



RECENT SCENES AT GPC



LIVESTREAM WORSHIP

11:00 AM
EVERY SUNDAY



WORSHIP IN PERSON

9:30 & 11:00 AM
EVERY SUNDAY
no registration required



From the Heart of Pastor Mary Austin

A SHOT OF HOPE

Dear GPC Members and Friends –

The woman who gave me my second COVID shot, months ago now, was a brand new mother, on her second day back from parental leave. As I got the shot, I was overwhelmed with gratitude for her, and for the gift of the vaccine, feeling as if I was getting my life back. I thought life might be “normal” again in a few weeks.

By now, that brand new baby can crawl and laugh, and our lives are still being shaped by COVID.

As we mark the season of Advent, we turn again to the spiritual work of hope. If your hope is running low, and your energy for this crisis is flagging, this season is coming right on time. Advent reminds us that hope is built into our DNA as people of faith. The people of Israel hoped for a messiah for hundreds of years before Jesus appeared, and some people came to know him as the Savior. Generations rose and fell, all holding on to hope in God.

Hope can grow and then falter, run thin and then be renewed, and yet God keeps giving us this gift. Our hope changes over time. My work as a hospice chaplain taught me that there is always hope, and the content of our hope changes over time. We learn not to hope for simple things, and we root ourselves in God over and over.

Now we know that “normal” is never coming back, and yet we find God at work in so many places, and through so many people.

This Advent and Christmas season, I’m full of hope for you, that you’ll find meaning and grace in this season, and a renewal of your faith.

In hope,
Rev. Mary Austin
Pastor



www.gpchurch.org



Find Us on Facebook:
Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church



(301) 948-9418



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



MANY BLESSINGS *From the Heart of Pastor Mary Beth*

Members of GPC and friends recently returned from a mission trip with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance after a two-year absence due to COVID. It was SO good to be back in the mission groove and to be working together with our friends from other congregations. The home we worked on this fall had suffered massive flood and wind damage from one of the many hurricanes of past years in eastern North Carolina. We made a huge difference in stabilizing the home and beginning the work of rebuilding.

PDA's tagline, emblazoned on our blue shirts, is "Out of Chaos, Hope." There is the chaos of having one's home flooded or washed away entirely, not knowing where to find shelter, of losing the entirety of one's possessions, of running out of money because of disreputable contractors or lifelong poverty, of taking care of children and trying to keep up with work, and of the illnesses that come from living in a moldy, mildewy house. Then people come from faraway Maryland, ordinary disciples of Christ, some skilled, some less-so, all with compassionate hearts and willing hands to bear witness to the suffering, "You are not alone. You have not been forgotten. Christ has sent us here. We are here to serve in the name of the God who loves you."

I hope that one day you will be able to join us on one of these mission trips (particularly if you are skilled). But if not, know that all Christians are called to be a sign of hope in this messy, chaotic world. Everything you do because Christ has sent you bears witness to the people you serve that they are loved by God.

You are a sign of God's hope to your family, your neighbors, your colleagues, and your schoolmates. YOU are a sign of God's hope.

Many Blessings,
Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence
Associate Pastor

MUSIC NOTES

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God." —Colossians 3:16 (NRSV)

It's no secret that music has played a crucial role in worship throughout the history of the church. The history of music and the history of the church are well tied together, especially from the sixth century through the eighteenth century. Today, as in years past, our worship is adorned with the sounds of singing as a community—an activity that we offer up to glorify God, but that also serves as a way to minister to one another and build the community itself. To me, that is a huge part of what music ministry is all about, and not being able to do these things has been one of the most difficult aspects of the pandemic for me. Finally, this fall, we have been able to come together and sing as a community again. What a relief and what a joy!

The Christian Women Fellowship was the first group to return to singing in person in worship, and what a delight they were to hear! The Chancel Choir has been rehearsing on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m., and has also sung in worship. All are welcome! The Canterbury Ringers and a new small handbell group focused on learning ensemble ringing (temporarily and quite imaginatively called the Canterbury Ensemble) have also begun to rehearse and make their first peals of joy heard in worship. We are also looking for a way to bring back the Adult Praise Band and musical groups for children and youth.

We have some big plans in the works for the music ministry here at GPC. It will take some time, to be sure, and we could always use more smiling faces. If you are interested in participating or sharing your music in worship, please get in touch with me! I would be delighted to chat.

Wade Meyers
Director of Music and Worship Arts



QUIPS FROM EQUIPPING DISCIPLES



One quarter of the year under our belts and we're still on a steep learning curve with regard to holding classes. We have learned that hybrid classes are doable and that asynchronous classes are not just doable but, in some cases, are the *only* way to do them. We are learning that many people are hungering for God's Word, whether that means being in church physically, watching a livestream, or watching the recording when they get home from work. From these ways to be deeply faithful we are learning that there are many ways to find community within our church; we have some good friends who have never met in person but who regularly

pray for and with each other. As we continue to explore and learn new ways to be and to equip disciples, we hope that you will continue to offer and be open to new ideas and new ways to seek God's will for GPC.

Worship and Educational Opportunities for Children

On Sunday mornings, at the 9:30 and 11:00 worship services, children of all ages will begin in the Sanctuary. On the first Sunday of the month, as well as any weekend that includes a school holiday, children will stay for the entire service. On the other weekends, they will be dismissed from the service prior to the sermon to attend Sunday School. For your child's safety, we request that the parent or guardian come to the classroom to pick them up.



For older children who choose to remain in worship, we will provide an extensive Children's Bulletin. Children 4 years old and younger are welcome to enjoy the "Prayground," a small space with quiet toys on the floor in the Sanctuary where their parents can sit nearby.

Our Nursery is adjacent to the Sanctuary and is available for our youngest children from 9:20 a.m. until 12:10 p.m.



Educational Opportunities for Adults

Sundays:

- Sunday Small Group, current Follow Me curriculum, hybrid, Room 32/33, 8:20 a.m.
- The Bible as a Whole, Thessalonians, Zoom, 9:15 a.m.
- The Present Word, current Follow Me curriculum, Zoom, 9:30 a.m.
- Christian Classics, the Apocrypha, hybrid, Room 202, 9:30 a.m.

Other Small Groups:

- Monday, Bible Study – Psalms, Zoom, 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, current Follow Me curriculum, Zoom, 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, Bible Study – Genesis, Zoom, 7:30 p.m.

Carolyn Hayes

Director of Children and Young Families

YOUTH & COLLEGE MINISTRIES

All Things Fall

After not being able to meet in person for over a year, this past fall brought multi-church bowling night, outdoor lawn games, bonfire talks and s'mores, pumpkin soccer, smiles, laughter, and renewed friendships. It has been such a blessing to be back together. We celebrate and rejoice together and allow God to continue to shine and build our group.



Upcoming Events

This winter several events are planned that will take us out into the chilly air! Ice skating, snow tubing, and a brisk hike to see the sunrise! Parents and youth, please watch for the youth communications giving details about our winter events.

Confirmation

Confirmation registration is still open. Classes are open to all youth in 8th Grade and up. If you are interested in attending, please contact Carrie. Classes will begin in January 2022.

College Events

Bible study for college students continues to meet on Tuesday nights over Zoom. We will meet for the first few weeks in December, take a short break, and then start again in January. Our topic for January will be the Book of James. Mark your calendars for a **Snow Tubing/Skiing/Snowboarding Day** on **January 5**. For more information, contact Carrie.

Summer Camp & Mission Trips

The jury is still out as to whether or not summer camps will be offered this summer. Please keep an eye out for information about summer camp for both middle school and high school youth. Details will be included in our monthly youth emails. We're hoping that GPC can offer an opportunity to attend this summer.

—Carrie Larsen

Director of Youth and Young Adults



EXTRA WORSHIP OPPORTUNITY DURING ADVENT

Thinking about how to observe Advent? Evening prayer, or Compline, is an ancient prayer practice for ending the day. During Advent, as we prepare for the coming of Christ, join Elder Kris Maldarelli and friends on Sunday evenings at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom for scripture, prayer, and song. Evening prayer is about 15 minutes. It will be an opportunity for families near and far to take time to be together and share in preparation for Christmas. Join by Zoom or phone. We'll be looking for volunteers of any age to read the scripture. **Our first evening prayer will be on Sunday, November 28, at 7:00 p.m.**

ADVENT SPIRITUAL STUDY

The Communion of Saints: Living into God's Mission Every Day

How do we live as "saints" in the 21st century? During Advent, join Elder Kris Maldarelli for one online session to discover how everyday people are participating in God's mission in our neighborhoods and the world. You will hear stories of everyday saints and be able to add your own story of a saint. We will meet in Voice Thread, which you can access via a weblink at any time that is convenient for you. You can listen to the presentation and add your story of an everyday saint. The session will be available starting in early December – watch the announcements in Pastor Mary's emails for the date.



CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S SERVICES

December 24 | Christmas Eve Service | 4:00 PM
Suitable for all ages

December 25 | Christmas Day Service | 11:00 AM
Carols and stories

December 26 | Worship Service | 11:00 AM

January 2 | Worship Service | 11:00 AM | Communion

January 9 | Worship Services | 9:30 & 11:00 AM
Ordination and Installation of Church Officers at 11:00

All services will be available in person and via livestream.

HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU?

The late Betty Pearce was a firm believer in the power of intercessory prayer. She put her faith into action by telephoning church members each week and learning about the concerns of their hearts.

Thanks to the leadership of Elder Doreen Turczyn-Toles (who was mentored by Betty Pearce), we are reinstituting these prayer calls. Beginning in January 2022, you can expect a periodic phone call from Doreen asking for your prayer requests. With your permission, she will post your concerns to GPC's electronic Prayer Network. Otherwise your conversations will remain confidential.

If you don't want to wait for a call from Doreen, you can submit prayer requests directly to her (*contact the church office or a pastor for her email address or cell phone number*).

Note: To join the Prayer Network, please visit gpcchurch.org/prayernetwork and submit the form.

LOVE OUR NEIGHBORS AND STAY FOR A WHILE

Jesus teaches us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is important for us to understand that love is action, not simply a feeling or an emotion. So how do we “do love”? GPC’s mission statement alludes to engaging our neighbors in Central Montgomery County, presumably out of love. Rebuilding Together Montgomery County (RTMC) provides a conduit for doing just that.

RTMC works in partnership with state and local governments, community volunteers, nonprofit service providers, and corporate partners to provide free critical home repairs, energy efficiency upgrades, and accessibility modifications to the homes of our county’s most vulnerable residents. GPC’s involvement with RTMC has been personally rewarding for me, and it is always a joy to leave the service recipient’s home in a much better state than that in which we found it. Although we do a reasonably good job of fixing the physical structures, our efforts in the engagement department have been somewhat deficient, however. We make contact with the beneficiaries of these services temporarily but do not stay engaged, leaving them to their own devices.



The RTMC recipient and volunteer group pairings are supposed to be based on scope of needs and the volunteer group’s capabilities, and recipient-volunteer group pairings seldom repeat. The probability of such a repeat is lower than winning the Mega-Lotto, but it does happen, and it happened with GPC and this year’s recipient. We first worked on the woman’s house about seven years ago. I characterized this year’s assignment as a “warranty repair” call on the job we did previously – fix the house and stay engaged. This year we cleaned her house and yard, installed a new kitchen floor, replaced broken security lighting, and refinished her bathroom. We even gave her a

brand-new refrigerator. A couple of weeks after the Rebuilding Weekend, we went back to reclean her yard upon learning that she and her daughter had both slipped and fallen after stepping on fallen acorns. Her house is in much better shape today than when we first saw it. Although we did not stay in contact with her seven years ago, we have been given an opportunity to heal this gap. This is providence at work.

We all need healthy relationships, and this year’s recipient and her family are desirous of such a relationship with GPC. She and her daughter have both reached out to our pastors, and the mother has even attended a VIPS meeting. I think our co-house captains are now on speed dial on her phone; she calls or texts them at least once a week. We welcome that. GPC is geographically close to her house and some members of our congregation live within a five-minute walk from her house. We need to meet the family more than halfway, to welcome and absorb them into our fold and help fulfill God’s promise. We should make a habit of staying for a while.

“The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.” —Isaiah 58:11

—Yaw Obeng

Dr. Yaw Obeng is a Ruling Elder. He works at NIST, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry, UK, and a Fellow of the American Institute of Chemists.

For more information about RTMC, go to <https://rebuildingtogethertmc.org>.



CHARITY IN THE HOSPITAL VACCINE CLINICS

I am grateful to The Mainstream for the opportunity to reflect on the theme of charity in the setting of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In considering possible subjects for this response, one particular image came to mind: the vaccine clinic on the ground floor of my workplace. As the months have progressed, I've watched local residents bring their elderly parents in for vaccines, come in for vaccinations themselves, and then accompany their (occasionally sullen) teenagers for their vaccines. I would offer to you that the greatest acts of charity—when defined as love for fellow humans—are some of the simplest: following mask-wearing and physical distancing protocols, and receiving the COVID-19 vaccination. Although masking/physical distancing and being vaccinated do benefit the individual, they also have a collective benefit to society by incrementally decreasing rates of viral spread. Compliance with masking recommendations also demonstrates respect and care for others, particularly those at higher risk of infection due to immune status, age, or occupation (think food-service workers and environmental service workers as well as nurses, medical assistants, and other healthcare personnel). By wearing a mask and being fully vaccinated, you help decrease their risk of infection as well as lessen your own. People bringing older relatives or adolescent children to the vaccine clinic at my workplace—giving of their time to ensure that others are protected—exemplifies charity.



Some personal protective equipment (PPE) that we wear at the hospital

In a similar manner, the sacrifices that many have made in limiting traveling to visit family or friends also represent acts of charity. These decisions to avoid travel help limit viral spread in much the same way that masking and distancing do. Although being physically separated from support systems is difficult in the best of times, and even more so during times of upheaval such as the present time, the benefits of collectively slowing the pace of pandemic are not to be ignored; by doing so we may well have averted even more infections than we've witnessed already.

As I wrote this article, I was reminded of a gospel passage containing Jesus' response to a question about the commandments:

²⁹"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ³⁰Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹The second is this: '**Love your neighbor as yourself.** There is no commandment greater than these.' ³²"Well said, teacher," the man replied. "You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. ³³To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to **love your neighbor as yourself** is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." —Mark 12:29–33

In this reading, Jesus exhorts us to love God but also to love our neighbor as ourselves. Both masking and vaccination are excellent ways in which to follow this teaching, as they provide benefits to both self and community – love thy neighbor, wear a mask. This pandemic isn't over yet.

Note: This article represents my personal views, and does not necessarily represent those of my employer.

—Grace Maldarelli

Grace, a child of GPC, is a fellow in Infectious Diseases at New York Presbyterian Hospital. She is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and is finishing her fellowship in Infectious Diseases (sub-specialty).

CHARITY FROM COLLINS CLARK

Our friend Collins Clark was born and raised in Nigeria. About six years ago, at age 46, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer. After two years, Collins had exhausted all the treatment options available in Nigeria. He learned of a doctor at Georgetown University Hospital here in Washington, D.C., who could administer other experimental treatments for the cancer.

Collins left his wife and three children to be treated at Georgetown University Hospital. In this area, he found a home in Derwood Bible Church (DBC). Two years later, my wife, Barb Thorne; our son, Paul Thorne-Keziah; his wife, Lena Thorne-Keziah; their children; and I moved to Derwood. Paul and his family also found a home at Derwood Bible Church and soon became fast friends with Collins.

A few months later, when Collins needed a new place to live, DBC appealed to its members to help find him a new home. This call touched Paul's and Lena's hearts. It was clear that they were shaped in part by Armenian traditions of hospitality and their experience hosting travelers in their home in Armenia. Not knowing Collins very well and shaped by American habits, Barb and I were skeptical of this proposal.

We all knew that this was a major commitment to support Collins at a time when we were making a home for ourselves and the children. After much prayer and discussion, we all decided to set up living quarters for Collins in our basement. Barb and I are now truly grateful that we made this decision.

Collins was a man of prayer who found joy in worship and prayer and in the company of other Christians. He warmly embraced us, worshiped with us, and prayed with us and for us. He was an excellent cook and very careful about his diet. He introduced us to many foods from Nigeria and encouraged us to eat more fish and other healthy foods. He introduced us to new friends, including Katie Odey, who founded a clinic in her hometown in Nigeria that treats people with sickle cell anemia. Meals were wonderful times of great food and greater fellowship, including stories from him, our daughter-in-law, and the rest of us who have grown up in Nigeria, Armenia, and the US, respectively.

There came a time when our landlord required that Collins leave because he was not a signer on our lease. A DBC couple made room for Collins, but that move was a sad day for us.

A few months after that move, we started looking for a permanent home and were careful to find a house that had an extra bedroom. Right after we found and purchased our home, we learned that the couple hosting Collins needed to move away. Joyfully, we moved Collins into the extra bedroom in our new house.

A few weeks after we moved into the new house, Collins started suffering terrible pain in his spine and had to go to the hospital for diagnosis and treatment. The examinations revealed that Collins' cancer had advanced beyond any available treatment. The medical personnel could offer only palliative care.

Collins returned to our home under hospice care. He was able to receive visitors and remain a blessing to us all. DBC set up a program for church members to visit regularly and give our family opportunities to be out of the house for church and other breaks. We also received meals from DBC and GPC.

We treasured those three months of hospice. We and our visitors were able to celebrate and cry with Collins. We could talk and pray and just sit. We even had a few worship services with Collins in his room.

Collins Clark died on Sunday, September 5, 2021, at 12:30 p.m. surrounded by friends and wrapped in prayer. He was a blessing to us all.

—Patrick Keziah

Patrick Keziah is an incoming Ruling Elder at GPC. He and his wife, Barb Thorne, moved to Maryland from Colorado two years ago.





VERY IMPORTANT PRESBYTERIAN SENIORS {VIPS}

VIPS has resumed holding its monthly gatherings in Lindsay Hall. Their October program, *Some Bright Spots – Even During a Pandemic*, featured personal stories by GPC members of satisfying experiences and accomplishments in recent months, and their November program, *Animals' Journey into Winter*, included show-and-tell time with some special guests—a frog, terrapin, rabbit, owl, and squirrel! VIPS' traditional **Christmas celebration and party** will be held on **Thursday, December 2, at 11:30 a.m.** Questions? Contact Nancy Sanders (*call the church office*).



MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

The group was able to meet in Lindsay Hall this fall. In September, Bob Gunderson spoke about his duties working for NOAA's National Weather Service; in October, David Mecklenburg and Carol Anderson gave a presentation on their trip to Ethiopia and Tanzania two years ago; and in November, Carolyn Hayes spoke about Christian Educators. The next meeting will be on **Saturday, December 4, at 8:00 a.m.**, when Wade Myers, Director of Music and Worship Arts, will speak on "Community and Fellowship through Song." Questions? Contact Ted Farrand (*call the church office*).



CRAFT GROUP

The members of this group have been busy making prayer shawls and prayer squares for Holy Cross Germantown Hospital. The next meeting will be on **Sunday, December 5, from 12:15 to 2:15 p.m.** in Rooms 30/31. Volunteers are needed to sew dignity bibs from donated men's and women's shirts! Bring your lunch and a project or help with shawls or prayer squares. Questions? Contact Barbara Clark (*call the church office*).



THE GOOD GRIEF GROUP

GPC's bereavement support group has resumed its monthly meetings in Room 202. Because their usual meeting day in December falls on Christmas this year, that meeting has been moved ahead to **Saturday, December 18, at 10:00 a.m.** If you do not receive emails from this group and would like to be added to its distribution list, contact John Slavcoff (*call the church office*).



2ND FRIDAY BOOK CLUB

This group is still meeting via Zoom. They are currently reading Chapter 7 of *How to Be an Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi. Their next meeting will be on **Friday, December 10, at 7:30 p.m.** You are welcome to participate anytime, even if you have not read the book. For more information, contact Cindy Cenname (*call the church office*).



CUB SCOUTS

Cub Scout Pack 64 hiked to the Kingsley Schoolhouse and had a family camping trip, both at Little Bennett Regional Park, and enjoyed a Halloween Fun Fair at GPC in October. November activities included collecting food for Scouting for Food and an Award Ceremony. The Pack welcomes all boys and girls in elementary school to join us. Their next meeting will be on **Tuesday, December 7, at 7:00 p.m.** on the ground floor of GPC near the main office. They are looking forward to placing wreaths on Veterans' graves in Frederick later in December. Questions? Contact Barbara Clark (*call the church office*).



KIND WORKS

GPC, in partnership with KindWorks, is continuing to help provide KindCasseroles for the Hillside Senior Apartments in Gaithersburg and KindSoups for various community agencies this fall. In addition, the KindKitchens and KindWelcomeDinners projects provide groceries and welcome dinners for newly arrived immigrant families. Volunteers can be reimbursed for food purchases upon request. Questions? Visit www.DoKindWorks.org or contact Denise Schleckser (*call the church office*).



AND THE RESULTS ARE IN . . .

COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY RESULTS

We would like to thank all of you who took the time to complete this survey, either electronically or on paper. We heard from 148 participants, broken down by age group as follows:

44.6% were in their **70s & Beyond**

14.9% were in their **30s & 40s**

35.8% were in their **50s & 60s**

4.7% were between **18 and 30**

In general, 89% of those surveyed felt that GPC's current methods of communication are meeting their needs. Specifically, the methods are listed below, ranked in order by percentages of participants who said that they used and were happy with them.

Worship Service Announcements **(78%)**

GPC Signs **(51%)**

The Mainstream **(77%)**

GPC Website **(49%)***

Letters/Postcards **(63%)**

GPC App **(31%)****

E-blasts [emails from the pastors] **(60%)**

Facebook **(18%)****

GPC Brochures **(53%)**

Instagram **(9%)****

*Presumably this percentage is higher during non-pandemic times, when there are more in-person activities at GPC.

**The percentage for this method might have been higher if we had received more input from younger respondents.

A number of you indicated that you would be willing to share your thoughts and ideas with the Communications Committee by email or telephone. If you are one of those who did (or would like to do so now), please call the church office so that a member of the committee may contact you.

Many of you also provided additional comments directly on the form. They were wide ranging, helpful, and provided good insights on some possible changes and improvements. The committee very much appreciates your feedback and is in the process of reviewing your comments.

Thank you again for your participation!

WE'RE LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS!

A few of you indicated on the Communications Committee's recent survey that you would be interested in attending a monthly Zoom meeting. We encourage drop-ins but are also actively seeking new committee members. We always benefit from hearing a variety of perspectives and opinions. This is your opportunity to have regular input on new communication ideas and be a part of the decision-making process! Please contact the church office (301-948-9418 or gpchurch.org/contact) and a committee member will call you back to provide more information.



THE LORD'S TABLE

The Lord's Table is part of Gaithersburg Community Soup Kitchen and has spent the past year serving brown bag lunches in lieu of hot meals, due to COVID-19 restrictions. During this time, many volunteers from churches, synagogues, and other religious and civic organizations in the Gaithersburg area helped make 20,000 sandwiches, providing 10,000 nutritious lunches every weekday. Pastor Jennifer Fenner and the Epworth Methodist Council granted The Lord's Table special permission to operate from Epworth Methodist Church.

Additionally, in May 2020, a food distribution program in partnership with the Epworth Methodist Church was started. More than 650 people received food donations each week. The food was provided through grants from Manna Food Center in Montgomery County; St. Martin's Pantry; local grocery stores, such as Costco and Harris Teeter; and financial donations from civic and religious organizations, including GPC.

Special thanks go to The Lord's Table board: President Patrick Donohue, Mary Canapary, George Sushinsky, Carole Wikert, Max & Ruth Billinger, Dolly Swoyer, Pat Stack, Patrick Burke, and Oscar Alvarenga, who provided food collection; purchased food; scheduled volunteers; and handled bookkeeping, maintenance, and equipment cleaning tasks.

As of October 2021, The Lord's Table is serving hot meals again. Yay! Back to serving the many guests. Depending on the weather, 20 to 100 men, women, and children may be served. We are looking for volunteers to help GPC cook and serve food for a few hours on the third Tuesday of each month. To join either the cooking group or the serving group, please contact Francie Whitlock (call the church office).

This is a great opportunity to add joy to others' lives and also your own. God's love begins with serving others.

"I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live." —Ecclesiastes 3:12

—Francie Whitlock

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

As the cooler weather moves in and Christmas approaches, we are reminded of our school families right around the corner from GPC at Summit Hall Elementary School. The director of their outreach program has identified the following three areas of need:

- **Snacks for 2nd Graders** – Some children eat lunch late (1:30) and need some extra morning energy. Food, such as animal crackers or Goldfish, can be in large bulk containers from Sam's Club or Costco.
- **Children's Winter Coats**, sizes 5–16 – The number of immigrant children at the school is growing and this is their first taste of winter weather.
- **Holiday Assistance Gift Cards** – Cards in denominations of \$25 or \$50 for such stores as Walmart, Target, Weis, and Sam's Club help parents shop for clothing, shoes, toys, and food for their cultural celebrations.

Items may be dropped off in the wooden bin in the Gathering Place or the large plastic bin under the mailboxes near the church office.

Gift cards should be given directly to me or a GPC staff member. I will try to be available outside the Sanctuary on Sundays between services. Thanks for your help!

—Marilyn Morrison
Community Engagement
Representative for Schools

GET INTO THE HOLIDAY SPIRIT WITH GAITHERSBURG CHORUS HOLIDAY CONCERTS!!

The Gaithersburg Chorus will present two free holiday concerts in December. Their first concert will be held in GPC's Sanctuary on **Friday, December 10, at 7:30 p.m.** The concert will be repeated on **Tuesday, December 14, at 7:30 p.m.** at Asbury Methodist Village in their Rosborough Auditorium. Come and enjoy a variety of seasonal and heartwarming songs!



MONTGOMERY PHILHARMONIC CONCERT



Orchestra concerts right in our Sanctuary are back! The first concert of Montgomery Philharmonic's 16th season will be held on **Sunday, December 12, at 6:30 p.m.** and will feature *Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major* (Schubert), *Largo for Strings* (Avni), and *The Bamboula* (Coleridge-Taylor). As always, admission is free, but donations are gratefully accepted.



Poinsettia Orders

Once again, we will decorate our Sanctuary with poinsettias at Christmas. The cost is **\$11 per plant**. Please make checks payable to "GPC" and marked "poinsettia." To order your plant(s), complete this form and return it to the church office or place it in the offering plate on Sunday, with proper payment, no later than **Sunday, December 12**.

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____ Number of plants _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Circle one: IN HONOR IN MEMORY IN CELEBRATION OF:

You may take home your poinsettia(s) after church on December 26.





INTERFAITH WORKS WOMEN'S CENTER (IWWC)

WEEK OF MEALS DECEMBER 19–25, 2021

*Deliver breakfast items
and pantry staples*

Prepare bag or hot lunches

Provide dinner

**THERE ARE SEVERAL
EASY WAYS TO HELP,
ALL CONTACTLESS!**

**Volunteers
are needed to:**

**Purchase breakfast food
and other supplies and
drop them off contact-free
at the shelter or GPC or use
a grocery delivery service**

*Delivery Day:
Sunday, December 19*

**Prepare and drop off,
without contact, lunch
or dinner for 35 residents**

See signup sheet for dates

(No serving this year)

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



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

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

Roger & Carol Marcotte

*(their son, Raymond,
in Derwood, MD)*

September 4, 2021

Charles & Bette Mercer

*(her father, James M. Butler,
in Golden, CO)*

September 6, 2021

Rosalie Sidieu

*(her husband, Ndjigang,
in Cameroon)*

October 2021



WELCOME TO THE WORLD!

Congratulations to:

Mark & Laura Wilson,
the proud grandparents,
and

David & Clara Wilson,
the proud parents of

LLEWELYN (LOUIE)

GEORGE WILSON

born on July 24, 2021

Vince & Jenna Bruni,
the proud parents, and

Xyla James Bruni,
the proud big sister of

SYLVIE EMILIA BRUNI

born on November 11, 2021

(Jenna is GPC's Communications Manager)

GIFTS FOR THE 2021 GIVING TREE!



GPC will once again support several local organizations as well as worldwide groups. For flexibility, convenience, and safety, we are again requesting gift cards. Details and shopping lists will be included in our upcoming GPC emails. You may also make a monetary donation to several of these organizations.

Please help support our annual Giving Tree as you are able. Watch for more information coming soon to your Inbox!

Questions? Please contact Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence or Cindy Zammit.



THANK YOU

We would like to extend our deepest thanks for all the cards, flowers, and phone calls we received while we were recovering from our recent illnesses, injuries, and accidents. But most of all, thank you for the prayers. I know that God heard each and every one of them, because we are both doing much better. So much love coming from all of you makes us thankful for our church family and for the spreading of God's love.

—Don and Laura Johnson



DIRECTORY CHANGES

*Addresses and phone numbers
are available through the church office.*

Marilyn Agard
Lloyd Currie
Roger & Carol Marcotte
Roland Ngang & Grace Ashu-Ngang
Tyler & Jeannette Shields

DOWNLOAD OUR APP!

GPC's mobile app features:

- Online Giving
- Weekly Bulletins
- Devotions
- Serving Opportunities
- Ways to Connect
- Worship & Sunday School Videos
- The Mainstream
- Event Calendar



Text "gpchurch app" to 77977 or visit the homepage of the website and click the "Download Our App" button.

For additional step-by-step directions to download the app, visit the YouTube page. Questions? Contact GPC's Communications Manager at jobermiller@gpchurch.org.

ARE YOU SOCIAL?



facebook.com/GaithersburgPresbyterianChurch

instagram.com/gpchurch_moco

youtube.com/GPChurch_Moco

Be sure to "like" our Facebook page,
"follow" our Instagram account,
and "subscribe" to our YouTube channel!

FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT

October 2021

	2021 YTD	% OF BUDGET
INCOME		
Envelope Pledged	\$646,666	85%
Envelope Unpledged	\$174,946	117%
Loose Offering	\$15,068	42%
GPP&K Rent	\$0	0%
Other Income	\$2,895	116%
Room Rent	\$0	0%
Interest & Dividends	\$47	24%
FourthNight	\$0	0%
Manse Rental	\$0	0%
Carryover	\$0	0%

Total \$839,62383%

EXPENSE

NCP Membership	\$28,077	100%
Human Resources	\$455,307	82%
Buildings & Grounds	\$174,784	87%
Office Operations	\$31,613	90%
Communications	\$30,123	75%
Stewardship	\$2,896	42%
Comm Engagement	\$82,155	82%
Eq Disciples	\$13,285	58%
Vital Worship	\$12,003	60%
Congregational Life	\$571	8%
Session	\$1,328	0%

Total \$832,14082%

NET \$7,483

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



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS TO ALL!



OUR VISION AND MISSION

GPC 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:

- 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