



THE MAINSTREAM

November 2, 2025 . . . The Next Chapter of GPC's Story Begins!

FOURTH QUARTER

2025



*From the Heart of
Pastor Joshua Narcisse*

INHERITING A STORY OF FAITHFULNESS

Beloved,

At my ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, a colleague shared these words from Deuteronomy 6:10–12a:

"When the Lord your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give you, a land with fine, large cities that you did not build, houses filled with all sorts of goods that you did not fill, hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you have eaten your fill, take care that you do not forget the Lord . . ."

These words have echoed in my spirit throughout my first weeks as your pastor. A deep and faithful story has long been unfolding at GPC, well before this new season of ministry we now share. A fine and spacious campus has been built—and rebuilt—through the sweat and sacrifice of a generation to whom we are indebted. Ministries have been filled with good and lasting work, touching lives both locally and globally. Faith has been planted in hearts that now carry GPC's story wherever they go. We are inheritors of a remarkable legacy and promise.

It is this legacy that I am committed to stewarding for the generations to come—and I pray that it is one you will renew your commitment to as we write this next chapter together. Each of us is being called to live our faith in new ways amid a world that continues to shift and challenge what we once called normal. The good news is that we do not face these changes alone. We have a place to discern, to grow, and to remember the Lord who has made all of this possible, together.

Unburdened by the work of building, filling, hewing, and planting, we can turn our attention toward gratitude and generosity—passing along our faith as a gift to those who follow. So, whether through a demonstration of faith through generosity, the offering of time and talent to one of our ministries, or the steady presence of fellowship and prayer, I invite you to join me in marking this next chapter in GPC's story.

Grace & Peace,
REV. JOSHUA HENRY NARCISSE
SENIOR PASTOR

WAYS TO CONNECT



www.gpchurch.org

301-948-9418

office@gpchurch.org

[@gpchurch_moco](https://www.instagram.com/gpchurch_moco)



- Nov 22 – Prep for Deck the Halls | 9:00 a.m.
- Nov 23 – Deck the Halls | 12:00 p.m.
- Dec 11 – Serve Our Community | 6:00 p.m.
- Dec 17 – Youth Christmas Party | 7:00 p.m.
- Dec 24 – Youth & Children Christmas Eve Service | 4:00 p.m.



Registration for Middle School & High School Camp opens on January 5. Please see Carrie for details.

JOIN US!

Sunday Mornings | 11:00 a.m.
Wednesday Nights | 7:00–8:30 p.m.

We've had a great start to our fall Youth program! We kicked off September with a fall retreat and started a new monthly drumming & art program on Wednesday nights. We've also had a chicken nugget fast food taste-off and service projects helping Easter Seals. The youth assisted with the children's Fall Festival, too. We're looking forward to what this new season brings.



Our Youth & College Ministry at GPC seeks to provide opportunities for our middle school, high school, and college students to **KNOW** one another, **SHOW** God's love to others through service, and **GROW** together with God at the center.



EQUIPPING DISCIPLES

The crisp, fall season is here and Thanksgiving is approaching. At GPC, we have much to be thankful for in Children's Ministry!

We are thankful for an amazing group of teachers giving our children a firm foundation in God's love. Tom & Betsey Bahls, Akua Donkor Makaai, Emma Chen, and Barb Clark work with children from Pre-K through Grade 1 using the Godly Play curriculum. Our youngest learners learn through this hands-on program that teaches about the church year, how worship works, and God and his love for all. Jennifer Scavullo, Cindy Dembnicki, Natalie Jorge-Castellanos, and Diane Franetzki teach children in Grades 2 through 5 using the "Feasting on the Word" curriculum. This program gives them a firm foundation in the Bible and follows the lectionary.

Our Nursery team—Malvin Duncan, Naomi Nyambura, and Diane Franetzki—provides loving care to our youngest children.



We are thankful for our precious children and how they share their talents with the congregation. They inspire us when they serve as Worship Leaders on Communion Sundays.

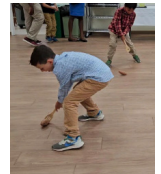
Our children have been a real blessing to the Music Ministry as well. The Joy Chimes and Joy Ringers ring and the Joy Singers sing in worship services from time to time. Some even help in the kitchen alongside their parents!



We were thankful for the smiles and laughter at our recent Fall Festival where our children made fall crafts and played games. Eating a cinnamon donut on a string with no hands and the yam pushing race were popular. A HUGE thanks to the GPC Youth who supported us by leading the games and activities. It is a real blessing when these groups get together!



We look forward to our next joint venture as the Youth and children lead the 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Service at GPC. You won't want to miss this!



On a personal note, I am very thankful for the opportunity to continue to serve children at GPC after completing my 45 years of work with MCPS. And I am very thankful for all the support and care that I have been given by staff and members as I undertake this new venture! Together we are serving God and giving children a solid foundation and ministering to one another! Thanks be to God!

—GAYLE LUCKENBAUGH
INTERIM CHILDREN'S
MINISTRY COORDINATOR



ADULT ED OFFERINGS

SUNDAY MORNING

- 8:30 - The Sunday Morning Class, *Deepening Our Prayer: The Heart of Christ*, hybrid, Room 33
- 9:30 - The Present Word, Prophets and Other Leaders, hybrid, Room 204
- 9:30 - The Bible as a Whole, "Feasting on the Word" adult program, in person, Room 205
- 9:30 - Christian Classics, *The Love of God* by Oswald Chambers, hybrid, Room 202

WEDNESDAY EVENING

- 7:00 - Frederick Small Group and Bible Study, open discussions, every other Wednesday, Zoom

MUSICAL NOTES

All of the music groups have returned to rehearsals at GPC. Each group has something special lined up to present during the coming holiday season.

On December 14, the Chancel Choir will present the cantata "The Poetry of Promise" by Joseph Martin at the 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. services. At the 11:00 service, they will be joined by members of the Sanctuary Choir from Mill Creek Parish UMC. That evening, the GPC Choir will participate in Mill Creek's Sounds of Christmas concert.

On December 21, the Canterbury Ringers will be joined by a woodwind ensemble from the Montgomery Philharmonic to present Advent music during worship. There will be two services on Christmas Eve—a family worship service at 4:00 p.m. and a candlelight Lessons and Carols worship service with the Chancel Choir at 6:00 p.m. The Youth will work with the Joy Singers to create and lead the family service.

The Joy Chimes and Joy Ringers will present special music earlier in the month of December, as well.

The Intergenerational Handbell Choir is off to a good start. We're having fun collaborating and learning all about ringing. We welcome NEW RINGERS at any time. Please contact me at kwilliams@gpchurch.org if you are interested in joining.

Last, but not least, we congratulate both the CWF and CMF groups on their great showing at their Rally held in Houston during the last weekend of September. The congregation enjoyed hearing CWF sing their award-winning original song about creation care during worship on October 5 and CMF sing their award-winning song in worship on November 2!



November Orchestra Concert To Feature Double Bass Soloist

The Montgomery Philharmonic's next concert will be on **Sunday, November 23, at 6:30 p.m.** in our Sanctuary. The program will include *Estampas Mexicanas* – José Elizondo, *Three Riders Overture* – Carrie Lane Gruselle, and *Concerto for Double Bass and Orchestra* – Serge Koussevitsky, featuring **Johan Choi**, a child of GPC, as soloist. Now a senior at Gaithersburg HS, Johan has played the double bass since 6th Grade, first with the Maryland Classic Youth Orchestras, and later with the Maryland Senior All State Orchestra, the Montgomery Philharmonic, and other groups. Admission to the concert is free but donations are gratefully accepted.

—BARBARA OLDROYD
MP BOARD MEMBER





CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

Services at GPC

All services will be livestreamed except Sundays at 9:30 AM.

November 30	9:30 & 11:00 AM	Worship Services (1st Sunday of Advent)
December 7	9:30 & 11:00 AM	Worship Services (2nd Sunday of Advent)
December 14	9:30 & 11:00 AM	Worship Services (3rd Sunday of Advent) Christmas Cantata (Chancel Choir)
December 20	6:00–8:00 PM	Blue Christmas: Finding Peace through the Longest Night 6:00 – Labyrinth Walk and Prayer Stations 7:00 – Community Service of Healing and Hope
December 21	9:30 & 11:00 AM	Worship Services (4th Sunday of Advent) Canterbury Ringers & Montgomery Philharmonic Woodwind Ensemble
December 24	4:00 PM 6:00 PM	Christmas Eve Family Worship Service Christmas Eve Candlelight Lessons and Carols Worship Service (Chancel Choir)
December 25	11:00 AM <u>only</u>	Christmas Day Worship Service
December 28	11:00 AM <u>only</u>	Worship Service
January 4	9:30 & 11:00 AM	Epiphany Worship Services



ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND CREATIVE ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS BEGIN



Academic Support and Creative Enrichment programs to MCPS students. This program includes one-on-one tutoring through the “Let’s Read” program that supports 20 struggling readers in 2nd Grade. It also includes the Academic Support and Creative Enrichment programs, which serve 40 students in PK through the 5th Grade. Students have opportunities to build literacy and math skills and participate in creative activities, including Art and Music/Movement.

GPC is touching children in the local community through the “It’s Lit” literacy program. Epworth and GPC worked together to successfully launch

We are thankful that our churches formed a partnership to fund and staff this program. In addition, both churches have gone beyond that, providing staff and volunteer support. Nearly 35 staff and volunteers from both churches have stepped out into the literacy mission field as tutors and staff. We are so thankful for this collaboration and the joy produced as our churches work together to make a difference in the lives of children in our community.



—GAYLE LUCKENBAUGH
READING SPECIALIST, LET’S READ PROGRAM,
AND PROGRAM COORDINATOR,
SUPPORT/ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

THE PCUSA CWF/CMF/CYF ANNUAL NATIONAL RALLY IN HOUSTON

In late September, seven men from GPC's Christian Men's Fellowship (CMF) joined multiple churches for a joyous rally in Houston, Texas. The event's theme was "Let Justice Roll Down," and the rally featured three days of worship, fellowship, and performances praising God. They were happy to place second in the singing competition. One surprise for the group was learning that **GPC has been selected to host next year's gathering**, to be held in the early fall of 2026!

For now, our group is embarking on a new Bible study exploring ways that God strengthens us in times of stress. We meet every Sunday after the 11:00 a.m. worship service.. Stop by and see us if you would like to learn more about the CMF movement!

—AARON CARUSO



GPC's Christian Women Fellowship (CWF) also attended the rally at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. They participated in the singing competition, where **their original song came in first position!** They also participated in community outreach, visiting some nursing facilities to provide gifts and songs, and say prayers with the residents.

They are thankful to God Almighty for the work that GPC's CWF is doing at GPC and also in their homes and the community at large.

—ELDER GRACE ATANGA-FUH

THOUGHTS FROM THE RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

Many GPC members have been part of the Let's Read! Tutoring Program in Montgomery Village and then Germantown, and many more are now helping the joint ministry with Epworth UMC this fall. Tutoring children is a fulfilling outreach ministry for our church, an opportunity to give back to our community, and a great way to promote reading and learning. Did you know that it also contributes to racial justice work?

Our Matthew 25 Ministry is focused on dismantling structural racism. One structure that disadvantages minorities is unequal educational opportunities. It's very difficult for a child to succeed, even in a great school system like that of Montgomery County, if reading is a struggle for them. Not all families have the resources to hire a tutor or have the English skills to help their children; some parents are learning English themselves at the same time.

Children "learn to read" by the end of 2nd Grade, and are then expected to "read to learn." By helping them learn to read, and to enjoy reading, we are leveling the playing field now when they are young, which removes more barriers as they go through the educational system.

Thank you to all of our tutors, and please join the Racial Justice Ministry for more drop-in conversations in the next few months!

- December 7 – Advent and Racial Justice – Where did all the white Madonnas come from?
- January 11 – Christianity and the Kingdom of God
- February 1 – Color Blindness
- March 1 – Racial Justice Success Stories

—MARY SPENCER, CHAIR
RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY



ENGAGE WITH GPC ... THE NEXT CHAPTER!

We're excited that the next chapter for GPC is in progress because our much-anticipated new Senior Pastor Joshua Narcisse has begun his ministry with us! Now, we are all writing this new story together with a goal to further glorify God.

In the three previous 2025 Mainstream newsletters, we highlighted the many and varied ways that each of us can volunteer and make a difference through sharing our time and talents in both large and small ways. In our [third quarter issue](#) we listed the various GPC committees with the name of each chairperson who you can contact to get more information and/or to volunteer.



Volunteer Church Librarians



Joy Choir Members
Engage with GPC by
Practicing for Worship

If you have reflected on ways that your further involvement with GPC can make your spiritual and social experience more fulfilling, now is the time to take action! During the seasons of Advent and Christmas there will be many opportunities to volunteer.



Youth Group Members
Assist with Worship



Creation Care Committee & Mizo Church
Members Volunteer for GPC Spring Clean-up

As 2026 begins, let's make it a resolution to engage with GPC whenever you are able. If you are working full-time, raising a family, or dealing with any variety of issues, you are appreciated for whatever one-time or smaller projects that you can handle. If you are at a season in your life that affords you more time to devote to service, maybe you'll want to take on one of the longer-term projects that GPC undertakes. Smaller or larger, one-time or years-long, we can guarantee that the rewards of engaging with GPC through service fellowship are abundant!

—LUCILLE BAUR, CHAIR
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

WE'RE ENHANCING COMMUNICATION THROUGH OUR UPGRADED CHURCH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ... DON'T BE LEFT OUT!



GPC went live with a new church app earlier this month. You'll enjoy the same good information but in an easier-to-use format. The app is being enabled by a new church management system called "Breeze ChMS," which replaces our previous "Servant Keeper" system.

Our GPC website online directory will also move to Breeze. That's why it is vital that everyone, whether you use the GPC app or not, fill out the information form. We need to confirm that all contact information and preferences regarding the way that information is received are up to date.

If you haven't already done so, please scan the QR code or [use this link](#) to update your profile. If you

prefer, you can fill out a printed form available at the Welcome Desk and the information will be entered electronically for you. Thank you for helping to keep our GPC family strongly and safely connected!



—LUCILLE BAUR, CHAIR
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE





GPC SPANS the GLOBE

FAITH AND RESILIENCE IN MADAGASCAR

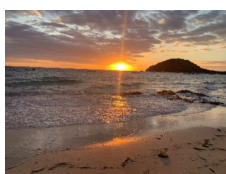
GPC benefits from and takes pride in the international diversity of its members. These quarterly articles are written by our internationally born members to share some of their home-country cultures and traditions, along with photos of the author and the featured country. We hope that these continuing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



Madagascar from Space – European Space Agency, captured March 2009

Madagascar, an island nation renowned for its unique wildlife, lush rainforests, and status as a leading producer of vanilla, is home to a rich tapestry of culture and enduring faith. This story of resilience and hope is told as seen through the eyes of Tony Rasoamiamanana, a Malagasy, who now shares the spirit of his homeland from the United States.

Amidst Madagascar's breathtaking landscapes, the Malagasy people are guided by a deep Christian faith that shapes their daily lives, strengthens their communities, and inspires perseverance in the face of significant social and economic challenges.



Sunset in Nosy Be – photo by author, July 2019

The Arrival of Christianity in Madagascar



King Radama I – Lapan' Andafivaratra Museum, Antananarivo

The seeds of Christianity were planted in Madagascar in the early 19th century, brought by British missionaries from the London Missionary Society during the reign of King Radama I (1810–1828). During the reign of Queen Ranavalona I (1828–1861), the church faced severe persecution, as Christian practice was banned and converts were often punished. Despite these

trials, Malagasy Christians persevered, embodying the promise of Romans 8:37: *“In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”*

Faith Today: A Christian Nation at Heart

Christianity remains a foundation of Malagasy life. According to the Pew Research Center (2020), about 85% of Malagasy identify as Christian, while the remainder practice Islam or traditional beliefs. Many Malagasy hold the conviction that faith guides moral choices; a person who acts wrongly might be asked, *“Miverena amin'Andriamanitra”* – “Return to God” – reflecting a communal reliance on repentance and guidance through Christ.

Among the largest denominations is the FJKM (Fiangonan'i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara) – the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar – which closely mirrors Presbyterian traditions. FJKM combines Reformed theology with strong community engagement, worship, and service. Its schools, hospitals, and development programs reach even the most remote regions, living out James 2:17: *“Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”*

Other denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran Church of Madagascar, continue to provide education, social services, and environmental programs – demonstrating faith in action across the country.



Tranovato Rasalama Martiora, Ambohipotsy – 2025

Challenges and Hope for the Future

Despite its spiritual strength, Madagascar remains one of the poorest nations in the world. The United Nations (2022) reports that over 70% of Malagasy live below the poverty line, earning less than \$1.90 per day.

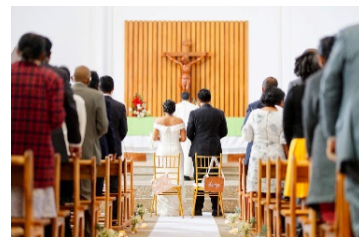


Many communities struggle with unreliable electricity and water, fragile healthcare, limited access to education, widespread corruption, and environmental degradation. In urban areas, begging and informal work remain common as families cope with these hardships. Political uncertainty and ongoing governance challenges continue to affect the nation, complicating efforts to address poverty, infrastructure gaps, and social needs. Yet, faith remains a strong anchor. Malagasy Christians draw strength from Philippians 4:13: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

As Madagascar welcomes a new political head and upcoming government, there is hope that citizens will remain steadfast in faith, becoming mirrors of God’s light and demonstrating unity, compassion, and integrity. Faith not only sustains communities but also has the power to transform the nation, turning challenges into opportunities for renewal, justice, and peace.

A Reflection from Afar

Now living in the United States, Tony reflects on the faith he witnessed growing up in Madagascar — a faith that thrives amid hardship and radiates joy even in the darkest times. He finds encouragement in Matthew 5:14: “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”



Chapel at Université Catholique de Madagascar

Madagascar, with all its struggles and natural beauty, continues to shine that light. As the people of Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church extend prayers and support across the globe, they walk together with Malagasy Christians — united by the same Spirit, strengthened by the same hope, and called to the same mission of love.

—TONY RASOAMIARAMANANA



Originally from Madagascar, Tony Rasoamiaramanana grew up in Antananarivo and Mahajanga before moving to the U.S. in 2011. He works in Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) and is inspired daily by his wife, their two children, and his mother-in-law.

A passionate musician, Tony plays piano and guitar, performing across the DMV and serving with Malagasy musicians in Fiangonana Malagasy Kristianina eto DC (FMK-DC), a DC-based Malagasy ecumenical congregation. Through music, faith, and family, he reflects Madagascar’s Christian spirit and seeks to inspire the community both locally and beyond.

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

MERRY CHRISTMAS IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGES OF ALL OUR “GPC SPANS THE GLOBE” AUTHORS!

CAMEROON – Merry Christmas! & Joyeux Noël!

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – Krismasi Njema! (Swahili)

GHANA – Afenkyiapa!

JAPAN – メリークリスマス! (Merikurisumasu!)

MADAGASCAR – Mirary Krismasy sambatra!

MALAWI – Moni Wa Chikondweleru Cha Kristnasi! (Chewa) & UKhisisimusi omuhle! (Zulu)

PAKISTAN – Bara Din Mubarrak Ho!

THAILAND – เมอริคริสตมาส (meu-ree khrit-maat) & สุขสันต์วันคริสตมาส (suk-san wan khrit-maat)

TOGO – Joyeux Noël, Bhutya na wo! (Ewe), Jabbama be salla Kirismati! (Fula/Fulani) & barka dà Kirsimati! (Hausa)





MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

THIRD SATURDAY | 8:00 AM | LINDSAY HALL

Yes, you read that right! The group now meets on the third Saturday of the month. Plans for the December, January, and February meetings are undecided at this time. Updates will be shared in upcoming Thursday emails and Sunday bulletin announcements.



VERY IMPORTANT PRESBYTERIAN SENIORS {VIPS}

FIRST THURSDAY | 11:30 AM | LINDSAY HALL

The group concluded its November activities with a **November 19** tour of the National Cryptologic Museum in Fort Meade, Maryland, followed by lunch. **The December 4** gathering will be an early Christmas celebration with Christmas music and games, an optional gift exchange, and a potluck lunch. Our Christmas Outreach will include the distribution of Advent Gift Bags to GPC's senior shut-ins, gifts for the Summit Hall ES community, and support of church families.

In January, the meeting date will move to **January 8**, since the first Thursday of the month falls on New Year's Day. The program will be presented by a Robert Buglass, from the Montgomery County Historical Society, on "Sugarloaf: The Singular History of a Singular Mountain." The speaker's message on **February 5** will correlate with our commemoration of Black History Month. Questions? 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 **December 13, January 10, and February 14**. Questions? Contact the church office.



CRAFT GROUP

FIRST SUNDAY | 12:15 PM | LINDSAY HALL

This group continues to meet monthly. They collect knitted and crocheted items to donate to Holy Cross Hospital, JSSA (Jewish Social Services Agency), Ingleside, Sunrise, Adventist Shady Grove Hospital, and the Prison Ministry. Items include prayer squares (at least 4"x4" with a tail to attach a prayer card), hats, and shawls. Donations must be washed and placed in plastic bags. Arrangements for pick-up can be made, if needed. Their next four meetings will be on **December 7, January 11, February 1, and March 1**. Questions? Contact Barbara Clark (*call the church office*).



CUB SCOUTS

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

Cub Scout Pack 64 is looking forward to its **December** activities. They will participate in the **Wreaths Across America** event at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Frederick. The holiday party will include a service project making **Holiday Cards for Sunrise Rockville residents**. **January** is **Pinewood Derby** month. Each scout will receive a kit to transform into a vehicle. Assistance from willing parents and community members is always welcomed. **February** events include Scout Sunday, helping serve at the **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**, and the annual **Blue and Gold Banquet**. 5th Grade Arrow of Light Scouts will bridge to Boy Scouts at this event.

Pack 64 is a family pack, welcoming all boys and girls in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. For more information, contact Barbara Clark (*call the church office*).



“DON’T GIVE UNTIL IT HURTS— GIVE UNTIL IT FEELS GOOD!”

If you’ve never been to a Waffle House, I highly recommend it. The food comes quickly, the coffee is always fresh, and the atmosphere is one of simple hospitality. These restaurants dot the interstate highways throughout the Southeast.

Pastor and professor Fred Craddock once shared a memorable experience at a Waffle House. After finishing one of their famous BLT sandwiches, he ordered a cup of coffee and asked the waitress for two creamers. She pulled out six and laid them on the table. Craddock told her he only needed two, but she smiled and said, “Better to have and not need, than to need and not have.” It is an old adage that I have probably said many times myself and heard from many others. It seems like simple wisdom to apply to all parts of our lives.

Craddock, being the thoughtful person he was, handed the extra creamers back and replied, “Best of all is to take what you need and give the rest away.” That simple exchange holds a powerful truth, especially as we enter the Christmas season.

Soon we’ll be surrounded by advertisements for the latest gadgets, toys, and phones. My daughter has already started circling items that she wants in the

holiday catalogs, and even I’ve hinted to my wife about a few things I wouldn’t mind receiving. But as fun as those things may be, they can’t bring lasting fulfillment. What we truly need is spiritual satisfaction.

Jesus reminds us in Matthew 6:19–21: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

So, where is your heart this Christmas season? What do you truly want? If your spirit feels weary, try giving. One of my former pastors used to say, “Don’t give until it hurts—give until it feels good!” You might be surprised how much joy flows from simple generosity. While every commercial this time of year urges us to take and accumulate, Pastor Craddock’s words point us in a different direction. **Take what you need and give the rest away.**

—AUSTIN CASTELLANOS
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

GPC IS REVITALIZING ITS SOCIAL ONLINE CONNECTIONS!

We hope that you’ve already noticed and are taking advantage of GPC’s social media! Our Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube postings were revitalized as we counted down to Pastor Joshua’s first sermon as Senior Pastor on Sunday, November 2. Please Follow us, Like, Comment, and Share, as you enjoy new videos and information each week.

 **Follow on Facebook:** facebook.com/GaithersburgPresbyterianChurch

 **Connect on Instagram:** Instagram.com/gpchurch_moco

 **Watch on YouTube:** youtube.com/GaithersburgPresbyterianChurch

—LUCILLE BAUR, CHAIR
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

THE GIVING TREE IS READY FOR YOU!



All gifts and other donations should be placed under the tree by **Sunday, December 21**. This year, GPC will support the following:

- Rosemont ES Families
- GPC's Little Free Pantry
- GPC's Little Free Library
- Prison Ministry
- GPC/Epworth Enrichment Programs
- PDA (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance)
- Medical Benevolence Fund
- Relief Supplies for Ukraine

For your convenience, a flyer giving specific requests regarding the recipients listed above is available next to the Giving Tree.

We are grateful that our Giving Tree continues to be such a wonderful way to give back to our community! Grab an ornament or two or three and help bless our communities at Christmastime!

Questions can be directed to Cindy Zammit and Alice Alexander.

—CINDY ZAMMIT



WEEK OF MEALS DECEMBER 21-27, 2025

for the

**INTERFAITH WORKS WOMEN'S
CENTER (IWWC) SHELTER**
(16911 Crabbs Branch Way in Derwood)



THERE ARE THREE EASY WAYS FOR VOLUNTEERS TO HELP!

Purchase breakfast food
and other supplies and
drop them off at either
GPC or the IWWC Shelter.

Delivery Date: Sunday, 12/21

OR

Prepare or order
dinner for the residents.
Drop dinner off at
the IWWC Shelter.

OR

Prepare or order
dinner for the
residents.
Stay at the Shelter and
serve dinner to them.

To sign up and for more information, go to: www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0f48a8a87-iwwc



a message from creation care –
**REDUCING OUR USE OF
AND DEPENDENCE ON PLASTIC**

We may be diligent in our recycling efforts, but it isn't enough. In 2021, approximately 85% of plastic waste went to landfills and 10% was incinerated, while the recycling rate was between 5% and 6%. The plastic that ends up in landfills or as litter breaks down into microplastics and nanoplastics that pollute waterways, soils, and even the deep sea, making its way up the food chain back to people.

The problem is great, but we CAN make a difference! Based on a *New York Times* article, here are SIX things that you can do right away:

- Start by buying less and, when possible, avoid buying clothing made from polyester, which is spun from plastic (and sheds microplastics). Most of this low-quality clothing ends up in our landfills.
- Using reusable bags, bottles, and other items, such as reusable straws, soda makers, snack and produce bags, and travel tumblers and travel mugs, can help reduce plastic waste, but only if they are used often and for as long as possible.
- If you shop online, grouping purchases into fewer deliveries and cartons reduces your environmental impact overall by cutting back on the plastic-derived packaging and fillings.
- Cook at home. Cooking from scratch can reduce the single-use plastics that you acquire from ordering delivered meals or buying prepared foods from the store. Many of these containers are not even recyclable.
- Try using solid or powdered versions of liquid products. There are many options to replace your shampoo & conditioner bottles and laundry & dishwasher detergents. These are often available in plastic-free containers as well.
- Make your own coffee at home. This can save you money and reduce waste. Although paper cups might appear to be recyclable, they actually have plastic linings that keep them from leaking.

—ELISA MCCLELLAND
CREATION CARE COMMITTEE



LITTLE FREE PANTRY
ESSENTIAL FOOD NEEDS CONTINUE

Our Little Free Pantry is a busy place. Folks across the community look to this resource to provide basic foods. We replenish the outdoor pantry daily, but recently it has been cleared out within a few hours. We need plenty of resources to keep providing food essentials, such as **oatmeal, pasta and sauce, canned vegetables and fruit, breakfast bars, and canned proteins**. When you grocery shop, please consider picking up a few items to help meet this need. You can put items in the Narthex bins or the outdoor pantry. You may also send a designated monetary gift to the church. Questions? Contact Sue Farrand (office@gpchurch.org).

—SUE FARRAND



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

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

David Collett
son of June Hitt and
brother of Mark Collett,
in Germantown, MD
August 13, 2025

Stuart Estes Houston
brother of Carol Anderson,
in Charlottesville, VA
August 16, 2025

Harriette ("Happy") Thorne
mother of Barb Thorne,
in Darien, CT
September 6, 2025

Ronald Guthoff
father of Cindy Zammit,
in Normal, IL
October 25, 2025

We mourn the loss of our members who have died.

Fletcher Tukes
husband of Carole Tukes,
in Gaithersburg, MD
September 4, 2025

Darla Shehadeh
(former member and VIPS leader)
in Germantown, MD
September 7, 2025

Erica Chizmar
wife of Dick Chizmar and
mother of Cam Miller, Ann
Schleicher, Jon Davis,
and Erica Dutzi,
in Gaithersburg, MD
September 9, 2025



WELCOME TO THE WORLD!



Congratulations to

Larry & Mary Masselink,
the proud grandparents,
and
Joel & Carol Masselink,
the proud parents,
and
Kirabo, the proud big sister of
TENDO HOPE
BOGEZI MASSELINK
born August 11, 2025

Ahmed & Doreen Tadde,
the proud parents,
and
Ayla, the proud big sister of
AMIRA MÉLODIE
MOJISOLA TADDE
born September 6, 2025

Vinai & Anne Vinlander,
the proud parents,
and
Jasmine & James,
the proud siblings of
JOSEPHINE ROSE
VINLANDER
born September 12, 2025

THANK YOU

To my GPC family –

Thank you for your prayers, support, visits, and cards & flowers during Fletcher's illness this past year. All of it meant so much to him and to me. During his recent passing, every one of you helped me get through planning and experiencing his final service. Our church family continues to be a blessing to my family and to me.

—WITH LOVE,
CAROLE TUKES



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
bmoldroyd53@gmail.com
by January 15, April 15,
July 15, and October 15.**

Questions? Contact the church office.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT

September 2025

% OF
2025 YTD BUDGET

INCOME

Envelope Pledged	\$512,275	73%
Envelope Unpledged	\$158,898	59%
Loose Offering	\$11,522	58%
Other Income	\$1,656	0%
Room Rent	\$0	0%
Interest & Dividends	\$16,983	76%
Manse Rental	\$23,160	86%
Bequest Unpledged	\$0	0%
Mizo Church Offering	\$0	0%

Total

\$724,494	69%
-----------------	-----

EXPENSE

NCP Membership	\$21,502	75%
Human Resources	\$430,005	71%
Buildings & Grounds	\$157,548	66%
Office Operations	\$25,812	66%
Communications	\$2,371	53%
Stewardship	\$1,088	27%
Comm Engagement	\$77,031	81%
Eq Disciples	\$10,269	56%
Vital Worship	\$4,990	39%
Congregational Life	\$1,425	43%
Other	\$0	0%
Session	\$0	0%

Total

\$732,041	69%
-----------------	-----

NET \$(7,547)

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

610 South Frederick Avenue

Gaithersburg, MD 20877-1297

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT U.S.
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Suburban Maryland
PERMIT NO. 10005



HAPPY THANKSGIVING AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!



FIND IT FAST!

- Montgomery Philharmonic Concert – November 23 (p. 4)
- Christmas Holiday Services at GPC (p. 5)
- Academic Support/Creative Enrichment Programs (p. 5)
- CWF & CMF Houston Rally News (p. 6)
- Racial Justice Ministry (p. 6)
- Engaging With GPC . . . The Next Chapter (p. 7)
- Breeze – Our New Church Management System (p. 7)
- GPC Spans the Globe – Feature Article (pp. 8–9)
- Stewardship Message (p. 11)
- Revitalizing GPC's Social Online Connections (p. 11)
- The Giving Tree (p. 12)
- Week of Meals at the IWWC Shelter (p. 12)
- Creation Care Message About Plastics (p. 13)