

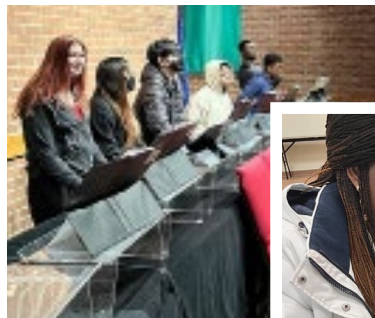


# THE MAINSTREAM

## SUNDAYS

WORSHIP IN PERSON  
9:30 & 11:00 AM

WORSHIP BY LIVESTREAM  
11:00 AM



FIRST QUARTER  2023



*From the Heart  
of Pastor Mary Austin*

## SESSION'S PRIORITIES

## IN 2023

Dear GPC Members and Friends –

A recent article said that the pandemic taught us to be lonely. We spent more time alone, or with fewer people. We ate alone. Loneliness became our default state, and we haven't gotten out of it yet.

This year, the session is hoping to change that. One of the priorities the session set for the church is providing occasions for people to connect. Dinners, lunches, tacos, ice cream—what would you like to see?

Our Lent book this year, *Meeting Jesus at the Table*, speaks about the power of eating with other people. Authors Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr say, “Just as the Lord’s Table stands at the center of Christian worship, so gathering with others to share a meal is at the heart of the human experience. Eating food sustains our bodies. Eating with others creates community and sustains our spirits. Feasting and the preparation and sharing of special foods is part of every religious tradition and most cultures as well.”

We want to build that more fully into church life.

During Lent, fitting the theme of the book, we’ll have some pop-up gatherings around a table to pray together and talk about the book. We want to have them in different areas, where people live.

So, the priorities for this year are:

- Building use, building on your ideas from last year. The Building Use Group is working on this.
- Hands-on mission projects – following our checks with our hands and feet.
- Ways for people to connect.

What comes to mind when you think about these things?  
See you around the table!

—REV. MARY AUSTIN  
PASTOR

P.S. Ready to start? How about taking a seat at one of GPC’s Mardi Gras-themed tables to enjoy food and fun at our **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper** (full details on page 2). It’s a great table-sharing opportunity for whole families and friends!

## WAYS TO CONNECT



[www.gpchurch.org](http://www.gpchurch.org)

301-948-9418

[office@gpchurch.org](mailto:office@gpchurch.org)

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

# MANY BLESSINGS – “Where are you?”

One of the gifts of the Covid lockdown, if one is allowed to write of gifts, is that it accelerated GPC's decision to livestream our worship service and record it for viewing online. For people who are not able to come in person, because of health or work schedule, online worship has been a lifeline to help them stay in fellowship with God and with God's people.

I also have been thrilled to see many people return to in-person worship, more and more each week it seems. There have been marvelous conversations with people around the coffee table or at an after-church luncheon or sitting around a table with various mission and service projects. Community is a gift and has been so since the Garden of Eden.

Recall that after God created everything, God enjoyed walking with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day. They must have had a marvelous time together. However, after Eve and Adam broke fellowship with God by eating the forbidden fruit, they hid from God. So when God came to walk with them again, God couldn't find them and called out, “Where are you?” It was the first question in the Bible and it was uttered by God.

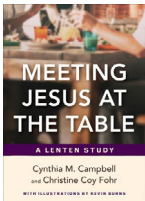
God has built a longing for community right into the fabric of creation. Let's celebrate the gift by finding ways to remain connected. I'd love to talk with you about this.

—REV. MARY BETH LAWRENCE  
ASSOCIATE PASTOR



## LENT AND EASTER 2023

- February 21** Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – 5:00–7:00 p.m.  
**February 22** Ash Wednesday Prayer Service – 7:00 p.m. (in person & online)
- April 2** Palm Sunday – 9:30 & 11:00 a.m. worship services (in person & online)  
**April 6** Maundy Thursday – 7:00 p.m. (in person & online)  
**April 7** Good Friday – Noon Community worship service at GPC (in person & online)  
**April 9** **Easter Sunday** – 6:30 a.m. Sunrise service (Bohrer Park)  
9:30 & 11:00 a.m. worship services (in person & online)



The taste of communion and the touch of ashes lead us into the holy season of Lent, where we follow Jesus toward Jerusalem. As our forty days of Lent mirror Jesus' forty days in the desert, we look at how faithfully we follow Jesus . . . or don't.

Our **Lent book** is **Meeting Jesus at the Table**, by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr. The book explores all the times that people encountered Jesus at tables. To match the theme, we have worship and conversation together during Lent at different tables, in different locations. Watch for details.

The authors tell us: “In the last days of Jesus' life, he sat at a table sharing the Passover meal with his closest friends and connecting the ancient story of God's liberating power with himself. After the resurrection, Jesus' disciples began to gather regularly to break bread in his memory and to experience him in their midst. We do the same thing today. But the upper room was not the only time Jesus was at table or told stories about tables. In this study, we invite you to consider some of these table stories and to reflect on them as we come to the Lord's Table together in this Lenten season.”

For worship and Sunday School, the **Lent curriculum** will be “Love God, Neighbor, Enemy,” with our worship texts based on the same scriptures the children and youth use, so that we can have cross-church, mixed-generation conversations about what happens at church.

## SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER

Bring your family, bring your neighbors, bring your friends to Lindsay Hall on February 21, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in Lindsay Hall. The cost is \$3 for children ages 12 and up and adults, \$2 for seniors, and \$1 for children under 12. Extra points if you wear a Mardi Gras costume!



# SOUPER FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON A SUCCESS!

Nearly 150 members of our GPC family enjoyed a variety of delicious soups and desserts as well as wonderful company at the January 29 luncheon, held in Lindsay Hall immediately following the 11:00 worship service. The GPC Souper Fellowship Committee thanks all who helped and all who attended!

—LUCY NZELLE, TOM & EMMA CHEN, NANCY SANDERS, AND SHARI MCCANN  
SOUPER FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW! UPCOMING MISSION PROJECTS

- Lent begins February 22. Watch GPC's weekly emails for details about our **2023 Lenten Mission Project**.
- **Saturday, April 29**, is **Rebuilding Together Montgomery County Day**! We will help one of our neighbors make repairs to their home to keep them safe. Contact Yaw Obeng to register.
- **April 30 – May 5** will be our next **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Mission Trip**. Contact Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence to register.

## QUIPS FROM EQUIPPING DISCIPLES

### Educational Opportunities for Adults

**Sunday Morning Classes:** 9:30 a.m., all Hybrid

- **Present Word** continues with the Winter Study of the Present Word.
- **The Bible as a Whole** moves into 2 Peter and forward into 1 John.
- **Contemporary Christian Classics** continues studying the Apocrypha.

**Sunday Morning Small Groups:**

- Sunday Morning Small Group is redefining itself and will publicize its plans soon.
- Creation Care meets at 9:30 a.m. in Room 32/33.

**Monday Evening Bible Study:** Isaiah, 7:00 p.m., Zoom

**Wednesday Evening Bible Study:** Exodus, 7:30 p.m., Zoom

**Wednesday Evening Frederick Small Group:** Follow Me curriculum, 7:30 p.m., Zoom

**Thursday Evening Book Study:** Choosing a new book (they finished **A House United: How the Church Can Save the World**), 7:00 p.m., Zoom

**2nd Friday Book Club:** Selecting a new book (they finished **How to Be an Antiracist**), 7:00 p.m., Zoom

Join us for our Lenten book study of **Meeting Jesus at the Table**, by Cynthia M. Campbell and Christine Coy Fohr. We hope to meet at various tables throughout our community—perhaps someone's home, a coffee shop, or maybe even a picnic table if the weather allows. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

### Worship and Educational Opportunities for Children

Sunday mornings at 9:30 and 11:00, children of all ages begin in the Sanctuary with their families. On the first Sunday of the month, children stay in worship for the entire service. The other Sundays, elementary age children are most often excused for Sunday School following the Children's Message. For your child's safety, we request that a parent or guardian come to the classroom to pick up their child.

For children who wish to remain in the service, we provide an extensive Children's Bulletin that reflects the scripture reading of the day. Children 4 years old and younger are welcome to enjoy the Playground, a small space in the Sanctuary with quiet toys where children can play, with their parents sitting nearby. Our Nursery is available for our youngest children from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.



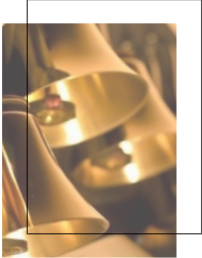
**SAVE THE DATES!**  
VBS will be **June 25–30**  
(Details to come)

—CAROLYN HAYES  
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG FAMILIES



# YOUTH AND COLLEGE MINISTRY

Here's a quick recap of some of the awesome experiences our youth have already enjoyed. Our students went on a fall retreat, had great conversations over bonfires and s'mores, joined together for a night of worship with five other churches, and grew deeper friendships together as an entire group. It's amazing to see God move in our midst. There's much more to look forward to, so check out the previews below of our upcoming events. To receive a more detailed monthly calendar, contact Carrie.



## Youth Handbell Choir

We now have a youth handbell choir and you are welcome to join us! Rehearsals are on **Wednesdays from 6:00 to 6:30 p.m.**, followed by a quick dinner before Youth Group starts. All skill levels are welcome!

## Confirmation Classes

I'm excited to announce that confirmation classes are kicking off! We started with a retreat the first weekend of February and will meet for classes on **Sunday, February 26, March 5 & 19, and April 2** at 11:00 a.m. If you are interested in joining this year's class, contact Carrie for more information.

## Youth Summer Camp Registration is Now Open!

### MIX MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP

**July 17-20** at Juniata College in Pennsylvania. Cost: \$394 (\$294)\*  
Open to all students currently in 5th through 8th Grades.

### MOVE HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER CAMP

**July 24-28** at Salisbury University in Maryland. Cost: \$364 (\$264)\*  
Open to all students currently in 8th through 12th Grades.

\*GPC pays for \$100 of each student's registration fee.

See Carrie for registration sign-ups.



## College Students Gatherings

College students, let's meet up! A few monthly gatherings are planned for bagels & board games, dinner & faith conversations, and a paint night! Contact Carrie for dates and more information.

—CARRIE LARSEN  
DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS



## APRIL 23 IS OLDER ADULT SUNDAY!

Our **VIPS** will lead worship at the 9:30 & 11:00 a.m. services.



# MUSIC NOTES

*"I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart: I will recount all of your wonderful deeds.  
I will be glad and exult in you: I will sing praise to your name, O Most High."  
—Psalm 9:1–2 (ESV)*

The wonderful deeds of the Lord are plentiful, and we have been singing His praise in worship—live and in person! I am so grateful that we are able to worship together and sing. We've not only had a return of our adult choirs and handbells, but we have brought back music for children and youth!

Our children's chimes and handbells and children's choir returned to worship in the fall and winter of 2022, especially on Christmas Eve. At our 4:00 p.m. service that day, they rang two pieces and also helped lead the congregational singing of Christmas carols.

Two of their main goals in the fall were to learn several popular carols that form the backbone of our musical tradition in the Christmas season, and how to use a hymnal. I believe we can say that they were successful! Children's choir currently rehearses at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. Children's chimes and bells rehearse at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays under the direction of Kris Maldarelli and Carol Anderson.

Our youth have returned to music ministry with a handbell choir, which meets on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. More than 10 youth have come to rehearsals so far, and they are looking forward to presenting music in worship.

If you or your child are interested in participating in bringing music to worship—whether as a regular part of an ensemble, or as a one-time thing—please do not hesitate to let me know!

May God bless you and keep you.

—WADE MEYERS  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP ARTS



## APRIL ORCHESTRA CONCERT

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The final concert of the Montgomery Philharmonic's 2022–2023 season, titled "Immigrants and Emergents, Different Together," will be held back in **GPC's Sanctuary** on **Sunday, April 23**, at **6:30 p.m.** It will feature *Song of the Angels* from Mathis der Maler, IPH 89 (Hindemith) and *Sinfonietta for Strings and Timpani* (Waxman), which were written by *immigrant* composers, and *Monograph for Orchestra* (Bingham) and *Caught by the Wind* (Montgomery), which were written by *emerging* composers.

There is no charge to attend these orchestra concerts, but donations are always gratefully accepted.

## Rebranding D48 to Table Friendship — A New Fellowship Opportunity!

GPC is rebranding Dinners for Eight (D48) to **Table Friendship**. This new program will begin sometime in late spring/early summer. It may be a cross between the traditional D48 and the Diversity Dinners that GPC offered a couple of years ago, so Table Friendship may happen over a shorter time duration, take place outside, and involve the entire family (including children), and may not require everyone to host.

The details are still being worked out, but if you are interested in being on the distribution list to receive more information about Table Friendship, contact Clara Pratt (*call the church office*).

# FEBRUARY IS FANTASTIC AT GPP&K!

First of all, we want to thank Carolyn Hayes for joining our classes to tell them the story of the Nativity. The children loved the joyful, interactive storytelling.

GPP&K is off to a great start in the new year. In January, we welcomed parent volunteers to help our classes during the woodworking unit. The children learned that Jesus was a carpenter and, with the parents' help, the children had the opportunity for hands-on learning by building a project made of wood.



To celebrate Martin Luther King, the Kindergarteners discussed how God made us exactly the way He wanted to. They learned that God loves us equally and that we should love and be kind to everyone, regardless of skin color.

In February, we celebrated Valentine's Day and learned about the postal system by creating postcards for our families. We also learned about dental health, pets, and health & fitness, and enjoyed two special community visitors—a dentist and a veterinarian.

We look forward to jumping into spring. There are so many great things going on! For St. Patrick's Day, the children will learn how St. Patrick explained the trinity using the shamrock shape. Our cooking project will consist of making Irish Soda Bread and green shamrock smoothies using spinach and fresh fruit. We are also excited to hold our annual "Truck Day," which is a part of the "Transportation" and "Community Helpers" curriculum.



Registration for 2023–2024 classes opened on Wednesday, February 15, with priority given to current families and GPC members. On Thursday, February 16, registration opened to GPP&K alumni. Registration will open to the public on Tuesday, February 21. For information on class choices and tuition, visit us at [www.gppk.com](http://www.gppk.com) or call the school office at 301-977-5787. We will be glad to help you. To see pictures of our program, join us on Facebook and Instagram.

—CYNTHIA DOBBINS  
GPP&K DIRECTOR



## GREEN TRAVEL IS PART OF WISE STEWARDSHIP

Our Triune Lord created everything. Creation care involves applying the biblical principal of stewardship to everything God created, from our blue-green planet to all sentient beings. Part of wise stewardship is being an eco-conscious and respectful traveler. Whether you are visiting family, on a business trip, or learning about new people and customs in a different part of the world, consider doing so in a manner that embodies thoughtful stewardship.

Try to use transportation that adds the least greenhouse gas emissions to our atmosphere. **If you are traveling 200 miles or less, look for an alternative to flying.** On a 200-mile trip, a flight would emit around 109 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> per person, a train 26 pounds, a charter bus 19 pounds. A solo driver in a gas car would emit 120 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>—the most polluting option! Each additional passenger reduces the emission cost per person, so four people in a car comes close to train emissions. ([terrapass.com](http://terrapass.com))

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. —John 1:1–3*

Locally, at home and wherever you visit, walking or unaided biking and scootering are best. Depending on how the electricity is created, electronic contraptions (bike, scooter, car) may add little CO<sub>2</sub>. Mass transportation, such as buses, light rail, and trains, may add less. Smaller, hybrid, and electric cars are all better choices if you decide to use or rent a car.

Whatever your choice of transport, **consider using a carbon offset program to compensate for the greenhouse emissions your travel will add to our atmosphere.** Vendors may offer this when you buy tickets.

May your thoughtful stewardship enhance your transportation experiences!

—LISA WHITEHEAD  
GPC CREATION CARE COMMITTEE





## MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP

FIRST SATURDAY | 8:00 AM | LINDSAY HALL

All men and women are welcome to join us for Christian fellowship, prayer, a light continental breakfast, and a short program. At our **February 4** meeting, we enjoyed Ernie Baur's presentation, "50 Years in Broadcasting." On **March 4**, Jenny Tan will present "Organic Gardening in Your Backyard – Year-round!" We're awaiting confirmation from the proposed speaker for **April 4**, and on **May 6**, Whitney Myers will be our presenter. Questions? Contact Ted Farrand (*call the church office*).



## VERY IMPORTANT PRESBYTERIAN SENIORS {VIPS}

FIRST THURSDAY | 11:30 AM | LINDSAY HALL

VIPS have two opportunities during Lent to be reminded of ways to draw closer to God. Through reflection, repentance, and growth, we hope to become more selfless and more concerned about others. For the **March 2** meeting, Melissa Wanner, PharmD, and Katherine Wanner, a HS senior, will share details of their summer 2022 mission trip. Traveling with an American medical team and joining with locally based missionaries, they provided medical care and brought the word of Jesus to the Quechua people of the high Andes of Peru. The April meeting falls on Maundy Thursday (**April 6**) this year. Our own Rev. Whitney Fauntleroy will help us reflect on the meaning and prepare for the messages of this important day.

On **May 4**, Alan Pultyniewicz, Recycling Coordinator Waste Reduction and Recycling Section, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, will share Ways to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Compost at Home.

Gathering begins at 11:30 a.m. and the meeting starts at Noon. Attendees are invited to bring their own lunches or may participate in the shared lunch. Questions? Contact Nancy Sanders (*call the church office*).



## CRAFT GROUP

SECOND SUNDAY | 12:15 PM | ROOM 30-31

The group has resumed meeting in person and continues knitting and crocheting to support the requests for prayer shawls, hats, scarves, mittens, and prayer squares made 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. 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. Questions? Contact Barbara Clark (*call the church office*). Their next three meetings will be on **March 5, April 16, and May 7**.



## 2ND FRIDAY BOOK CLUB

SECOND FRIDAY | 7:30 PM | ZOOM

The group is in the process of selecting a new book. They're discussing topics that are most relevant to GPC and our community and want to choose books that will be informative and help them contribute towards solutions. Their next three meetings will be on **March 10, April 14, and May 12**. You are invited to participate anytime. For more information, contact Cindy Cenname (*call the church office*).



## CUB SCOUTS

TUESDAYS | 7:00-8:00 PM | LINDSAY HALL

Cub Scout Pack 64 is back in full swing. The annual **Pinewood Derby** was held at the end of January. Lots of decorated and fancy woodwork was on display. **Scout Sunday** in February included recorded scout presentations and scout presenters in the services. Our largest den of Arrow of Light scouts will transition to Boy Scouts at the annual **Blue and Gold Banquet** at the end of February. Springtime offers more outdoor hikes and camping experiences. All boys and girls in Kindergarten through 5th Grade are welcome to participate in our family Pack. Questions? Contact Barbara Clark (*call the church office*).



# WELCOME, NEW CHURCH OFFICERS!

THE FOLLOWING ELDERS, DEACONS, AND TRUSTEE HAVE BEEN NOMINATED TO SERVE  
AND WERE ORDAINED DURING WORSHIP ON JANUARY 8, 2023.

## ELDERS



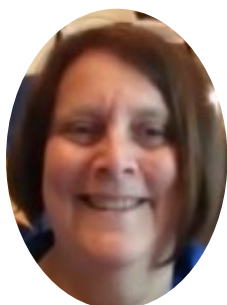
### Thomas Chen

I was born in Taiwan and moved to New Jersey with my family when I was 11 years old. During my high school years, I attended both a Chinese church and a Presbyterian church to better learn about and serve God. While in graduate school, I served my church in Raleigh, North

Carolina, by helping with the morning coffee hours and Sunday School for 2- to 5-year-olds. During my postdoc time in Bozeman, Montana, I felt God's grace and the love of the church in sustaining and caring for me while far away from my family and friends. At that time I was reminded to nurture my spiritual life more.

I moved to Montgomery County for work in 2014 and we joined GPC when my wife, Emma, moved here after finishing her postdoc training.

I've served on GPC's Strategic Planning Committee and helped out with the tables and chairs at the FourthNight dinners. Our family attends GPC services and its events regularly. Our young children, Taliesen and Marian, are physically more active at church than we are!



### Gayle Luckenbaugh

I grew up in Annapolis, Maryland, and was very active as a youth and young adult at First Presbyterian Church in Annapolis. The strong youth program there allowed me to develop strong relationships and to be active in many of the missions and church programs. The church

believed strongly in actively involving young people in leadership in the church. I was a lay leader, Sunday School teacher, and Deacon before graduating from high school. In addition, I served as the Youth Advisory Delegate to General Assembly in 1976. As part of our mission trips, I helped build a children's playground in Belgium and worked at a VBS program in France.

I graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education and began my teaching career in 1980. I've taught Grades PK-2 and currently teach First Grade for MCPS. I've continued my education and have a Master's degree in Reading and many credits in Special Education. As an educator, I feel called to not only teach academics, but also to help children at an early age learn to respect and include everyone in our diverse community and to solve problems using strategies that promote peace.

Gary and I joined GPC when our children, Mary Beth and Chris, were young. In 1997, I was asked to be a Sunday School teacher and I've been actively involved in Children's Ministry since then. I'm currently the Sunday School Coordinator and work closely with Carolyn Hayes to plan and implement children's programs. I love the diversity of GPC and how we constantly seek to include everyone. I'm looking forward to serving God as an elder and will do my best to serve in this role as our church moves forward.



### Joelle Pokam

Born in Douala, Cameroon, I was raised as a Catholic and received all my sacraments (baptism, communion, confirmation, and marriage). My primary and secondary education were in Cameroon. I then migrated to West Africa (Benin), where I attended the

university and obtained a Master's in Biotechnology Sciences. I returned in Cameroon in 2007, got married, and began working as a medical representative.

In 2013, I won the DV (Diversity Visa) lottery and migrated in the US with my family. That same year, I joined GPC, following my husband, Peter, who is a Presbyterian. I completely embraced GPC as family and am an active member. I also joined the CWF choir and sing with them in worship regularly.

I'm a registered nurse; I started as a CNA, GNA, RN and am now completing my studies as a nurse practitioner. I've worked in several health institutions, including



Genesis Nursing Home, Sibley Memorial/Johns Hopkins, Holy Cross Hospital, and Adventist HealthCare. Currently, I'm a cardiac registered nurse at Holy Cross Hospital and a visiting nurse for Adventist Health.

We have three young boys—David Christ, Daryl Gabriel, and William Noah. They attend middle and elementary schools and love being active at GPC. This year, my mom finally joined our family here in the US.



### VLC Vanlalhriatrenga Vanlal Chhangte

Born and brought up in a Presbyterian family from my ancestors in Mizoram State, Northeast India, I received my MSW and BD in India and then came to the US for further studies.

I completed my Master of Theology (ThM) in Pastoral Counseling & Psychology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, and am

currently getting my PhD in Marriage & Family Therapy at Mount Mercy University in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

I was a counselor at Presbyterian Church Counseling Centre (2011–2013) and Director of Counseling Ministry at the First Mizo Community Church in Florida until 2021, and I've taught Children's and Adult Sunday School since 2005. I've published more than 10 books and edited more than 20 books in our vernacular language. I was a resource person and speaker in international seminars organized by government colleges and universities in Mizoram, and have led retreats and refresher courses for immigrant churches in Indianapolis, Iowa, Chicago, Florida, and Mizoram.

I married Lahlm Puii in July 2019, and we have been blessed with a baby daughter. They are living in Mizoram, India.

Note: VLC (nickname for Vanlalhriatrenga, meaning "one who is remembered by God") has been called to lead the Mizo Church, our neighbor church. He hopes to enter the process to become a Commissioned Ruling Elder (and eventually a Pastor), and to do that he must first become an elder. We support the Mizo Church in this, and, of course, GPC will benefit from his service as an elder.

## DEACONS



### Jeanne Chamberlain

I was born in Chicago and grew up in a Presbyterian family. Dad was an elder and sang in the choir. Mom taught Sunday School and was a Cub Scout den mother. Ours was a loving, active church where I felt known and cared for.

When I was in high school, we moved to Connecticut. In searching for a church home with a similar atmosphere, my parents chose a Methodist church with a vibrant youth program, which drew me right in. Having friends with similar values was a godsend to a shy teenager.

In adulthood, I became part of another wonderful church—St. Matthew Presbyterian Church in Silver Spring. My three children attended Sunday School and I got involved helping with the junior high youth group and delivering food through Wheaton HELP. I served two terms on session as an elder, and also played handbells and sang alto in the choir. When my children grew up and left home, I moved to Germantown.

When I first came to GPC in 2012, I immediately knew that it would be my new church home. The people genuinely cared about one another and about their community. I was welcomed into VIPS with open arms and got involved with the Muffin Ministry and volunteering at Summit Hall Elementary School.

I thank God for the great cloud of witnesses to God's steadfast love who have filled my life. Through joyful as well as sad times I know that I'm never alone. I would be honored to serve as a deacon in this wonderful congregation.



### Lucil Oppong

I was born in Ghana and raised in a strong Presbyterian family. My husband, Emmanuel, and I have three children—Adrian, Alexis, and Aaron, who were all baptized at GPC. My 22-year-old nephew, Austin, has lived with us since he was 3 years old.

I enjoy morning and evening walks every day, weather permitting. I also love playing board games from Ghana with the family when everyone is home. My neighbor introduced me to gardening and it has become my favorite hobby.

When my children were growing up at GPC, I remember working in the kitchen during the coffee hour as well as being a daycare attendant. Having been a member of GPC for more than a decade, I'm excited to work closely with the GPC community as a deacon!



## Debonnaire Tchouambou

I was born Colette Alphonsine Ketchongué in Yaoundé, Cameroon, and moved to the US in 2003. When I became a citizen, I changed my name to Debonnaire (my father's first name) and Tchouambou (my husband's last name).

Growing up, I attended mostly missionary schools. My parents served in the Evangelic Church part of Protestant Churches of Cameroon (PCC/EPC) their entire lives. My father preached in church on Sundays and my mother sang in the choir. I sang in the choir in the Presbyterian and Evangelical churches in Cameroon, where I'm still a member.

I graduated from Montgomery College with an Associate degree and work as a Retention and Human Resources Specialist.

I'm a very busy mother and am concentrating on taking care of my family. I live in Boyds with my husband, Serge, and my three children—Holy Angel, Aaron, and Abigail. I love singing, laughing, and making others smile.

I've always felt that I was not doing enough to serve God, so I'm very grateful that God led GPC's pastors to nominate me to serve as a deacon and the congregation approved the nomination. I'm blessed to be part of this diverse community of faith and would be honored to serve as a deacon of this amazing congregation.



## Laura Wilson

Born in a sleepy, southwest Florida town, where gladiola fields, shrimp boats, and mosquitos were abundant, cultural events minimal, and the railroad tracks clearly delineated the white and black sections of town, I was

raised by "radical" parents, who welcomed people of all races, religions, nationalities, lifestyles, and interests into our home. Both parents had served overseas in World War II and, greatly affected by their wartime experiences, they raised my sisters and me to have a broad worldview. They were highly involved in different aspects of the community, including helping to start the local Unitarian church. My sisters and I were raised Unitarians, but we occasionally attended services with friends and relatives at different Christian and Jewish congregations.

I left home at the age of 14 to attend a performing arts high school in North Carolina, and since then have lived and worked in cities across the US, and performed in North America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Through my varied education and careers, first as a professional ballet dancer and then as a special education teacher, as well as my roles as wife, mom, and, most recently, grandmother, I've continued learning and expanding my perspectives.

In college, I was drawn to studying the Bible and Christianity because of my enthusiastic Christian roommate and a philosophy professor who introduced me to books by C.S. Lewis. Having seen the emotional and life struggles of so many in the dance world, I was impressed by the love and peace that I saw and felt among my fellow students and dancers who were Christian. I accepted the Christian faith and was baptized during my college years.

I became a Presbyterian after marrying Mark, whose father was a Presbyterian minister. We were active in his church in New Mexico before moving to Maryland in 1999, where we soon joined and became active in GPC. Our two sons, Nick and David, who are now raising their own families out west, were very involved in GPC's youth groups as teens. Mark has been an elder at GPC, and I've served in various ways—assisting with Sunday and Vacation Bible School; ushering; performing liturgical dance for worship services; going on a mission trip to New Bern, North Carolina; and, more recently, working with others from GPC at Epworth UMC's food bank.

I'm most grateful for the beautiful diversity of this congregation and its whole-hearted, loving service within and outside its walls. I look forward to serving the GPC community, as needed, in its continued efforts to touch, support, and inspire lives and spirits with Christ's love.

## Thanks and Congratulations!!

GPC thanks **Kay Penn** for her 15 years of devoted service as our Stated Clerk of Session and congratulates **Ann Hayes** as she moves up from Assistant Stated Clerk to fill Kay's position.



# TRUSTEE



## Tom Curtis

I'm a native Washingtonian. I received a B.A. in Economics and Accounting and an M.S. in Information Systems Technology from The George Washington University. I'm an Enrolled Agent with the Internal Revenue Service and a Certified Financial Planner™

(CFP™). I hold professional designations from various boards and state agencies in financial planning, accounting, business analysis, and insurance.

I've been a member of GPC since 1987. I was in charge of obtaining pulpit assistants for three years, led the 2006 and 2007 Stewardship campaigns, was an elder for three years and re-wrote the GPC Personnel Manual, and donated the seed money for the planning and construction of GPC's columbarium. I was the former Treasurer of the Mattie J. T. Stepanek Foundation, Inc., an educational charity devoted to promoting the use of the work of author Mattie Stepanek in breaking the cycle of bullying in schools and understanding that there are peaceful ways to resolve conflict.

My faith journey started at an early age, and when I was 7 years old I was baptized in the Southern Baptist Church. My first wife, Stephanie, was a Presbyterian, and we were married in the First Presbyterian Church

of Westfield, New Jersey. Like most young families, however, we became lapsed Protestants. Our son, Eric, was baptized as a Presbyterian when he was a baby, but when he was 6 years old, he asked us who God was and we realized that we were failing in our duty to bring him up in a spiritual environment. Our first church visit was to GPC, where Donald Kinloch was preaching. Stephanie and I looked at each other after the service and knew that we were home.

After struggling for 14 years with ovarian cancer, Stephane died in 2017. Later that year I reconnected with Carol Vandrey, a long-time friend whose husband had also died in 2017. The four of us had been good friends. Carol and I began spending time together and got married in November 2018. In marrying her, I was blessed with two more children and seven grandchildren to add to my own two children (Eric and Sonja) and four grandchildren.

I am currently a Board member of the Maryland Public Television Foundation and was formerly a Board member of the WETA Board of Trustees. I'm a Life Fellow, Financial Planning Association, where I was bestowed the 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award; I also served as treasurer of the National Capital Chapter. A number of my professional articles have been published and in the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post, and I appeared in an NBC Nightly News segment about long-term care issues for seniors.

## WANTED:

## ELDERS & DEACONS FOR THE CLASS OF 2026

The Nominating Committee is seeking names of candidates for positions as elders and deacons. Elders discern God's will for our church, attend monthly meetings, and chair committees. Deacons care for specific, assigned persons and/or organize and support one-on-one caring ministries, such as the Caring Card Table. Both elders and deacons can serve communion.

When God calls you to service, please contact one of the following committee members: Rev. Mary Austin, Rev. Mary Beth Lawrence, Ginny Allsopp, Carol V. Curtis, Malvin Duncan, or Elisa McClelland.



## UPDATE FROM THE BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

### RECENT REPAIRS

Making GPC a welcome gathering place is a high priority so that God can use it as a beacon to the community and a tool for Christ's mission. The GPC buildings currently support many partners, including Gaithersburg Presbyterian Preschool and Kindergarten (GPP&K), Cub Scout Pack 64, Mizo Presbyterian Church, and the Montgomery Philharmonic.

To maintain the church buildings, several repair activities were recently completed. Specifically, the roof over the Sanctuary was extended out over the walls and new gutters were installed to direct rain water away from the building. New HVAC units were installed in the Sanctuary and the portions of roof damaged by carpenter ants have been replaced. This new roof is visible over the south entrance and will be painted when warmer weather arrives.

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING

In an abundance of caution, GPC is reviewing its preparedness to respond to security threats and other emergencies. The Gaithersburg Police Department completed a security assessment of GPC last October and conducted active assailant training for GPC staff in December. In general, the security assessment was positive concerning controls and procedures in place. One recommendation was to periodically practice evacuations. GPC last performed an evacuation in September 2012 and was able to evacuate the Sanctuary in under 5 minutes.

—DAVID ALLSOPP  
COMMITTEE CHAIR

Before



After



## THANK YOU from SHES!

a huge success, in part due to your contributions. 126 children got holiday presents and 56 families received toiletries bags. Our Linkages program and our Summit Hall families have been so fortunate to have your support with presents and with leading the cookies decoration and snowman making projects. It really says a lot about the community spirit and the caring people of the Gaithersburg Presbyterian Church VIPS group.

The projects were great experiences for the children, and everyone attending had a great time! Marilyn [Morrison] and Nancy [Sanders], please make sure all the VIPS ladies involved in the SHE Holiday celebration are aware of how much we appreciate your contributions. I wish you all a great 2023 year!

—ANA SCHMITZ, MS  
MOCO-DHHS LINKAGES TO LEARNING, SUMMIT HALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The chaplains and social workers at Jewish Social Services Agency are especially appreciative of manipulatives, prayer squares, and prayer shawls for their hospice patients made by GPC Craft Group members. They were quickly snatched up!

—REV. DEB VAUGHN

THANKS  
from JSSA!



# WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN OR JOIN A GPC COMMITTEE?

Have you been thinking about attending a committee meeting or maybe joining a GPC committee this year? Last year, each issue of the Mainstream contained information about the responsibilities of the committees, along with meeting details and the name of the contact person. For your quick reference, a summary of that information follows (some committee contacts are new this year). The Mainstream issue in which each committee's article appeared has been provided as well.

<i>Committee Name</i>	<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>Chair/Contact</i>	<i>Mainstream Issue</i>
Buildings & Grounds	1st Wednesday   7 PM	David Allsopp	May 2022 (2Q), p. 8
Communications	1st Monday   6 PM	Lucille Baur	Feb 2022 (1Q), p. 12
Community Engagement	3rd Wednesday   7 PM	Denise Schleckser	May 2022 (2Q), p. 8
Congregational Life	2nd Monday   7:30 PM	JoAnn Barney	Aug 2022 (3Q), p. 10
Digital Ministry	3rd Monday   7 PM	Terry Young	Aug 2022 (3Q), pp. 10–11
Equipping Disciples	2nd Monday   1:30 PM	Akiko Taketani	Nov 2022 (4Q), p. 9
Finance	2nd Thursday   11 AM	Andy Imboden	Nov 2022 (4Q), p. 10
Human Resources	(Closed Meetings)	Lucy Nzelle	Nov 2022 (4Q), pp. 10–11
Nominating	4th Tuesday   7 PM	Carol V. Curtis	Feb 2022 (1Q), p. 12
Stewardship & Planned Giving	2nd Monday   4 PM	Pat Keziah	Aug 2022 (3Q), p. 11
Vital Worship	2nd Monday   7 PM	Grace Atanga Fuh	May 2022 (2Q), p. 9

## THANK YOU from IWWC

Many thanks to all the volunteers who shopped for supplies, cooked and served meals, and ordered dinner delivered for the Interfaith Works Women's Shelter at Crabbs Branch during Christmas week. The residents there experiencing homelessness very much appreciated that their neighbors would take time out from their own Christmas preparations to remember and provide for them. GPC provided breakfast, lunch, and dinner for 38 residents for the entire week of December 26–31. More than 40 volunteers came together to make this effort possible. We thank each and every one of you!



We will be serving meals again in December 2023, so if you didn't have a chance to participate in December 2022, consider making this project part of your Christmas tradition!

—DENISE SCHLECKSER  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

# DIRECTORY CHANGES

Addresses and phone numbers  
are available through the church office.

🏠 Address change | 📞 Phone number change

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Lydia Baiye  
Ruth Boakye  
Alvin Etang Ndip & Frieda Enow  
Janet Fujikawa  
Rose Hendje  
Garret Kelly  
Selda Kumar  
Veronique Makdugoum Eps Mouafo  
Larry & Mary Masselink  
Gary Patterson  
Doreen Tadde  
Vanlalhriatrenga (VLC) Vanlal Chhangte

Emelia Adu 🏠  
JungJoon Ahn 🏠  
Paul & Mary Beltran 🏠  
Ray & Linda Carricaburu 🏠  
Austin Castellanos &  
Natalie Jorges-Castellanos 🏠  
Jeanne Chamberlain 🏠  
Lloyd Currie 🏠  
Jim & Kay Fenton 🏠 📞  
Carrie Larsen 🏠  
Eric Manu 🏠

Rosa Nine 🏠  
Patrick Sasu 🏠  
Joy Schiager 📞  
Anna Utter 🏠  
Robert Von Moss 🏠  
Mary Wasik 🏠

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

69 YEARS

Frantz & Lois Wilson  
December 24, 1959

60 YEARS

Don & Barb Woodward  
January 26, 1963



*We mourn the loss of members and friends who have died.*

**Juliana ("Mama Juli") Ziorklui**  
in Accra, Ghana  
January 2, 2023

**Nawal Mourad**  
in Gaithersburg, MD  
December 5, 2022

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

**Debonnaire Tchouambou**  
her mother,  
Ngassam Pousseu Colette,  
in Yaounde, Cameroon  
January 26, 2023

**Claudio Ferreira**  
his mother,  
Suzana Luiza Funcke Ferreira,  
in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
January 24, 2023

**Rev. Mary Austin**  
her father, Ronald Austin,  
in Chelsea, MI  
December 28, 2022

**Crystal Blyler**  
her father, Fred Arthur Blyler,  
in Hanover, PA  
December 15, 2022

**Kevin McCann**  
his father, Aaron McCann,  
in Sultan, WA  
December 8, 2022

**Donna Dannels**  
her sister,  
Marlene St. Lewis,  
in Los Angeles, CA  
December 4, 2022

**John Kabangu**  
his brother,  
Charles Kabangu,  
in Kinshasa, Congo  
November 26, 2022



## SANCTUARY FLOWER ORDERS

### WANT TO DONATE FLOWERS for Easter Sunday or any Sunday worship service?

You can give flowers in honor of someone, in memory of someone, or to celebrate a special occasion. The cost is \$45, and you can take the flowers home after the 11:00 service.

Easter flowers are \$14 per plant and orders must be placed by Sunday, April 2.

Scan the QR code below to access both flower forms or visit [gpchurch.org/flower-form](http://gpchurch.org/flower-form) to place your order.



## THE MAINSTREAM

Schedule for Submission of Articles and  
Distribution of Newsletters in 2023

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](mailto:jobermiller@gpchurch.org)  
and [bmoldroyd@earthlink.net](mailto:bmoldroyd@earthlink.net)  
by January 15, April 15,  
July 15, and October 15.**

Questions? Contact the church office.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT

December 2022

2022 YTD % OF BUDGET

### INCOME

Envelope Pledged.....	\$777,110	101%
Envelope Unpledged .....	\$244,898	117%
Loose Offering .....	\$9,621	64%
GPP&K Rent .....	\$0	0%
Other Income .....	\$6,087	243%
Room Rent.....	\$0	0%
Interest & Dividends .....	\$3,372	1,686%
Mizo Church - Offering .....	\$5,000	0%
Manse Rental .....	\$0	0%
Carryover .....	\$0	0%

Total.....\$1,046,088 ..... 97%

### EXPENSE

NCP Membership .....	\$25,133	100%
Human Resources.....	\$653,156	101%
Buildings & Grounds.....	\$242,769	114%
Office Operations .....	\$31,945	96%
Communications.....	\$5,474	100%
Stewardship .....	\$2,968	48%
Comm Engagement .....	\$97,087	97%
Eq Disciples.....	\$12,381	47%
Vital Worship .....	\$8,066	53%
Congregational Life .....	\$1,801	62%
Session .....	\$739	23%

Total.....\$1,081,308 ..... 101%

**NET ..... - \$35,220**

To request a complete financial summary,  
email [accountingmanager@gpchurch.org](mailto: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

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*WISHING YOU A MEANINGFUL LENT  
AND A HAPPY EASTER!*



## *FIND IT FAST!*

- Lenten Book Study (pp. 1, 2 & 3)
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper (pp. 1 & 2)
- Ash Wednesday Prayer Service (p. 2)
- **Easter Week Services** (p. 2)
- PDA Mission Trip (p. 3)
- Rebuilding Together Montgomery County (p. 3)
- Youth Summer Camp Registration (p. 4)
- Montgomery Philharmonic Concert (p. 5)
- Table Friendship (p. 5)
- Our New Church Officers (pp. 8-11)
- Easter Flower Orders (p. 15)