



THE MAINSTREAM

SUNDAYS

WORSHIP IN PERSON
9:30 & 11:00 AM

WORSHIP BY LIVESTREAM
11:00 AM

SECOND QUARTER

2024



Rebuilding Together
Montgomery County Day



Easter Sunrise Service
at Bohrer Park



Jumpstart Retreat



*From the Heart of
Rev. LeAnn Hodges*

OUR LIFE TOGETHER IS A WITNESS

Dear GPC Members and Friends,

Last February I wrote a 4-page summary of the CAT Scan results.* There is a LOT of data in the report, and since I have been working with this instrument for over 10 years, I have a good sense of how to draw out GPC's story from the data.

I suspect that one important piece of data will come as no surprise to you: GPC has a very high degree of diversity among our members, both theologically and culturally. We know just from looking at the worshipping congregation that there is a delightfully rich ethnic diversity at GPC (our 2023 statistical report indicates that our membership is 55% white people and 45% people of color). And the CAT Scan reports that we also have a high degree of theological diversity.

One thing that I have learned about leading change in communities of uncommon diversity is that building relationships that go beyond the surface is essential. Too often diverse congregations tiptoe around the differences out of fear of offending or "doing it wrong" and end up creating ever-enlarging divides between the very people with whom we are longing to connect.

As we move into this next season of shared ministry, here are a few invitational questions for you to consider:

- What are some ways in which you might use this community's strength of hospitality to create meaningful opportunities to share the stories of your lives with one another?
- What are some ways in which GPC's passion for music in worship might create expansive opportunities for our diverse musical groups to lead together in new ways that embody the fullness of this gathered community?
- Who do you not yet know, and how might you commit to deepening your relationship with people who sit in other places in the Sanctuary on Sunday morning?

There is a quote that Mary Beth shared with me on my first day at GPC. She was paraphrasing a larger quote by Will Willimon, but I like the succinct way that she said it – "May our life together be our witness."

I believe that we have a precious gift in the diversity of our gathered community, and it appears to me that there are many riches waiting to be uncovered just beneath the surface. The CAT Scan shows that we are healthy and have what we need to do this work—the work of deepening relationships, of building up the Body of Christ.

*https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sxsxv7Mgh5OWwyjpvvGbUmyAR-cuux_Tw/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=104502857109615498818&rtpof=true&sd=true

—REV. LEANN HODGES
TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

WAYS TO CONNECT



www.gpchurch.org

301-948-9418

office@gpchurch.org

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

MANY BLESSINGS

As I prepare to retire from active ministry later this year, one thing I've been doing is reminiscing about the beginning of my ministry with you. Early on, I identified a strong value that characterized GPC. It took me a while to name this behavior, but once I did, I saw it in every part of the church's life.

The value is: *everyone pitches in*. If there were an event in the church building, people arrived early to set up tables and chairs. After the event, someone would begin to put away the furniture and others joined in without even being asked. If helpers were needed in the kitchen, people took a turn, and by the sound of the laughter, they enjoyed the work and the fellowship. If volunteers were needed to fold bulletins, plant flowers, decorate the Sanctuary for special seasons, mentor the youth, or teach VBS, people said "yes," and they showed up. They contributed time and money to the life of the church. They invested in this community of faith called GPC. Very few people waited to be served. Most stepped forward to help.

The other value that stood out for me when I first arrived was how much people cared for one another. A lot of churches talk about being a caring community of faith. GPC is a caring community. From this congregation's beginnings in 1964, members have enjoyed Christian fellowship in one another's homes, prepared meals when someone was ill, stepped up to care for children, provided rides to medical appointments, studied the Bible together (outside of Sunday mornings), prayed for one another, and built strong relationships based on *the love of Jesus Christ*.

As we are listening to the Spirit and learning how to sail into God's new future for GPC, we know that some things will change. Some activities and programs that were dear to us long ago aren't coming back. However, *the love of Jesus Christ is still here*. For that reason, the values that I observed years ago are still needed today – in new contexts, yes. With new people, yes. I challenge everyone reading these words to consider, "How is Christ calling me to pitch in to support the work and worship of GPC? To whom is Christ calling me to support with loving action?" Then put that loving action into practice.

—REV. MARY BETH LAWRENCE
ASSOCIATE PASTOR



WE WANT YOU

This message is to everyone who attends GPC worship services via Livestream. We want you to add your photos to our online directory. Please email a single or family photo to pwhiteh@hotmail.com. We are still happy to take photos of those folks who are attending church in person. Please don't leave a blank box in our directory above Your Name!



Now is the time to sign up for Table Fellowship, previously known as Dinners for Eight (D48). Table Fellowship takes place inside or outside, involves adults with or without children, and does not require everyone to host. As eight adults sign up, groups are created. After you participate in one group, you can sign up to be included in another group. Contact Clara Pratt at office@gpchurch.org to be added to a group.



EQUIPPING DISCIPLES

avail themselves of some wisdom from Jumpstart and/or the urgings of their own periods of discernment. EqD has been reimagining itself as we have worked through the period of discernment as a church. We have emerged as a more cohesive whole, made of three distinct parts, all of whom are trying to equip the members of the various ages and stages of our congregation to be the best disciples that they can be. If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please reach out to Carolyn (301-948-9418, ext. 1114) or any other member of the group. We welcome your thoughts.

Sunday Mornings: Our Children's Program will continue throughout the summer as we have done during the school year. We will take two short breaks: June 23 & 30 and August 18 & 25. On those four Sundays, activity bags with a short lesson and activities will be provided to kids attending the worship service.

Fireworks Picnic – Saturday, June 29, 6:00–9:00 PM: EqD joins Congregational Life to bring you this annual picnic. We will provide chicken, hot dogs, hamburgers, and condiments. You provide side dishes and desserts.



Holy Spirit Study – July: Enjoy a study of the Holy Spirit throughout July. We are excited to present an adult study and discussion version of the same Scripture passages used during Vacation Bible School.



Sail On! Vacation Bible School – July 15–19, 9:00 AM to Noon: We learn how the Holy Spirit can fill our sails. Registration for children 4 years old through 5th grade continues through June. Learn more and register at www.gpchurch.org/vbs. Anyone interested in volunteering to help may contact Carolyn Hayes (301-948-9418, ext. 1114) for particulars.

—CAROLYN HAYES
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES AND
ACTING DIRECTOR OF GPP&K



FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER SEMINAR

SATURDAY, JUNE 8 | 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM | LINDSAY HALL

GPC's Racial Justice Ministry will host the Montgomery County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), who will present this free seminar. The goal of the seminar is to provide critical information to Montgomery County residents to guide them on the path to homeownership. You will learn about the benefits of homeownership, how to prepare for it, and resources available to first-time homebuyers.

Representatives from Montgomery County government, lenders, attorneys, counselors, and other relevant professionals will be available to answer your questions. This seminar will be held in person so that you can receive handouts from the speakers. Subsequent seminars will be held via Zoom and will be tailored to information that attendees have indicated would be most useful to them. An Eventbrite site will be opened for registration and follow-up. More information will be available closer to the date so that you can learn what is "key" to getting the "keys" to your first house that you will make your home!

—CAROLYN COLEMAN
RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

YOUTH & COLLEGE HAPPENINGS

YOUTH SUMMER CAMP

WOW . . . Summer Camp for Youth is almost here! The theme for both Middle School Camp and High School Camp is "Rest of Your Life." Youth will be challenged to be Kingdom Workers in their school, community, church, and family!

MIX MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP

July 8-12 • Juniata College, PA

MOVE HIGH SCHOOL CAMP

July 22-27 • Salisbury University, MD

Registration is open for both camps. The cost is \$485/person. Scholarships are available.

If you're interested in attending camp, contact Carrie Larsen for more information.



Do you feel pressured?

To measure up?

To be the best, the brightest, the funniest, the prettiest, the strongest?

To try harder, work longer, never let up, never give in, and never quit?

Do you wonder what you're going to do with the rest of your life?

Does all your striving, all your efforts to keep up, to stand out, to be noticed, to make someone proud only lead to being tired, exhausted, burnt-out, worn-out, fatigued, and weary?

If so, then Jesus has something he wants you to hear,

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

**Join us this summer and let Jesus give you the
REST of your life - for the rest of your life.**

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

- Daniel Anpoma – Gaithersburg HS
- Lila Moncak – Quince Orchard HS
- Zaman Munthali – Watkins Mill HS
- Zikani Munthali – Watkins Mill HS

COLLEGE GRADUATES

- Junior Abisi – University of Maryland, Baltimore College, Biology, with a minor in Psychology
- Muyang Chunga – Coppin State University, Biology & Life Science, with a minor in Chemistry
- Kristen Frick – Virginia Tech, Agriculture Business, with a minor in Marketing Strategy
- Abby Gordon – University of Redlands (California), Global Business, with a minor in Math



THANK YOU, GPC CHURCH FAMILY!

We thank you for your support in making our Muffin Mania event a huge success. Together we raised **\$1,003**, which helps support our summer youth camp scholarships. It was a great Sunday and the muffins you provided were all delicious! Thank you again for your love and support for our students.



—CARRIE LARSEN
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS



MUSICAL NOTES

Greetings, dear members of Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church! I began my time with you as Music Director on February 1. How the time has flown! It has been a joy and a privilege to get to know you and collaborate with you to bring music to the Sunday worship services. I have been met every single Sunday with a warm greeting, a kind word, and an enthusiastic response to the music. GPC has something very special in this diverse group, and I am grateful to be part of it.

I want to briefly acknowledge and express my gratitude for the efforts made by so many to bring music to worship. The women of CWF are amazing and a true inspiration to me. The Praise Team brings their passion and skill each month. I very much enjoy playing for them. The Canterbury Ringers are truly an awesome group—what a pleasure it is to listen to the handbells. And the children ringing and singing is always a delight. Speaking as their director, I am so pleased that the Chancel Choir has returned in full force. We have even welcomed some new members. If you are interested in singing, you may join the choir at any time. You are invited to attend a rehearsal any Thursday night at 7:00 p.m. to see if it might be for you. The Chancel Choir will sing again in May and in June, and after that we will take a break for the summer and start choir rehearsals again in early September.

Speaking of the summer, this would be a wonderful opportunity if you would like to play a solo on your instrument or sing a solo or duet. If you need assistance in choosing your repertoire, I can help with that and would be delighted to accompany anyone on the piano. I know that this is a congregation with lots of musical talent, so I would encourage you, whether young or old or somewhere in the middle, to consider taking this opportunity to share your musical gift to the glory of God and the edification of God's people! Please reach out to me if you are interested and we can discuss scheduling a Sunday for you to play or sing.

We have lots to look forward to in the coming year. It is my hope that we will expand the handbell program and children's choir as well as continue to develop GPC as a place for diverse voices to be lifted up. If you have something that you would like to see happen musically at GPC, please reach out to me—I welcome your input. I will do my best to honor the voice of the Spirit as we seek to be a sailboat church and discover how that is reflected in the music program within our congregation.

Thank you for your warmth and kindness! I look forward to deepening and developing relationships within GPC and collaborating to make a beautiful, musical witness to God's goodness!



—KATHERINE WILLIAMS
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

ORCHESTRA CONCERT

The Montgomery Philharmonic will hold the last concert of its 2023–2024 season in our Sanctuary on **Sunday, June 9, at 6:30 p.m.** They will perform *Symphony No. 7 in A major, Opus 92* (Beethoven), *The Rhyme of Taigu* (Long), and *Serenade for Orchestra* (Still). Admission is free but donations are gratefully accepted.



LITTLE FREE PANTRY

To all who donate to the Little Free Pantry, thank you! You are making a difference! Keep up the good work! If you haven't been supporting it yet, please consider adding food items for the pantry to your weekly shopping lists. Current needs include:

- Peanut Butter
- Oatmeal – instant or regular
- Fruit – dried or canned
- Vegetable Oil – small bottle
- Beans – dried or canned
- Rice

Donations can be placed directly in the pantry or in the wooden bin in the Gathering Space (Narthex). If you would prefer to make a monetary donation, you may donate via check or online, designating "Little Free Pantry" as the fund.

—ANNETTE WARD

CELEBRATING 48 YEARS OF GPP&K!



The last couple of months of the school year are always special, filled with learning opportunities that focus on springtime and renewed life. We hatch chicks and butterflies, paint pictures of flowers and flowering trees, and learn all about the insects that pollinate them and the importance of those pollinators. We enjoy our annual Truck Day, which is also deeply enjoyed by those who bring the trucks to us and have done so for some 30 years.

Our school year will finish on May 31 with the Kindergarten Moving On ceremony. On June 1, we will have an afternoon celebration of 48 years of nurturing children. We have invited current families, alumni, and as many of our former staff members as we could reach. It has been a wonderful, if bittersweet, year as we all move on.

—CAROLYN HAYES
ACTING DIRECTOR OF GPP&K



(1976–2024)



GPC WOMEN'S PRAYER TIME

MEETING DATES AND TIMES VARY

The leaders of this group are currently looking at various schedule options and hoping to resume meetings in the future.



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 **June 8, July 13, and August 10**. Questions? Contact Cathy Lyon (call the church office).





MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

FIRST SATURDAY | 8:00 AM | CAFÉ SOPHIE (JUNE-AUGUST)

At their **April** meeting, Lisa Whitehead shared a wonderful PowerPoint presentation about the various extensive plantings around the church. As in previous summers, the group will meet for breakfast and conversation at Café Sophie (formerly the Airport Café) in the Gaithersburg Airpark. This year they started meeting there one month sooner, on **May 4**. Future breakfast dates are **June 1**, **July 6**, and **August 3**. No program, just fellowship, and each person pays for his or her own breakfast. As always, women are welcome to join the group for these outings. Questions? Contact Ted Farrand (*call the church office*).



VERY IMPORTANT PRESBYTERIAN

FIRST THURSDAY | 11:30 AM | LINDSAY HALL

SENIORS {VIPS}

We look forward to a presentation by our own Suzie Ward entitled "Gaithersburg: Then and Now!" at our **June 6** meeting. We will also acknowledge GPC's 60th Anniversary. Later in the month, on **June 26**, we'll have the opportunity to participate in a guided tour of the Soleado Lavender Farm in Dickerson, Maryland.

July 4th will find us at Asbury Methodist Village for our traditional Independence Day Party! The 4:00 p.m. celebration at the Villas Clubhouse will feature a potluck meal, patriotic songs and games, and fellowship, of course. VIPS will be on vacation in **August**, so NO gathering is planned. Questions? Contact Nancy Sanders (*call the church office*).



CRAFT GROUP

FIRST SUNDAY | 12:15 PM | LINDSAY HALL

The group continues knitting and crocheting to support requests for prayer shawls and prayer squares by local service organizations, such as Holy Cross Hospital, The Equity Center, and JSSA (Jewish Social Services Agency). 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" and should have a prayer card attached. Donations must be washed and placed in a plastic bag. Arrangements for pick-up can be made, if needed. The summer meetings will be on **June 2**, **July 14,*** and **August 4**. Questions? Contact Barbara Clark (*call the church office*).

*Note that the July meeting will be on the second Sunday of the month.



2ND FRIDAY BOOK CLUB

(FORMERLY SECOND FRIDAY | 7:30 PM | ZOOM)

The 2nd Friday Book Club, formed around 13 years ago by Mary and the late Bob Wasik, read on subjects where faith and culture intersect, such as LGBTQ and anti-racism issues. They first met in the Wasik's home, then at GPC, and finally over Zoom since the pandemic. Their meetings have now ended. Many members have become part of the Matthew 25 Racial Justice Ministry, so although the book club has reached "The End," they have also transformed into active, faithful disciples following Christ in the world.



CUB SCOUTS

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

Cub Scout Pack 64 has been busy! **April** activities included helping with GPC's Spring Clean-up Day, touring the King Farm building site, and going on a spring campout. A special **May** activity included participating in a Bike Rodeo sponsored by MCDOT. Our last meeting of the school year will be on **June 4**. We'll hold our Raingutter Regatta in the GPC parking lot, and scouts will be advanced to their new rank if they've completed all the requirements. Summer activities are still being planned. Our pack is open to boys and girls entering Kindergarten through rising 5th Graders. If your child is interested in participating, contact Barbara Clark (*call the church office*).



GPC SPANS the GLOBE

THE WASHINGTON JAPANESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

GPC benefits from and takes pride in the international diversity of its members. This is the fourth in a series of articles 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 new, continuing articles in *The Mainstream* will help us build even stronger understanding and connections.

In Japan, Shinto and Buddhism are the two main religions. Often practiced simultaneously, they account for some 80% of the population. **Christianity has a very small presence in Japan, with only about 1.5% of the population identifying as Christian.** A history of its evolution in the Washington, DC, area follows.

The Washington Japanese Christian Church

(1946–Present) The Washington Japanese Christian Church (WJCC) started 78 years ago, right after World War II. I was drawn to their history and God's plan for them and wanted to learn more. From a human perspective, it seems to meander and be full of twists and turns, but in God's eyes, it may look different.

I am grateful to Ms. Kazuyo Sato, who compiled WJCC's history through 2016 after interviewing senior members about the past. In spite of conflicts, separations, and changes over the years, she is certain that one thing remains the same: "People gathered in the name of Jesus Christ and Japanese was the common language of those who gathered."

*Where two or three gather together
in my name, I am among them.*

—Matthew 18:20

Pastor Andrew (Yoshinobu) Kuroda (1946–1953) **First Evangelical Reformed Church**

This church began worshiping around New Year's Day in 1946. Most worshipers had been liberated from the Japanese Relocation Camp after the war ended and

moved to the Washington, DC, area. They gathered and the Washington Resettlement Committee sponsored a location for them to worship. They started with a small group, but the numbers soon increased. American missionaries who returned from Japan were initially in charge of Japanese language services. In September 1946, Pastor Kuroda, a Methodist pastor, began participating in the Japanese services. In June 1947, he became the official associate pastor and initiated services in Japanese. Pastor Kuroda was born into a pastor's family in Japan that moved to the United States in 1934. He studied at Auburn Theological Seminary and later served Japanese Christians on the West Coast. He was forced to live in an internment camp for about 10 months during the war, and later worked as a Japanese instructor for the military at the University of Michigan and the Office of Strategic Services in New York and India. After the war, Pastor Kuroda started working at the Library of Congress full time. He joined this small Japanese Christian group, even though the church's financial donations were too small to cover his salary. During this period, the War Brides worshiped together.

In 1953, the First Evangelical Reformed Church moved to Maryland and changed its name to Trinity United Church of Christ. The Japanese Christian group moved together and continued holding services there. Transportation to the new location was inconvenient, however, so the Japanese church rented a room at Grace Reformed Church in DC. In 1962, Pastor Kuroda resigned as associate pastor because of doctrinal issues but continued holding services and Bible study meetings at his house until around 1977.



Pastor Chikara Oze (1962–1965)

Grace Reformed Church

The Japanese church invited Chikara Oze, a student at Wesley Theological Seminary, to be their pastor.

Pastor Kyeong-ok Kang (1965–1967)

Grace Reformed Church

The Japanese Embassy called Kyeong-ok Kang, a Korean pastor, to take over this Japanese Christian group. He had received higher education in Japan and then worked as a Christian businessman in the Osaka area. Pastor Kang returned to Korea and immediately became involved in the Korean business and political world. Later, when he was in his mid-50s, he studied theology abroad and pursued a Master of Divinity degree at Howard University. Pastor Kang supported the Japanese church for two years and then returned to Korea and established a seminary school. God sent the church various helping hands to carry out its mission.

Pastor Cornelius Kunihiro Iida (1966–1969)

Grace Reformed Church

Pastor Iida had moved to the DC area from Japan to be an interpreter for Meridian House. He came to the United States in 1955 and entered the doctoral program at Westminster Theological Seminary. Because he worked as a pastor and interpreter, he was often absent. In his absence, his wife, Isako, and other leaders handled church business.

Brother Shiro Oda (1969–1970)

Grace Reformed Church

Brother Oda grew up in a pastor's family in Japan and was the perfect liaison to fill Pastor Iida's empty position. Takeo Nishioka, one of the members, took on a leadership position. Mr. Nishioka and another core member of the church, Mr. William Togashi, relocated the church to the Friends Meeting House and named it Japanese Christian Fellowship.

Brother Takeo Nishioka (1971–1978)

Friends Meeting House

Mr. Nishioka came to the United States and studied Biblical Theology at a Quaker school. He had a theology background in Japan and was influenced by non-churchism. He used Kanzo Uchimura's Bible commentaries rather than lessons from the Bible in his sermons. Some members were unhappy with the church's indirect teachings and lessons that came from an unconventional and non-churchistic faith rather than the Bible. Mr. Nishioka took turns preaching with Mr. Norihide Shima, a seminarian at Union Theological Seminary. They started having picnic services once a year and bi-weekly Sunday services. Around 1974, Rev. and Mrs. Kanagy began attending services. Transportation in the DC suburbs was inconvenient, so the members rented a room at Christ Congregational Church in Silver Spring.

Brother Takeo Nishioka and Pastor Lee H. Kanagy (1979–1984) Christ Congregational Church

Pastor Kanagy, who had done missionary work in Hokkaido for 22 years and was fluent in Japanese, began taking turns preaching with Mr. Nishioka. In the summer of 1980, Sunday services were changed from bi-weekly to weekly. Pastor Kanagy persuaded members of the need to establish an evangelical-based Japanese church and rented a room at Central Methodist Church separate from Mr. Nishioka's non-churchism group. Services at Christ Congregational Church continued with some enthusiastic non-churchism believers.

Pastor Lee H. Kanagy (1981–1986)

Christ Congregational Church

Pastor and Mrs. Kanagy were sent to Japan by the Mennonite Mission Board, and upon their return they had a vision of building a Japanese church in the DC area. In February 1982, the Japanese Church made a new start. They resolved the following essential items:

- The name of the church was changed to Washington Japanese Christian Church (WJCC).
- WJCC's Confession of Faith was drafted.
- WJCC became a Bible-based evangelical church.
- Sunday afternoon services started being held weekly.

In March 1984, they decided that Communion would be held on the first Sunday of the month at the General Meeting. The church received 20 volumes of Hymns from Mr. Yuji Nakata and 10 New Testaments from Westminster Japanese Church in Atlanta. Mr. Sakaguchi, a seminarian at Capital Bible Seminary, assisted with Sunday services when Pastor Kanagy was absent. WJCC had joint picnic services twice a year with Mr. Nishioka's group and the two groups later merged.

Several issues were resolved at the General Meeting in January 1985. Communion was changed to being held four times a year. Pastor Kanagy wrote the Confession of Faith, and it was translated into Japanese and distributed. This document confirms the doctrine within the church and clarifies the statement of faith to those outside the church.

Pastor Takashi Uehara (1986–2016)

The Church Vision

Around 1985, the church had a clear vision to welcome Pastor Uehara from the Seabrook Japanese Church. He was studying for a master's degree at Westminster Theological Seminary and shared their vision to evangelize in the DC area. Before starting his ministry at WJCC, joint services among three churches—

(continued)

(continued)

Pastor Uehara's North Washington Bible Meeting in Silver Spring, Brother Otani's Bible Study Group in Gaithersburg, and Pastor Kanagy's WJCC—were held at Fourth Presbyterian Church. In order to merge into one church, the three churches held joint services eight times between early 1985 and October 1986. The three groups confirmed that starting in November they would become one group and their new name would be the Washington Japanese Christian Church. Pastor Kanagy agreed to stay at WJCC, and they began meeting at St. James Episcopal Church.



WJCC and welcome sign on WJCC entrance door



WJCC Members Celebrating a Baptism

Pastor Kei Kataoka (2017–Present)

Washington Japanese Christian Church

Pastor Uehara was called to heaven in November 2016. When he learned that he had cancer, he began searching for a new pastor. After an intensive search, he handpicked Pastor Kei Kataoka from Japan to replace him. WJCC members hold services in rooms rented at Bethesda Presbyterian Church.

—AKIKO TAKETANI

Akiko Taketani grew up in Tokyo, Japan, and studied Food Science and Nutrition at a college in Japan. She went to Alberta, Canada, to study English and later studied International Management. Akiko has attended GPC since 2009 and served as an Elder from 2021 to 2023. She has participated in the WJCC Wednesday Bible study via Zoom. On Saturdays, Akiko works at Tanpopo Japanese Elementary School in North Bethesda. She lives in Derwood with her husband, Kwang; their two sons, Eugene and Johan; and their loving dog, Comet.



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



TIPS FROM CREATION CARE!

During the spring and summer travel seasons, the Creation Care committee provides suggestions to reduce CO₂ emissions related to modes of transportation.

- Consider the health benefits of walking and cycling to avoid driving.
- When driving, avoid idling your car. Billions of gallons of fuel are wasted each year by idling vehicles (U.S. Dept. of Energy).
- Take non-stop flights rather than flights with layovers, and travel with light luggage.
- Choose trains or buses instead of flying when trips are only a few hundred miles. On average, trains are 12 times more energy efficient (International Energy Agency). A diesel bus emits about 70% less CO₂ than direct flights (Sierra Magazine).
- Using online resources, calculate your carbon emissions and then research and choose carbon offset or carbon credit programs that have Gold Standard certification. (Offsets provided by airlines are not always reliable.)

To offset your carbon emissions, you may donate to such organizations as:

- **Terrapass**, which has numerous multiply certified carbon offset projects (terrapass.com)
- **Gold Standard** projects, which make verified contributions to at least three of the **United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals**. Among them are reductions in poverty and hunger, providing clean water and affordable clean energy, and protecting ecosystems. (marketplace.goldstandard.org/collections/projects)



This spring and summer, may you be blessed as an active and thoughtful steward of God's Creation . . . whether you're traveling or staying at home!

—LAURA WILSON
GPC CREATION CARE COMMITTEE



FOCUS ON STEWARDSHIP — THE NON-FINANCIAL PIECE

Many of us think of stewardship mainly in terms of tithing and finances related to an annual campaign in the fall (usually one Sunday in October) soliciting pledges to balance the church's budget. Certainly, the financial piece is important, but stewardship is much more than that. In many Presbyterian churches, a renewed congregational emphasis is being placed on stewardship as a year-round event but in multiple dimensions; these include a person's time, talent, and treasure (financial resources). With this in mind, let's explore another aspect of stewardship that includes time and talent.

Serving Others

In 1 Peter 4:10–11, Peter writes, “God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God’s many kinds of blessings. Are you called to preach? Then preach as though God himself were speaking through you. Are you called to help others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies so that God will be glorified through Jesus Christ—to him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.” (The Living Bible; Tyndale, 1973)

According to this scripture passage, Peter correctly assumed that we were all created differently, and that we were given different abilities or talents to use. Some of us are better at nurturing, some are better at offering encouragement, and others are better suited to teaching.

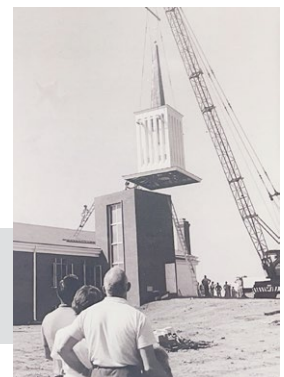
It is a rare individual who possesses all the necessary talents to tend to our brethren's needs. We must collectively use our gifts to help those in our community who are in need.

Where and how can you help? Volunteer in various church activities, such as ushering and church beautification days. Serve in community outreach—at the Lord's Table in Gaithersburg; preparing bag lunches for So Others Might Eat (SOME) in Washington, DC; or at the Interfaith Works Women's Center in Rockville. Join a church committee, such as Congregational Care or Buildings and Grounds. Display (learn) your construction skills on a Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) mission trip. GPC offers many opportunities to serve others.

In summary, God created Earth for mankind, and I am convinced that it is our purpose to serve one another, help one another, and be good stewards of this planet. Our congregation must view stewardship as a year-round activity. Your time and talent play an important role in the management of all resources that God provides.

(Resources for this article included My Well Ministry, Stewardship in the Bible, Presbyterian Mission Agency, Presbyterian Foundation, and gpcchurch.org.)

—GARY SCHUMACHER
STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE



GPC CELEBRATES ITS

DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY!

May 17, 2024 is the 60th Anniversary of GPC and just the right milestone to acknowledge that

“Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church Honors Its Past and Celebrates Its Future!”

In this issue we take a peek back in time. You'll enjoy reading about charter member John McAuliffe as well as some personal memories regarding GPC's early years from long-time members Erica Chizmar, John Travis, and Carolyn Coleman. In the next two issues of the Mainstream, you will learn more about some of our GPC family who've made an impact on our church right up to 2024!

(continued)



JOHN MCAULIFFE

John McAuliffe is our one charter member still living. He was a lawyer who later became a Montgomery County judge, and was a spiritually active member who shared his legal knowledge with GPC when it was needed. John also served as Sunday School Superintendent in the early years of GPC. His wonderfully deep speaking voice made him the obvious choice for principal speaker or sole narrator roles during special Christmas and other church holy day programs, as well as being a frequent lay reader. (John's wife, Barbara, and John are pictured 2nd and 3rd from the left in photo with other charter members.)

ERICA CHIZMAR

GPC member Carol Anderson is good friends with our second-longest serving GPC member and shares Erica's trip down memory lane.



How did you find out about GPC and why did you decide to attend? I was working closely with John and Barbara McAuliffe about the colors they chose for their house (the flooring and tile, etc.) because I was the Girl Friday for the subdivision of Fox Chapel, which was where they had picked a house to buy. So during conversations we somehow shared our church backgrounds and I asked John because I needed a church for myself and my little girl and he started giving me rides and so I became good friends with the McAuliffes. They had the class for the kiddies and I had my little Erica, who has followed more closely in church attendance than my other children. We didn't have a youth group at GPC, so they went to Methodist Youth Fellowship at Epworth.

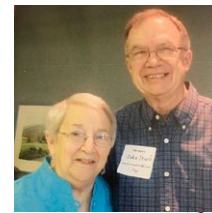
How has GPC changed over the years? Well, the church physically was much smaller. We used what we regard now as the Fellowship Hall as a Sanctuary. First we were at Gaithersburg High School, where we used various rooms like the chemistry room and the choir room and the different classes and ages. The Sunday School I was involved with was [led by] Pat and Jo Zengerle and he had a Swiss background as do I. It always means a lot to us expats to find another one of our landsmen in another country. What better, warmer, safer environment than church, and the reason I went with the Presbyterians was because when I was still in Zurich I was confirmed in the Calvinist church to retain my French. So Calvinism runs closely to the Reformation style of Knox.

Were you involved in committee or session work? I was the first female deacon at GPC in 1965. I also helped with the flowers for Sundays and would talk to the people requesting flowers and then take the flowers to them and visit for a while doing that. I got to know a lot of people in the congregation that way.

What have you liked best about GPC? I really loved the big musicals we used to put on—especially Jesus Christ Superstar. When Nancy Powell was there, we did a lot of those and I also enjoyed doing the Christmas madrigals with the boar's head made out of paper mache. We trooped around the round tables and sang wassail songs and King Wenceslas and that kind of thing. She could bring the best out in us.

What would you say to give advice to the members and church leaders to keep the hopes and dreams of the early founders alive? Well, the early founders never envisioned the kind of church that we have now. Never, never in a million years did they think that we would have drums and bongos, which is fun because it's inclusive. We need to encourage that inclusivity more and more.

Transcription of interview by Carol Anderson in April 2024



JOHN TRAVIS

The story of how John Travis came to choose GPC as his home church is a lesson in the importance of a welcoming smile to a church visitor!

It was the summer of 1967 when John, who had just completed graduate school at the University of Texas at Austin, came to Gaithersburg for a weekend visit before he and his wife, Kay, planned to move to this area for John's new job. As he recalls it, he walked into the "Building 1 Sanctuary," now Fellowship Hall. He sat in an empty seat at the end of a row and right away got a big smile from a woman who he would later learn was Betty Fellows, the wife of Norris Fellows, GPC's Founding Pastor. John liked the friendly vibe he felt that morning—enough to come back with Kay. He was 27 years old and she was 26. They hadn't yet started a family when they moved to the Gaither House Apartments near Gaithersburg High School. They hailed from Texas but were willing to relocate to Gaithersburg for two years for his new post-doctoral position. They've lived here ever since.

John says that in 1967 GPC was a very friendly church, with many younger members in the congregation and a variety of ages represented. Both he and Kay became involved members. She spent many active years on Session and was the chair of the Pastor Nominating Committee that called Rev. Jey Deifell to be GPC's first "Called" Pastor.



Norris Fellows was an “Organizing” Pastor selected by the National Capital Presbytery without any input from the first GPC members. Jey and his wife, Joan, accepted GPC’s call and served with us from 1969 to 1977. Joan had been a Drama major in college and she organized the “Church Row Players” with the other churches on South Frederick Avenue. John did volunteer stagecraft work for the group. He remembers helping to build the first stage from scratch. The Players’ biggest production was “The Crucible,” with John playing the important role of Reverend Parris, the parish priest of Salem. This writer was surprised to learn from John that Jan Rex was GPC’s first non-volunteer choir director and that John sang in the choir.

John also has a connection to Gaithersburg Presbyterian Preschool (GPP), the precursor to “GPP&K” after a kindergarten program was added. His son Eddie, who would later become a Youth Program Director for GPC, is a GPP graduate!

Looking forward, John is pleased that our church has become as diverse as we are. He has witnessed the growth of our church from one building to four, and even as GPC navigates this time of downsizing and transition, he believes there are many good things still to come!

Based on Lucille Baur’s interview in April 2024



CAROLYN COLEMAN

Walter, Irene, Roslyn, and Carolyn Coleman were the first Black family to join GPC. You might be wondering “Why GPC? Why not a traditionally Black church?” There is a story of finding the rewards of committing to breaking down barriers over choosing an easier, less challenging path in life.

In 1972, Carolyn was 17 years old; her older sister, Roslyn, had just graduated from college and returned home. Her father had been transferred for work from New York, as a member of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration, to Rockville to become an initiator of the reorganized Public Health Service.

The Colemans—the first Black family to buy a house on their street—were moving to their new home over Labor Day weekend.

One of the movers asked for a beer, which led Walter to the Walnut Hill Shopping Center. Yes, they found GPC on a “beer run!” Walter and Irene had already researched “Black” churches in the area, but none of them was Presbyterian. Walter was intrigued to find out more.

On that day, as luck (or God) would have it, GPC’s Pastor, Bill Buitendorp, was outside the church. Walter stopped by to say hello and asked if GPC was a PCUSA church. (Although some Presbyterian churches were segregated, many PCUSA churches accepted Blacks.) Rev. Buitendorp said, “Come and see!” And so, the Coleman family came to GPC, choosing to stay with the denomination they had been raised in, rather than attend a church where they would not have been trailblazers. Irene would also become the first Black teacher at Candlewood Elementary School in Rockville.

Once they began attending GPC, they tried to make it easy for the congregation to get to know them. They joined GPC in 1973 and soon became very active members. Carolyn and her parents all served various terms on Session. They would later learn that the Session members had held discussions as to whether the Colemans should be accepted as members of GPC.

They loved the “Dinners for Eight” as a means for everyone to really get to know one another. The “Parish System” used at that time was another means of having a supportive group who reached out in times of joy and in need. Carolyn said that there were no Deacons at this time, so the Parish System sort of filled that role.

One change over the years that Carolyn has seen includes placing less emphasis now on how the Bible relates to contemporary social issues. She believes that it is important for people to understand its current relevance. As our church has expanded in size and diversity, she would like to see us embrace that diversity and really learn more about the cultures of others. She’d like us to be a united “Beloved Community” and once designed a T-shirt with the message “Striving for the Beloved Community.”

As to the future, Carolyn understands that our digital platform is going to remain. She counsels, “We must resolve to evolve and build our faith together. Let’s mix it up!”

Based on Lucille Baur’s interview in April 2024





DIRECTORY CHANGES

Addresses and phone numbers
are available through the church office.

 Address change | Phone number change 

Marolyn Crosswhite 


Jane Hyndman  (mailing)

Don & Laura Johnson 

Loriann Oberlin  

Thomas Reddy & Consuelo Litton 

Beverly Spencer 

Anita Sung 

Deborah Vaughn 

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

50 YEARS

Bob & Shirley Gunderson
May 5, 1974

YOUR HELP WAS APPRECIATED!

You did it again! Your generosity is outstanding! During Lent we collected the following:

- 4 Bibles
- 81 T-shirts
- 59 pairs of white socks
- 10 pairs of women's briefs
- Several packages of greeting cards
- 5 small battery-operated alarm clocks

These items will be split between the Clarksburg Detention Center and the Pre-Release Center in Rockville. Thank you for being so generous!

—SHARI MCCANN/SANDY MENZIES
THE PRISON MINISTRY

Thanks to everyone who helped with Spring Clean-up Day on April 13! A special thank you to the Scouts and parents of Cub Scout Pack 64 and to members of the Miso Church. Together we made our shared space look beautiful!

—ANNETTE WARD
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

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

Raymond Raven

his father, Edouard Frederick Raven,
in Lomé, Togo
March 3, 2024

Kofi Kumi

his brother, Kwabena Opong Kumi,
in Accra, Ghana
March 28, 2024

Terry Young

his grandmother, Elizabeth Jean Maradei,
in Pittsburgh, PA
March 31, 2024

Katherine Williams

her aunt, Helen Danielson,
in Arlington Heights, IL
April 22, 2024

We mourn the loss of members who have died.

Clancy Mann

husband of Marianne,
in Mitchellville, MD
March 3, 2024

Daniel Spencer

husband of Beverly,
father of Charles and Ella,
brother-in-law of Charlotte,
and uncle of Mary,
in Frederick, MD
March 15, 2024

Ron Foulds

husband of Nancy,
in Cary, NC
March 21, 2024

John Slavcoff

husband of Dorothy (Dottie)
and father of Julie Obenauer,
the late John (Johnny) Slavcoff, Jr.,
and the late Mark Slavcoff,
in Gaithersburg, MD
April 22, 2024



THANK YOU

Dear GPC Family –

I am very grateful for your cards, emails, texts, phone calls, and in-person words of support and encouragement, as well as tasty homemade soups and meals, offers of assistance, and even gifts during the last five months! I'm overwhelmed by your continued caring and generosity and am certain that these things, along with keeping me in your thoughts and prayers, are a big part of why I've done well with my treatments. Thank you so much!

—BARBARA OLDROYD

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

March 2024

% OF
2024 YTD BUDGET

INCOME

Envelope Pledged.....	\$ 207,999	28%
Envelope Unpledged.....	\$ 82,465	33%
Loose Offering.....	\$5,111	34%
Other Income.....	\$1,337	45%
Room Rent.....	\$0	0%
Interest & Dividends.....	\$3,167	26%
Manse Rental.....	\$6,720	25%
Mizo Church – Offering.....	\$0	0%
Capital Maintenance Reserve.....	\$0	0%
Carryover.....	\$0	0

Total.....\$306,799 29%

EXPENSE

NCP Membership.....	\$7,053	25%
Human Resources.....	\$142,415	22%
Buildings & Grounds.....	\$55,525	24%
Office Operations.....	\$8,797	24%
Communications.....	\$1,408	31%
Stewardship.....	\$685	10%
Comm Engagement.....	\$27,510	28%
Eq Disciples.....	\$2,945	15%
Vital Worship.....	\$637	6%
Congregational Life.....	-\$17	0%
Other.....	-\$4,893	0%
Session.....	\$0	0%

Total.....\$242,065 22%

NET\$64,734

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

*SUNDAY, MAY 19, IS PENTECOST AND
OUR CELEBRATION OF GPC'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY!*

REGISTER NOW FOR VBS (JULY 15-19)!



FIND IT FAST!

- Table Fellowship (p. 2)
- First-Time Homebuyer Seminar (June 8) (p. 3)
- Montgomery Philharmonic concert (June 9) (p. 5)
- Little Free Pantry (includes list of items needed) (p. 5)
- GPP&K, with special photo collage (p. 6)
- Spanning the Globe – The Washington Japanese Christian Church (feature article) (pp. 8-10)
- Tips from Creation Care! (p. 10)
- Focus on Stewardship – The Non-Financial Piece (p. 11)
- GPC's 60th Anniversary – memories shared (pp. 11-13) about John McAuliffe and by Erica Chizmar, John Travis, and Carolyn Coleman