articles are written by our internationally born members to share some of their home-country cultures and traditions, along with photos of the author and the featured country. We hope that these continuing articles in *The Mainstream* will help us build even stronger understanding and connections.

Hearts Transformed:

A Journey into PSSM's Impact in Pakistan

Traveling to Pakistan on behalf of GPC was both a homecoming and a mission. As someone with ancestral roots in the region, stepping into the vibrant, yet challenging, ministry landscape of Pakistan Sunday School Ministry (PSSM) offered a rare opportunity to assess cross-cultural partnership through personal as well as vocational lenses.

With only 3% of Pakistan's 240 million people identifying as Christian, ministry here carries profound risks, discrimination, social exclusion, and little legal protection. Yet it's precisely in these difficult conditions that the light of the Gospel shines most powerfully.

PSSM was founded in 2000 and exemplifies faithful, indigenous leadership. The ministry operates inter-denominationally, centering on spiritual formation, recreational evangelism, media outreach, and leadership development, all rooted in evangelical theology and geared toward holistic transformation.

Two Decades of Tangible Impact

My February visit, deliberately timed outside the formality of anniversary events, offered an unfiltered glimpse into PSSM's day-to-day operations. Founder Adnan Sandhu shared remarkable metrics: over one million children reached with the Gospel in just 25 years. Community engagement was palpable, and the ministry's longevity has fostered multi-generational spiritual impact.



PSSM Nationwide

At a leadership consultation titled "Children and Youth Development," I witnessed how PSSM builds capacity at every level. Ministry leaders, pastors, and evangelists gathered from across Pakistan. The fact that 40% of them were women is a testament to inclusive leadership within culturally conservative norms. These weren't just inspirational sessions; participants used SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis tools to critically evaluate and refine their outreach strategies, revealing a commitment to excellence grounded in both Scripture and best practices.

One pastor testified to establishing Sunday schools across numerous villages, using PSSM's resource kit: children's Bibles in Urdu, Bags of Blessings, and coordination with Samaritan's Purse. The strategic integration of tools and training ensures not only the reach but the depth of discipleship.



Distribution of Children's Bibles in Urdu



Sports as a Bridge to the Gospel

One of the most inspiring programs that I observed was a three-day sports ministry retreat. PSSM has creatively adapted sports as a medium for evangelism, especially among youth. Games and athletics serve as relational entry points, leading naturally to moments of worship, teaching, and leadership planning. One highlight was the inclusion of physically challenged youth, whose joy and participation underscored PSSM's deep commitment to the dignity of every person.

Stories That Speak Louder Than Stats

While numbers are impressive, stories reveal the real heart of the ministry. I met Jessica, once a child in PSSM programs and now the Media Manager overseeing the "Umeed Kids TV" YouTube channel, with over 13,000 subscribers. She's earned professional credentials in communications while continuing her service to the ministry that shaped her faith.

Dr. Rubab is another product of PSSM's long-term discipleship. From a young participant to a Ph.D. in biochemistry with international academic experience, she now serves as a program manager within PSSM. Her story blends global exposure, academic achievement, and unwavering ministry commitment—a living model of holistic formation.

Responding to Crisis with Compassion

PSSM's work doesn't stop at education or evangelism. When Christian communities face violence, PSSM steps in with material aid and trauma healing. In one recent attack, they helped 100 families recover with sustained support, combining physical resources with emotional and spiritual care, especially for children. Their programs reflect a deep understanding of pastoral care, developmental psychology, and community restoration.

A Maturing Partnership

As part of our shared mission, I led staff workshops on American church models and digital tools. Far from being passive recipients, the PSSM team engaged critically, demonstrating their readiness for continued growth and innovation. Their ministry model is cyclical: evangelism leads to discipleship, then to leadership, and finally to multiplication—all rooted in theological integrity.



An Eternal Investment

The evidence is clear: GPC's 15-year partnership with PSSM is bearing fruit. The impact of over a million children reached, leaders raised, and communities transformed is undeniable. What began as a mission investment has matured into a strategic alliance built on trust, shared vision, and measurable results.

In the words of Matthew 11:5, the Good News is being preached to the poor. Through faithful local leadership and cross-cultural collaboration, PSSM is not only surviving in adversity, it is thriving, reminding us that Kingdom work, done well, always echoes into eternity.

—ARFAN SANDHU



Originally from Pakistan, Arfan was nurtured in a Christian household that cultivated his lifelong devotion to the Church. A seasoned IT professional and project manager with a degree in psychology, Arfan brings a thoughtful, analytical, and compassionate approach to leadership and service. Since joining GPC in 2000, he has served faithfully as an Elder (twice), a valued member of the Pastor Nominating Committee, and on various church committees. His commitment to the global Church is evident in his sustained support of Christian missions, particularly those serving children and youth.

Arfan and his wife, Ulfat, are the proud parents of three children: Yerusa, Ashley, and Matthew. His guiding Bible verse is Micah 6:8: "Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God."

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE AN ARTICLE ABOUT YOUR HOME COUNTRY,
CONTACT PETER FOFUH AT OFFICE@GPCHURCH.ORG.

WELCOME, NEW CHURCH OFFICERS!

THE FOLLOWING ELDERS, DEACONS, AND TRUSTEE WERE NOMINATED TO SERVE
AND WILL BE ORDAINED DURING WORSHIP IN JANUARY 2026.

ELDERS



Austin Castellanos

My wife, Natalie, and I live in Montgomery Village with our two children, Zora and Walter. We moved to Maryland from Georgia in 2021, when I completed my doctoral studies and began working in Washington, DC. Since then, we've been grateful to be part of the

GPC community, which has been a source of strength, friendship, and faith.

I was born in rural, northwest Georgia and met Natalie during our senior year of high school. After graduation, I moved to Atlanta to attend college, eventually working as an accountant for the local school system. During this time, we attended a Presbyterian church in Marietta, where we discovered a renewed sense of fellowship and spiritual growth.

A few years later, I returned to school and earned a Ph.D. in Economics from Georgia State University—an intellectually rich chapter of life made even more meaningful by the birth of our daughter, Zora. After completing my degree, I accepted a position at the Congressional Budget Office, focusing on climate and energy policy. Our son, Walter, was born in 2022.

It is a great honor to serve as an Elder at GPC. I look forward to listening, learning, and walking alongside others as we live out our faith in community together.

for all four years! My first job was as a math teacher. Later I moved into the information technology field and worked at The National Institutes of Health for 40+ years. I found it to be very interesting, even though it involved many long workdays!

When I first started attending GPC, I felt that it was a welcoming and diverse church, and in 2011, I decided to become a member. My husband, Jim, and I live in Derwood, and our son and daughter-in-law live in Germantown. I have one sister who lives in Washington, DC, and we get together often.



Janet Fujikawa

I retired from the U.S. Navy and a defense contractor as an Occupational and Family Medicine physician, where I managed six medical clinics with nursing and administrative staff in four different states. At my previous church, I helped with worship, missions,

congregational care, youth, and teaching. I look forward to serving as an Elder and am especially interested in church finances and administration. My husband, Bill, and I have three adult daughters and a two-year-old grandson.



Cindy Cename

I was born in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. My family moved frequently, however, because my dad was in the Air Force. By the time I graduated from high school I had attended nine different schools, in the U.S. and overseas. In fact, I was confirmed

into the Presbyterian Church while we were stationed in France. I did manage to stay at Gettysburg College



Comfort Ncheawah

I've been a devoted member of GPC since 2011. My Christian journey began and flourished within the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, where I was a lifelong member. While living and working in Douala (Cameroon), I was privileged to serve as a dedicated Sunday

School teacher at Presbyterian Church Bonamoussadi for several years, an experience that deepened my commitment to nurturing faith within the community.



When I relocated to the United States, I continued this ministry, serving as a Sunday School teacher here at GPC for about two years. I'm also an active member of the Christian Women Fellowship and have been blessed with the gift of composing songs, which I offer in praise and worship.

With humility and joy, I answer the call to serve as an Elder, recognizing this as a divine invitation to further dedicate myself to the Lord's work and to the spiritual well-being of our congregation.

I serve as a Program Coordinator with the National Children's Center, a provider for the Department on Disability Services in Washington, D.C. Prior to this role, I taught physics at the secondary and high school levels for 21 years. I attended the Advanced Teachers Training College in Bambili, Cameroon, and earned a Bachelor's degree in Management from the University of Douala and a Master's degree in Human Services from Walden University. I'm the proud single mother of two adult sons and have two granddaughters.



Steven J. Ward

I grew up in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, one of three siblings, and attended a Lutheran church, although most of my mother's relatives are Presbyterians. I'm a proud graduate of Penn State, majoring in Engineering, and currently work part time for Leidos as a system

architect on air traffic control contracts for the USA and UK. I'm looking forward to full-time retirement soon.

I served on Session as an Elder many years ago. Currently, I lead a small group, prepare communion elements, assist at the A/V desk, and help with our Little Free Pantry.

My wife, Annette, and I have been members of GPC since 1993. Our three grown children—Evan, Amanda, and Carvel—grew up at GPC, and we have also been blessed with four grandchildren.

DEACONS



Kwang Choi

I grew up in South Korea and, after graduating from college there, went to graduate school in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, to study neuroscience. That's where I met my wife, Akiko. We enjoyed outdoor activities—camping and hiking in summer, and skiing and

ice skating in winter.

After graduate school, I worked in Dallas, Texas, for a few years. It was quite a change from Edmonton, although there were some similarities between the two cities (including rodeos!).

We moved to Maryland and have been members of GPC since 2009. The weather here is comparable to Korea's, with four district seasons, so it was a easy change for me. We have two teenage sons, Eugene and Johan, who both grew up in GPC. We're blessed to have so many good church friends and families, and I look forward to serving as a Deacon!



Sandra Newcomb

I was born in North Carolina and raised in a Disciples of Christ Church. I'm a special educator. My undergraduate degree was from East Carolina University; my Master's and Ph.D. were completed at the University of Maryland with a specialty in early intervention (children birth–3). At the university, I trained future early interventionists and worked with Connections Beyond Sight and Sound (CBSS), the Maryland project on deaf-blindness. CBSS assisted families and schools that had a child with dual sensory impairment. I am now semi-retired and continue to work three days a week. I'm incredibly blessed to have a job where I can use the gifts God gave me to support and nurture children with significant disabilities and their families.

I've been a member at GPC for 20+ years and have served as an Elder, chair of Congregational Life, and a Stephen Minister. I facilitated a women's Bible Study and, best of all, served as Snack Queen for VBS. I am excited about being a Deacon and to that end borrow from a Quaker friend the concept of expectant waiting—being present and open to whatever spiritual insight is waiting for me or may come to me through this new opportunity to serve at GPC.

(continued on page 14)



(Sandra Newcomb cont'd)

I have three adult children and nine wonderful grandchildren, and I enjoy going to the beach, quilting, reading, and walking my dog, Kermit ("It's Not Easy Being Green").



Eddie Schantz

I was born in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, and moved to New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, when I was eight years old. There I was involved with the Presbyterian Church Sunday School classes and youth program. I graduated from Clarion State College (Pennsylvania), with a B.S. in Geography (and a minor in Cartography) and finished Graduate School at the University of Maryland. During my cartographic career,

I worked for several environmental and engineering firms and then for the Defense Mapping Agency. During my freelance jobs, I created and published a Frederick Street Map for sale to the public.

My wife, Michele, and I met in 1984, and in 1985 we joined GPC and were married by Donald Kinloch. Our two adult sons and two grandchildren live out West, which gives us an opportunity to travel there regularly. I have a younger brother in Buckeystown, Maryland, whom we visit often. In our spare time, we enjoy hiking, skiing, traveling, and playing in the surf at Rehoboth.

At GPC, I've served on Session and in the Stephen Ministry, Prison Ministry, Property Ministry, and Soup Kitchen and have also ushered. I was in a Covenant Group, have enjoyed many Adult Ed classes, and am currently in a Bible Study class. I'm particularly interested in how we make choices within the framework of God's plan for us.

TRUSTEE



John Travis

I was born in 1940 in Wilmore, Kentucky, the youngest of three children and the only son of a Presbyterian minister. At the Southminster Presbyterian Church in Oklahoma City I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior and remained there until departing for college in 1958.

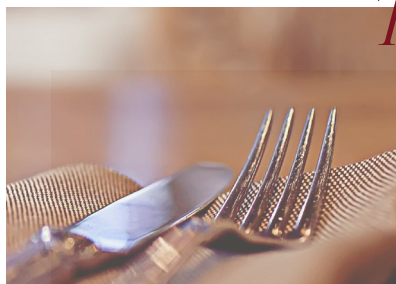
I met Kay Richter during freshman orientation at Austin College in Sherman, Texas. We were married the summer after our graduation in 1962. Over the next five years, I earned a Ph.D. in Physics at the University of Texas at Austin and served as a Deacon in the University Presbyterian Church.

In the fall of 1967, we moved from Austin to Gaithersburg for me to join the National Bureau of Standards (now NIST). We moved our membership to GPC and my two-year appointment turned into a 37-year career.

Our family grew with the addition of Sarah in 1968, Tom in 1969, and the unplanned arrival of Ed in 1980! They have blessed us with six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. My beloved Kay died on March 31, 2025, after a long bout with Alzheimer's disease.

At GPC, I've served on Session as a Trustee, ushered, taught Sunday School, recruited teachers, and at present serve on the Buildings and Grounds committee.

NOTE: BIOGRAPHIES WERE EDITED FOR LENGTH.



THERE'S ROOM at the Table for You!

Sign up for **Table Fellowship** as an individual, with a friend, or as a couple. You do not need to host. As eight adults sign up, groups are created. After you participate in one group, you can sign up to be included in a different group. For questions or to be added to a group, email Clara Pratt at office@gpchurch.org.





MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

FIRST SATURDAY | 8:00 AM | LINDSAY HALL

After three enjoyable breakfasts at Café Sophie again this summer, meetings will return to Lindsay Hall in the fall. Details on speakers and plans for the upcoming months will be forthcoming in the Sunday bulletin announcements and mid-week emails.



VERY IMPORTANT PRESBYTERIAN SENIORS {VIPS}

FIRST THURSDAY | 11:30 AM | LINDSAY HALL

Although there was no regular meeting in August, VIPS were still active. On Saturday, **August 16**, a group spent the afternoon outdoors at the Doc Waters Cidery in Germantown, enjoying delicious homemade cider, live music by the Eddies band, and good food. On **August 31**, VIPS hosted the Sunday Coffee Hour.

The **September 4** meeting will feature retired Montgomery County Police Officer Tom D'Albora, who will share some of his experiences while serving as a police officer. He will follow with information about moving forward in his retirement. At the **October 2** meeting, Barb Thorne, a retired librarian, will share her retirement experiences. She will describe her work with the Hester J. Hodgdon Libraries for All Foundation, a charitable foundation that promotes and supports San Juan del Sur Biblioteca in Nicaragua and other lending libraries in Central America. The Racial Justice Ministry will present the program on **November 6**. For more information about VIPS, contact Nancy Sanders (call the church office).



CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP

SECOND SATURDAY | 10:00 AM – NOON | ROOM 30/31

This group is for GPC members and friends who are caring for loved ones with mental illness. Upcoming meetings will be held on **September 15**, **October 11**, and **November 8**. Questions? Contact Cathy Lyon (call the church office).



CRAFT GROUP

FIRST SUNDAY | 12:15 PM | LINDSAY HALL

The group continues knitting and crocheting to support requests. In addition to prayer squares and shawls for local service organizations—Holy Cross Hospital, The Equity Center, JSSA (Jewish Social Services Agency), Ingleside, Sunrise, and Adventist Shady Grove Hospital—they have been asked to knit or crochet hats for the Prison Ministry. You can help too – just let Barbara know! Any pattern is fine, and yarn and patterns are available, if you need them. Prayer squares are 4"x4" so that a prayer card can be attached. Donations must be washed and placed in a plastic bag. Arrangements for pick-up can be made, if needed. The next three meetings will be on **September 7**, **October 5**, and **November 2**. Questions? Contact Barbara Clark (call the church office).



CUB SCOUTS

TUESDAYS | 7:00–8:00 PM | LINDSAY HALL & DOWNSTAIRS CLASSROOMS

The Cub Scouts are looking forward to a busy fall! **September** brings the Gaithersburg Labor Day Parade, Den meetings, Fall campout, and most importantly, the **JOIN SCOUTING** event. All families with children in Grades K–5 who are interested in joining should come to Lindsay Hall on **September 16 at 7:00 p.m.**

October brings a special camping experience for our older scouts at the Seneca District Camporee. Scouts will participate in a Pack hike and enjoy our Fall Halloween celebration. **November** brings service opportunities by collecting food items for Scouting for Food. November Den meetings will highlight our thankfulness as the scouts earn their Achievements. Awards will be presented at the first Pack meeting. Questions? Contact Barbara Clark, Charter Organization Representative (call the church office).



LITTLE FREE PANTRY NEEDS CONTINUE

Thank you to everyone who contributes to the Little Free Pantry. Your generous donations help feed GPC's neighbors. Late summer and early fall back-to-school needs put extra pressure on family budgets, so please help by continuing to share God's bounty.

Current pantry needs include canned vegetables, soups, fish, and meat; single-serving fruit; and single-serving oatmeal and breakfast foods.

A special canned soup collection will be taken at the churchwide potluck on Sunday, October 5.

—SUE FARRAND

CMF TRAVELS TO TEXAS RALLY!

There are many exciting events on the calendar in the upcoming months for the GPC Christian Men's Fellowship (CMF). At the end of September, CMF will be traveling to Houston, Texas, to perform at a national rally involving CMF groups from dozens of other churches. We also continue to sing at GPC once a month at the 11:00 worship service. In addition, we continue to meet in Lindsay Hall each Sunday at noon for Bible study and fellowship. Our meetings include both official GPC CMF members as well as non-members. The meetings generally last for 45 minutes to an hour. Come and join us if you would like to learn more!

—AARON CARUSO

NEED EMPLOYMENT?



If you're seeking employment and would like to network with others in a supportive Christian environment to share concerns and job-hunting tips, please contact us. Beginning in

August, the GPC Employment Support Group will meet by appointment only. For more information, email Clara Pratt at office@gpchurch.org.

SUMMIT HALL ES welcomes clothing/small items

Thank you to everyone who contributed backpacks and school supplies! The Linkages to Learning staff also continue to be grateful for the donations of gently used children's and adult clothing. Many families arrive in Maryland without the clothing needed to meet our climate changes. As families come to the school for counseling and support, they can choose—from our donations of clothing and small items—things that they need for their new life in Gaithersburg. All items may be placed in the large, plastic SHES container under the mailboxes, where they will be collected and then delivered to the school.

—MARILYN MORRISON

ORCHESTRA CONCERTS RETURN

The Montgomery Philharmonic will resume its Sunday evening concerts in our Sanctuary on **October 12 at 6:30 p.m.** The program will include works by Brahms, Dvořák, and Harberg. Other future concert dates for their 19th season are November 23, March 22, and June 7.



CWF PREPARES FOR TEXAS RALLY

The excitement is building as members of the Christian Women Fellowship "fine tune" their preparations for the organization's annual rally to be held in Texas the weekend of September 26–28. Of course, the rally doesn't just include a singing competition. With a theme of "Let Justice Roll," the CWF groups will have retreat/leadership training, several community outreach activities, and a Bible quiz. They look forward to having members of GPC's CMF join them!



WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The following people joined GPC in May and June. When you see them, be sure to introduce yourself and welcome them to our GPC family!



Samantha
Agard*



James
Bruku



Eveline
Duncan*



Sharmila Edwin
& Edwin Dass



Daryl
Muwuh Fofuh*



Ameh
Kowou



Shane
Kwende*



Oscar
Ndive-Mongo*

*June confirmands



WEDDING Congratulations

Kendall Zammit & Andrew Knox
July 19, 2025

HAPPY Anniversary

60 YEARS
Don & Nancy Wilson
July 31, 1965



MoCo Interfaith 5K Walk and Run

GPC is proud to participate again in the annual MoCo Interfaith 5K Walk and Run to be held **Labor Day Monday, September 1**, at the Soccerplex in Boyds. This exciting event brings together many communities of faith in our county for fun and fellowship.

Walkers and runners are invited to register and join our team—**GPC Striders**—(runsignup.com/Race/MD/Boys/MoCoInterfaith5K). **Registration fees are \$48.70 per participant.** Online registration closes at 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, August 31.

Note: There is NO Race Day registration!

All proceeds will benefit **Gaithersburg HELP** (gaithersburghelp.org) and **C-4 Clothes Closet** (c4clothescloset.com).

If you do not want to run or walk, you may volunteer to hand out information about GPC at our table or just come cheer us on. Email Sandy Menzies at Sandy@SandraMenzies.com if you would like to volunteer or have questions. For more information, you may also go to mocointerfaith5k.org.

Once again, David and Ginny Allsopp will host a post-race gathering and brunch at their home near the SoccerPlex.

—SANDY MENZIES



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

*We extend our sympathy to the members of
our congregation who have lost loved ones.*

Emmanuel Kwadwo Narco
son of Ophelia Fremong,
in Accra, Ghana
April 18, 2025

Bob Aldridge
husband of former member
Maxine (Counihan) Aldridge,
in Leonardtown, MD
May 20, 2025

Marguerite Ragusa
mother of Sandra Ragusa
(Canterbury Ringers Director),
in Temple City, CA
May 22, 2025

Helen Ngwa
mother of Janet Ngwa,
in Gaithersburg, MD
May 23, 2025

Louis Wapong Mbuh
cousin of Schola Muluh,
in Turnersville, NJ
May 27, 2025

Donald N. Oliver
cousin of Bob Oliver,
in Columbia, MD
June 8, 2025

Godlove Awonti
brother of Grace Ndjongo,
in Yaounde, Cameroon
June 16, 2025

Joyce A. Gordon
mother of Sonja Simko,
in Virginia Beach, VA
June 24, 2025

John Smith Ward
father of Steven J. Ward,
in Warminster, PA
June 25, 2025

*We mourn the loss of our
members who have died.*

Kathy Lowe
wife of Tom Lowe,
in Gaithersburg, MD
June 29, 2025

Carol O'Neal
(former member of GPC)
wife of Clifford and mother of
Lindsey, Ian, Brady, and Molly,
in Denver, CO
July 23, 2025

James Goodyear
father of Sue Goodyear
(GPC Office Manager),
in Clymer, PA
June 25, 2025

Rev. Francisco J. Beltran
father of Frank Beltran,
in Lucena, The Philippines
August 2, 2025



WELCOME TO THE WORLD!

Congratulations to

Mark Harper & Sue Goodyear*
(*GPC Office Manager),
the proud grandparents,
and
Brian Davis & Meredith Fay,
the proud parents of
JOANNA FAY DAVIS
born on May 22, 2025

Don & Nancy Wilson,
the proud great-grandparents,
and
Cal & Nancy Wilson,
the proud parents of
ATALAYA MAE WILSON
born on May 31, 2025

Sonja Simko,
the proud grandmother,
and
Rachel (Simko) & James Breheny,
the proud parents of
RONAN FÉIRIN BREHENY
born on June 20, 2025





*Congratulations to
Rebecca Baxter!*

B.S. in Biomedical Engineering
Johns Hopkins University
May 2025

SANCTUARY FLOWER ORDERS

WANT TO DONATE FLOWERS *for Sunday worship service?*

You may give flowers in honor or memory of someone, or to celebrate a special occasion.

The weekly altar flowers cost \$50, and you may take them home after the 11:00 service.

Scan the QR code below to access the flower form or visit gpchurch.org/flower-form to place your order.



THE MAINSTREAM

Distribution of Newsletters and Submission Deadlines for Articles

The Mainstream is published quarterly. It is sent electronically and hard copies are mailed in February, May, August, and November.

**Submissions should be sent
to jobermiller@gpchurch.org and
bmoldroyd53@gmail.com
by January 15, April 15,
July 15, and October 15.**

Questions? Contact the church office.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT

July 2025

% OF
2025 YTD BUDGET

INCOME

Envelope Pledged.....	\$432,251	62%
Envelope Unpledged	\$124,358	46%
Loose Offering	\$8,878	44%
Other Income	\$1,656	0%
Room Rent.....	\$0	0%
Interest & Dividends	\$13,083	59%
Manse Rental	\$20,920	78%
Bequest Unpledged.....	\$0	0%
Mizo Church Offering.....	\$0	0%

Total.....\$601,146 58%

EXPENSE

NCP Membership	\$14,318	50%
Human Resources.....	\$325,315	53%
Buildings & Grounds.....	\$124,004	52%
Office Operations.....	\$21,272	54%
Communications.....	\$1,967	44%
Stewardship	\$1,088	27%
Comm Engagement	\$59,543	63%
Eq Disciples.....	\$7,235	39%
Vital Worship	\$4,027	32%
Congregational Life	\$938	28%
Other.....	\$0	0%
Session	\$0	0%

Total.....\$559,707 53%

NET\$41,439

To request a complete financial summary,
email accountingmanager@gpchurch.org.



GPC MEDIA POLICY

Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church (GPC) uses print and digital media of church life in communications materials to share the ministry of GPC with our congregation and community at large. GPC reserves the right to use any media taken at any activity sponsored by GPC, without the express written consent of those individuals included within the media. GPC may use any such media in publications, social media, and any website.



THE MAINSTREAM

Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church

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CONSECRATION SUNDAY IS OCTOBER 19!

FIND IT FAST!



- Organ and Handbell Fundraising Campaign Results (p. 4)
- Intergenerational Handbell Choir Forming (p. 4)
- Pastor Nominating Committee Update (p. 5)
- We Need Your Photos, You Need a Name Tag (p. 5)
- Engaging with GPC . . . Committees, Ministries, and More! (pp. 6-7)
- GGC "Let's Read" Tutoring Program (p. 8)
- Plans for the Generous Von Moss Legacy Gift (p. 8)
- Demonstrating Faith Through Generosity (p. 9)
- GPC Spans the Globe – Feature Article (pp. 10-11)
- Our Class of 2028 Church Officers (pp. 12-14)
- Montgomery Philharmonic Concert – October 12 (p. 16)
- MoCo Interfaith 5K – September 1 (p. 17)