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PASTORAL PONDERINGS

Dear Friends,

Hopefully you have your pledge cards by now. If not please let us know we will make sure you get one! If you have been around Govans for a few years you may notice something different on the card. The difference is you are only asked to make one pledge to the ministry of Govans as a whole. In years past there was a space to pledge to the three year staffing initiative and a space to make a pledge to any other designation.

This year you are just asked to make just one pledge. Of course, you can still make designated gifts at any time. If



you feel passionately and get excited about any ministry or mission or fund at Govans please feel free to make a special gift. With the new Vanco online

...continued on page five

GOVANS TO WELCOME PIANIST JUNGHOO PARK FOR A FREE LIVE CONCERT

By Marie Herrington

Junghoon Park is a graduate of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and an accomplished musician with a rich background in solo and collaborative artistry who has been actively performing in the DMV area.



*Pianist Junghoon Park will be performing live in Govans sanctuary on **November 17 at 7:00 p.m.***

Junghoon will be performing some pretty big piano pieces by composers Kapustin, Gounod, Bach, Medtner, and he will be finishing off the concert with two big pieces by Rachmaninov in honor of Rachmaninov's 150th birthday. Don't miss the incredible free concert.



November Calendar

- 1 - Govans/Knox Zoom Bible Study, noon
- 4 - Woodbrook Players performance, 7:00 p.m.
- 5 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 5 - Woodbrook Players performance, 2:00 p.m.
- 5 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 4:30 p.m.
- 7 - Racial Justice Speaker Series, 7:00 p.m.
- 8 - Govans/Knox Zoom Bible Study, noon
- 12 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 12 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 4:30 p.m.
- 15 - Govans/Knox Zoom Bible Study, noon
- 17 - Junghoon Park concert, 7:00 p.m.
- 19 - Heritage Sunday/Potluck, 10:30 a.m.
- 19 - Soul Kitchen Thanksgiving Feast, 4:30 p.m.
- 21 - Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 22 - Govans/Knox Zoom Bible Study, noon
- 22 - T'giving Eve Zoom Prayer Circle, 7:00 p.m.
- 23-24 - Church Office closed
- 26 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 26 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 3:30 p.m.
- 29 - Govans/Knox Zoom Bible Study, noon

December Calendar

- 3 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 3 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 3:30 p.m.
- 6 - Govans/Knox Zoom Bible Study, noon
- 11 - Online Bible Study, noon
- 10 - Holiday Coffeehouse during Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 10 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 3:30 p.m.
- 13 - Govans/Knox Zoom Bible Study, noon
- 17 - Oratorio de Noël during Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 17 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 3:30 p.m.
- 19 - Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 20 - Govans/Knox Zoom Bible Study, noon
- 20 - Service for those Who Grieve, 6:30 p.m.
- 22 - Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk, 6:30 p.m.
- 24 - Worship, 10:30 a.m., Pageant, 4:30 p.m., Service of Peace and Joy, 8:00 p.m.
- 24 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 3:30 p.m.
- 31 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 31 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 3:30 p.m.

****Church Office will be closed from December 25-29****

November Birthdays

- 2 - Maria Wong
- 5 - Calissa Shaw
- 13 - John Smeallie
- 15 - Donna North
- 18 - James Hardin, Elsie Wong
- 23 - Carolyn Anewich
- 26 - Kit Clark
- 30 - Anneliese Gover, Jamie Hardin

December Birthdays

- 3 - Anne-Allen Dandy
- 5 - Tanya Morrel, Jenny Williams
- 6 - Ralph Arnsdorf
- 7 - Edie Cleaves
- 8 - McKenna Traynham
- 9 - Rich Dombrowski
- 10 - Marin Harris
- 16 - Laila Ali
- 20 - Heather Hairston, Ralph Cook, Anne Minkowski, Diana Romano
- 24 - Myra Brosius
- 31 - Jeannette Hobbs



Note: If you are not sure if the church has your correct birthday, please email Andy Wilson (wilson@govanspres.org) in the church office.

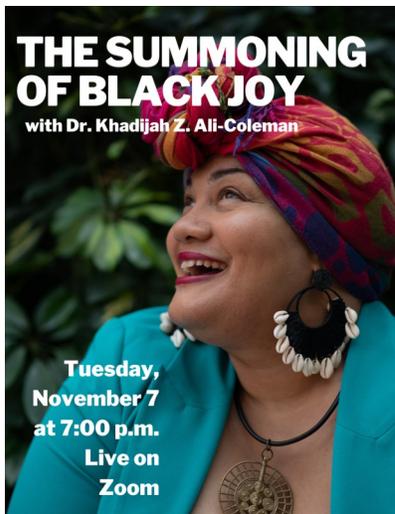
THE SUMMONING OF BLACK JOY The Racial Justice Ministry Speaker Series welcomes Dr. Khadijah Z. Ali-Coleman

Since COVID-19, how have we pivoted in a world that was already on the verge of losing its mind? Dr. Ali-Coleman joins us on Zoom on Tuesday, November 7 at 7:00 p.m. for a talk on homeschooling Black children, finding peace through writing, remote work and her new book, *The Summoning of Black Joy: A poetry collection*.

Khadijah Ali-Coleman, Ed.D. is an award-winning performance artist, multi-genre writer, producing playwright and filmmaker. She is author of the children's book *Mariah's Maracas* and the 2023 Juneteenth weekend release, *The Summoning of Black Joy: A poetry collection*. She is co-editor of the 2022 release, *Homeschooling Black Children in the US*.

Dr. Ali-Coleman has been featured in the Washington Post, USA Today, The Guardian, the Financial Times and more because of her work in arts and education. She has been interviewed by various broadcast media outlets, including NPR, CNN, Slate, and local affiliates of NBC, FOX and CBS recently, specifically because of her work in the Black homeschooling community. She is currently the 2023 Poet Laureate of Prince George's County, MD.

For more information and for the Zoom link, please email Lea Gilmore (lea@govanspres.org), Minister for Racial Justice and Multicultural Engagement.



Church Staff

Rev. Tom Harris, Pastor
Lea Gilmore,
Minister for Racial Justice & Music
Director
Marie Herrington
Music Director
Missy Smith, Interim Christian
Education Coordinator
Rufus Ingram, Bookkeeper
Andy Wilson, Office Manager
Sylvia Usher, Sexton
Pam Ferguson,
Director of Preschool
Gwen Lloyd, Program Director,
Senior Network

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Submissions for the
January|February 2024
newsletter are due by
December 10. Please send
to Andy Wilson at
wilson@govanspres.org



Racial Justice
Ministry

SOUL KITCHEN THANKSGIVING FEAST

Sunday, November 19

Volunteers Needed!

Email the church office (wilson@govanspres.org) for more info.

#SoulKitchenRocks

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT GOVANS

9:00 a.m. - Adult
Options in Sharp Hall
and Zoom

9:45 a.m. - Sunday
School in the Youth
Room

10:30 a.m. - Worship in
the Sanctuary and
Zoom



WHAT'S GOING ON @ GOVANS?

Advent and Holiday Schedule

Heritage and Commitment Sunday November 19 during worship: Join us during worship as we celebrate the past and the future of Govans. We will tip our hat to the Scottish roots of the Presbyterian Church. We will celebrate the good in our history and acknowledge the bad. We will listen for God calling us to a new future. **And then, of course, a potluck!** Bring a dish from your heritage or a dish from the Giant, or neither, or both and spend time getting to know folks around the table.



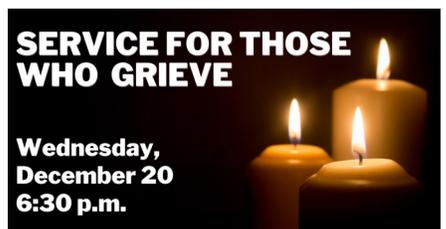
Thanksgiving Eve Zoom Prayer Circle - November 22nd @ 7:00 p.m.: Join us for this first ever Thanksgiving service. Log on to the call from home. Share what you are thankful for. Listen to some scripture. Hear a brief word from Pastor Tom and pray with your church family. Maybe someone will even play an instrument or share a song. Check your weekly email for the Zoom link.

Holiday Coffee House - December 10 during worship: Join us as Govans presents its annual Christmas Coffeeshouse - a "open mic" style showcase of church members sharing their musical talent with the congregation. All ages and skill levels welcome. If you would like to perform, please contact Lea Gilmore at lea@govanspres.org. Merry Christmas!



Govans Chancel Choir presents - Oratorio de Noël - December 17 during worship: Chancel Choir's performance of *Oratorio de Noël* (Christmas Oratorio) by Camille Saint-Saëns. You will also get to hear some of the singers in our choir featured as soloists: Jocelyn Taylor, Nerissa Paglinauan, David Willerup, Karl Starks, and Colin Johnson! You might recognize this composer, for he wrote the famous Carnival of the Animal pieces, most notable of which is "The Swan." Saint-Saëns also composed the famous "Dances Macabre." See page 8 for more information.

Service for Those Who Grieve - Wednesday, December 20 at 6:30 p.m.: Christmas time can be especially hard for people who are grieving. We may have lost loved ones during the holidays or we may be acutely feeling their absence at this time when being with loved ones is emphasized. Come light a candle in memory of a loved one. Listen to some quiet music. No Christmas Carols will be sung. No compulsory joy. It will just be a space set aside to acknowledge our grief.



Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk - Friday, December 22 at 6:30 p.m.: A time to acknowledge darkness and to notice the undying light within. Bring a flashlight and a warm coat as we walk into the center of the ancient labyrinth and walk back out again. Light a candle in the center as a sign of your hopes for the coming year.



Sunday, December 24 - 10:30 a.m. Sunday Morning Worship: We don't skip Sunday morning church even when it falls on Christmas Eve! But let's just be honest, if you attend this service AND one of the Christmas Eve evening services you get major brownie points with God. It will definitely make up for at least some of your holiday debauchery. So join us for a Sunday morning church service, with hymns and scripture and a sermon and prayer. Because, it's Sunday morning, and that's what we do!

Children's Christmas Pageant - Christmas Eve at 4:30 p.m.: The Christmas Pageant is back! Everyone is welcome to participate. Grab a costume when you walk in. What will you be? Shepherd? Angel? Animal? Maybe there will be some lines. Maybe not. You never know. What we will have for sure is classic Christmas Carols led by our band, scripture readings that tell the Christmas story, and an evening of joy and light.



A Service of Peace and Joy - Christmas Eve at 8:00 p.m.: We begin by singing Silent Night to candle light, then we move through a few scripture readings and carol melodies before ending with a rousing round of "Go Tell It On The Mountain!" Join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ with choral music, instrumental music, and congregational singing.

Pastoral Ponderings...*continued from cover page*

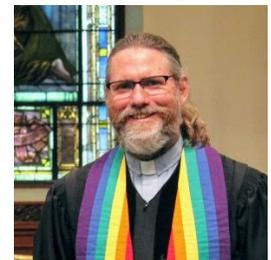
giving platform you can even set up recurring gifts to special designations. Some of the designations people give to are: Soul Kitchen, Kay Papa Nou, Friends of Music, the Mission Budget, and many others. Designated gifts are a good thing.

Yet, if everyone just gave designated gifts we would probably not have a functioning church. Critical functions that are not exciting or sexy would go unfunded. Like toilet bowl cleaner. Think about a church without toilet bowl cleaner for a minute. Not a happy thought, right?

In all seriousness, when we give to the church as a whole, we are saying that we believe in the church as a whole. We believe in supporting programs that feed the souls of other people. Maybe a given individual doesn't love one style of music, or doesn't care about Adult Options or Wednesday Bible Study, or youth ministry, or labyrinth maintenance, or whatever. Yet, we give to support the whole church because we know other people do care about those things. And we know that other people are giving to support the things that feed us. So somewhere along the way by giving to the whole church we become people who care for one another, and just as importantly, people who care for strangers.

So keep giving as you feel called. Give joyfully. Give generously. Give to things you feel passionately about. Give to the church as a whole. Give to the community. And along the way remember to be grateful for how many people are also giving to the whole community and making Govans Presbyterian Church possible.

Peace,
Tom



Rev. Tom Harris

NOVEMBER MISSION OFFERING: TURNAROUND

TurnAround opened its doors in 1978 to serve survivors of sexual assault and intimate partner violence in Baltimore County. After seeing a gap in services for individuals abused through sexual violence in Baltimore City, the agency expanded in 1995 to provide counseling and support services to survivors there. They provide their clients with trauma therapy, legal advocacy, abuser intervention, other assistance. TurnAround is the rape crisis center for Baltimore City and County and also provides 24/7 crisis helpline and text line. Learn more at www.turnaroundinc.org.



*****All donations during the month of November marked "Mission Offering" will support the work of TurnAround, Inc. Thank you for your support. *****



DECEMBER MISSION OFFERING: BALTIMORE SAFE HAVEN



Baltimore Safe Haven

Baltimore Safe Haven started in 2018 with a vision of creating a community and a resource that those in the TLGBQ community, particularly black transgender women who were living in survival mode, could rely on. Founder and executive director, Iya Dammons, turned her own lived experience with poverty, violence and sex work into a wellness and outreach operation for those in need.

Baltimore Safe Haven became incorporated as a registered 501 (c)(3) organization in late 2018, and by the fall of 2018 began operating a drop-in center and mobile outreach operation. Iya was awarded Upcoming Activist of the Year by the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of LGBTQ Affairs and continues to use her platform to enhance lives daily.%)

*****All donations during the month of December marked "Mission Offering" will support Baltimore Safe Haven. Thank you for your support. *****



THE WOODBROOK PLAYERS RETURN WITH "THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 16TH"

November 4, 10 and 11 at 7:30 p.m.

November 5 and 12 at 2:00 p.m.

The Woodbrook Players Presents
Was it murder or suicide? What really happened to Bjorn Faulkner?
Night of **JANUARY 16TH**
a play by **Ayn Rand**
directed by **Ron Oaks**
Limited Tickets Available
Friday, Nov 10 - 7:30 PM
Saturdays, Nov 4 & 11 - 7:30 PM
Sundays, Nov 5 & 12 - 2 PM
Govans Presbyterian Church
5828 York Rd, Baltimore
www.woodbrookplayers.org

Who did it? In this gripping drama about the rise and destruction of a brilliant and ruthless international tycoon, the answer relies on members of the audience to determine the fate of the accused! To the world, he was a startlingly successful tycoon, head of a vast financial empire. To his beautiful secretary-mistress, he was a god-like her. To his aristocratic young wife, he was an elemental force of nature to be tamed. To his millionaire father-in-law, he was a giant whose single error could be used to destroy him.

Since it's original Broadway success, this dramatic vision of human strength and weakness has achieved worldwide popularity and acclaim. Tickets are limited. Scan QR code to purchase.

JUNGHOO PARK - LIVE IN CONCERT...continued from cover page

Junghoon Park is an accomplished musician with a rich background in solo and collaborative artistry, actively performing in the DMV area. A graduate of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, he has studied under the guidance of esteemed mentors, Drs. Kristina Suter and Alon Goldstein, while amassing an extensive and diverse repertoire.

Junghoon's artistic journey has been marked by outstanding achievements on both national and international stages. He has participated in prestigious events such as the National Music Festival, Wonderlic Competition, Liszt-Garrison Competition, and the International Keyboard Institute Festival. His exceptional talents earned him a Special Honors award at the 2016 Paderewski Competition in Hartford, Ct and in 2018, Junghoon received the title of Rising Star for his emotive interpretation of Earl Wild's "Etude No. 4," a rendition inspired by George Gershwin's classic "Embraceable You."

Beyond his musical pursuits, Junghoon's dedication extends to humanitarian causes. In 2022, he hosted a successful benefit concert at Catonsville Presbyterian Church, raising funds to support Ukrainian refugees. Junghoon's artistic goals are deeply rooted in sharing his musical talent and passion with audiences worldwide.

In 2024, Junghoon has an exciting plan to celebrate the 151st anniversary of Rachmaninoff's birth through his #Rach151 series. This series will feature Rachmaninoff's concertos in chamber music arrangements, showcasing his innovative approach to classical repertoire and offering a fresh perspective on the renowned composer's work.



Sergei Rachmaninoff,
1873-1943

MORE ABOUT THE “ORATORIO DE NOËL”

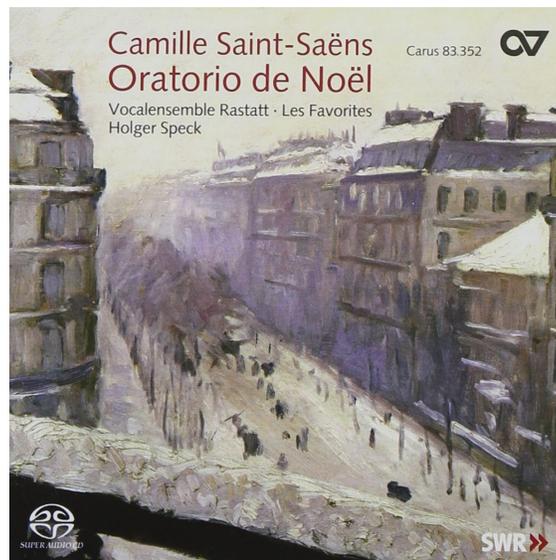
by Marie Herrington

On Sunday December 17, look forward to the Chancel Choir's performance of Oratorio de Noël (Christmas Oratorio) by Camille Saint-Saëns. You will also get to hear some of the singers in our choir featured as soloists: Jocelyn Taylor, Nerissa Paglinauan, David Willerup, Karl Starks, and Colin Johnson!

Here is a little bit about the text of the Christmas Oratorio:

Saint-Saëns chose several verses from the Latin Vulgate Bible for the text of the work. "While these texts are not from a single source, it is clear that the traditional church liturgies surrounding Christmas influenced Saint-Saëns. About half of the texts he chose match different portions of two Christmas Offices: the First Mass at Midnight and the Second Mass at Dawn." One author calls the work "a musical enhancement of the words of the [Christmas] Office, without interest in the human drama."

The narrative portion of the text, taken from the second chapter of St. Luke, appears in the second movement and tells the part of the traditional Christmas story involving the shepherds. The remainder of the texts, taken from John, Isaiah, Lamentations, and the Psalms, reflect upon the meaning and significance of the event.

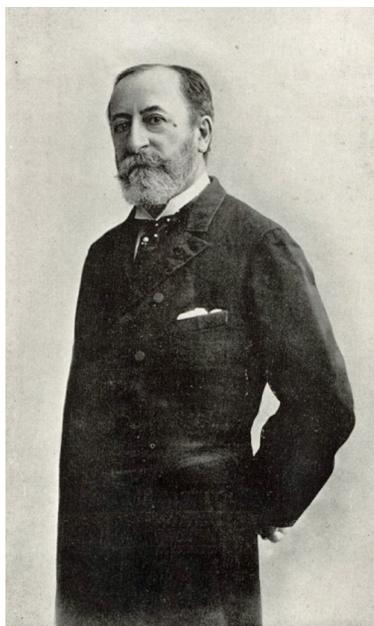


Here is a little bit about the structure of the Christmas oratorio:

The Oratorio de Noël is structured in a way that "hardly exceeds the limits of a cantata, but musically is constructed in oratorio style." However, "its shorter length and the fact that it was intended for presentation during a worship service place it closer in character and purpose to a traditional sacred cantata." Its structure bears a greater resemblance to oratorios of the early Baroque than to later works of that genre.

Saint-Saëns divided the work into 10 movements, a prelude followed by nine vocal numbers. After the prelude, opening recitatives and chorus, the work gradually builds from a single soloist accompanied by a small ensemble to involve the entire instrumental and vocal forces. The full chorus sings in the second, sixth, and final movements and the women of the chorus accompany the tenor soloist in the fourth.

While there are brief episodes of grandeur in the solo parts and one frenetic section for the chorus, most of the work is subdued and lyrical in character. Saint-Saëns's study of the choral music of Bach, Handel, Mozart, Berlioz, and others had a great influence on the work, with the most significant influences being Part II of J. S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio and Gounod's St. Cecilia Mass.



Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Join us for worship on December 17 for this beautiful piece!

ADULT OPTIONS IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

ADULT OPTIONS

Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in Sharp Hall and on Zoom

For the month of November, Jody Morris will present a series on "Practicing Antiracism in Committee". This is part of his Doctor of Ministry Project. Committee chairpersons and committee members are encouraged to attend one or all of these sessions.

- November 5 - **A Theology of Antiracism**
- November 12 - **Our Predominantly White Church**
- November 19 - **Our Antiracist Opportunities**
- November 26 - **Our Antiracist Committee Work**

On December 3, Anne Owens will present "The Spirituality of Grief". The other weeks in December are still being planned. Please follow in the weekly announcements for further details.



A NEW WAY TO GIVE TO GOVANS: INTRODUCING VANCO

Giving to Govans is easier than ever. We are now using the online giving service Vanco to give you greater access and control over how you give. Take a look below and at the Frequently Asked Questions on the next page to learn more.

We are encouraging everyone who already gives electronically or would like to give electronically to set up a Vanco Online account and/or sign up through the Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app on your phone.

Vanco allows you to:

- Control when you give, how often, and how much
- Give using credit card or automatic debit from your bank
- Give quickly and easily to any Govans Mission Partner
- Give quickly and easily to any Govans Designated Fund
- Give from your computer or your mobile phone

Scan the QR code below to go to www.govanspres.org/give and learn more, make a gift, sign up, or download the Vanco mobile app to your phone.

If you have any questions, please contact the Office Manager, Andy Wilson (wilson@govanspres.org) or our Bookkeeper, Rufus Ingram (rufus@govanspres.org).



GIVING WITH VANCO: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Do I have to use Vanco to give to Govans?

No. You can continue to give as you do now. All current giving options will remain the same including cash, check, Paypal, Facebook, and having the church office arrange your credit card and/or automatic debit for you.

What are the advantages of using Vanco for me?

You will have greater access and control over how you give, how much you give, and how often. You can make changes quickly and easily on your computer or phone. You will also be able to make designated gifts to any mission partner or church fund at any time. Vanco provides reports through email when you make a donation and at the end of the year.

What are the advantages for the church?

Offering people greater control over giving and access to giving has been shown to increase overall giving to the church. Allowing supporters freedom to make their own changes to their giving reduces administrative work for the Church Office. Vanco provides easy to read reports to the Church Office including reporting any designations. This will streamline our bookkeeping. Vanco provides a clear memo option with each gift to communicate information from the giver.

If I use PayPal now should I change?

You are not required to, but we are encouraging those who are giving through PayPal to change to Vanco. Vanco giving reports are much easier for the church office to access.

Is there a fee for using Vanco?

For credit card transactions there is a 2.75% fee (3.75% for Discover). For Automatic Debit from your bank account there is a .6% fee (6/10%). The church will pay this fee or you can choose to pay this cost yourself by checking a box when you make your donation.

If the church is currently charging my credit card or debiting from my bank account, how do I transition to Vanco?

Once you set up your giving through Vanco you should immediately email the Church Office (office@govanspres.org) and ask them to stop charging your credit card or bank account. After this, all your future giving will be completely under your control through Vanco online or the app.

How do I get started with Vanco?

Go to www.govanspres.org/give and click on the Vanco link at the top of the page to sign up, or get the Vanco Mobile from your app store and sign up there. You will be asked to select Govans Presbyterian Church and will see a map to be sure you are choosing the right organization. You will be given the option to choose a general or designated gift. You can give to the Operating Budget by choosing General Offering. Or you can give to designated funds. You will be asked to enter your information and payment method and choose how often you want to give along with other options. You will then “checkout” in a cart similar to online shopping.

What if I want to make a designated gift, but I don't see the mission partner or fund I want to support?

If you don't see a tile for the mission partner or fund you want to support, you can use the "General Offering" tile and write the name of the mission partner or fund in the memo line.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SOUL KITCHEN FUNDRAISER ON OCTOBER 14

Photos by Justin Camejo





PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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www.govanspres.org

"Govans Presbyterian Church is a theologically progressive community empowering people to make the world better."