



September | October 2024

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PASTOR RON'S JOURNEY TO GOVANS RAN THROUGH 9/11

by Jon Morgan

Pastor Ron has taken a long and winding road to the pulpit of Govans.

Our new interim pastor was born in Philadelphia, grew up in Somerset, NJ, served as a staff sergeant in the Marine Corps and led visits to the wreckage of the Pentagon with family members who lost loved ones there on 9/11. He's been a pastor of congregations in Baltimore, Virginia, Texas and Silver Spring, Md. Oh, and he almost became a lawyer.

"God has always been tugging at my heart since I was a teenager," he says.



Welcome to Govans, Pastor Ron and Linda!

The Reverend Dr. Ron Hankins took over as Govan's interim pastor on Aug. 19, charged with tending the flock and preparing the congregation for the next

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INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE CONCERT SERIES TO BEGIN ON OCTOBER 4

by Marie Herrington



Nicolle Avila



Ramilya Saubanova

We are excited to announce that we have two amazing musicians joining us over the next three years as part of the *International Artists in Residence Concert Series*: pianist Ramilya Saubanova and violinist Nicollev Avila.

Dr. Ramilya Saubanova is a passionate pianist whose musical journey began in Tatarstan, Russia, over two decades ago, and has since taken her to numerous stages around the world. Known for her expressive performances and collaborative spirit, she shares her love for music through solo recitals, chamber

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September Calendar

- 15 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 15 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-Up, 4:30 p.m.
- 16 - Music Mondays, 7:00 p.m.
- 17 - Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 22 - Worship 10:30 a.m. followed by RJMC Presentation
- 22 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-Up, 4:30 p.m.
- 29 - Worship 10:30 a.m.
- 29 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-Up, 4:30 p.m.
- 30 - Music Mondays, 7:00 p.m.

October Calendar

- 4 - Concert with Ramilya Saubanova, 7:00 p.m.
- 6 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 6 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 4:30 p.m.
- 13 - Worship, 10:30 a.m. with Sanctuary Art Unveiling
- 13 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 4:30 p.m.
- 15 - Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- 20 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 20 - Understanding and Defending DEI, noon
- 20 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 4:30 p.m.
- 27 - Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 27 - Soul Kitchen Meal Pick-up, 4:30 p.m.

September Birthdays

- 2 - Calvin Morris, Jeremy North
- 5 - Fred Gaede
- 8 - Bruce Dunlop, Micki Morris
- 9 - Kay Simmons
- 10 - Kamila Alexander
- 11 - Matthew Moore
- 12 - Don Taber
- 13 - Eleanor Schwartz
- 14 - Sherry Peck
- 19 - Bobbie Seabolt
- 20 - Deb Smith
- 22 - Laura Wake
- 23 - Trenton Simmons
- 24 - Lea Gilmore, Matthew Clay-Robison, Tank Jamison

October Birthdays

- 1 - Circey Trevant
- 4 - Marc Ceanfaglione
- 6 - Cordelia Alexander
- 10 - Ayden Allston
- 11 - Xavier Fuller
- 14 - Yvette Freter, Evelyn Koehler
- 15 - Karen Ceanfaglione, Rich Ketner
- 19 - Al Coleman
- 24 - Claire Wilson
- 26 - Thomas Moore
- 28 - Heather Bruce

CHURCH WORKS: NEWS FROM THE SESSION

The Session met in our regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 20. Here are some highlights:

- Both Pastor Shannon and Pastor Ron were present - it was Pastor Ron's first session meeting.
- We approved an updated job description and job title change for Andy Wilson from Interim Church Administrator to Church Administrator.
- Missy Smith's contract for the Interim Christian Education Coordinator position was not renewed. We wish her well.
- We heard an update on the Education Building construction project which is beginning soon. The preschool will begin moving into Sharp Hall this week.
- And the Worship and Music Committee presented a draft agenda for a liturgist training. This training will explain the role and responsibilities of the liturgist and also provide an opportunity to practice. Stay tuned for more info about this.

RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY LETTER

Welcome to our new Interim Pastor Rev. Dr. Ron Hankins, who will lead us while we search for and call a new, permanent pastor. I will miss Bridge Pastor Shannon Weston's witty sermons and encyclopedic Biblical knowledge.

The Racial Justice Committee examined our history as it relates to racism so that we can begin the work of repairing historic harms and seek reconciliation. Myra Brosius, chair of our Truth and Reconciliation Committee shares, "as Kamala Harris reminds us, 'We exist in the context of all in which we live and what came before us.' If we seek to dismantle racism, we must understand first who we are and the truth about how we got here; we are the product of our past as we work to build a hopeful future."

Please attend church service on September 22 to hear Myra and Rev. David Harris present the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's deep dive into the racial history of our church. Also, please make it a point to be at the unveiling of Baltimore artist Ky Vassor's artwork in the front of our sanctuary on October 13.

And, as we begin to enjoy cooler days heading into fall, please keep the Govans community and our nation in your prayers as we contemplate our nation's future leadership. May God instill wisdom in us, may we seek to continue to show love for our neighbors, and retain hope in us for a bright future as we prepare our plans to vote on November 5, 2024. Please feel free to contact me anytime at lea@govanspres.org.

Peace, Lea

Reprinted from "The Light" Govans' Racial Justice Ministry e-Newsletter, edited by Tiffany James. Email Lea (lea@govanspres.org) or Andy (wilson@govanspres.org) to subscribe.



Church Staff

Rev. Dr. Ron Hankins, Interim Pastor
Lea Gilmore,
Minister for Racial Justice & Music
Director

Marie Herrington
Music Director

Rufus Ingram, Bookkeeper
Andy Wilson, Office Manager
Sylvia Usher, Sexton

Pam Ferguson,
Director of Preschool

Gwen Lloyd, Program Director, Senior
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*Submissions for the November /
December 2024 newsletter are
due by October 10. Please send
to Andy Wilson at
wilson@govanspres.org*

SUNDAY MORNINGS AT GOVANS

10:30 a.m. at
Worship in the
Sanctuary &
Zoom



THE NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD DRIVE IS BACK!

Join us Wednesday, September 18 and/or Saturday, September 21 as we get the neighbors around our church involved in our ministry. All ages are welcome! Sign up using the QR code.



Wednesday, September 18th

- 5:15 p.m.: 6-10 people are needed to staple the instructions to each bag. The instructions as each neighbor to fill the bag with non-perishable food for the CARES Food Pantry and leave it on their porch Saturday morning for us to pick up.
- 6:00 p.m.: You will be assigned a team and a geographic area. Each team will have one driver and 2-3 walkers. Each team will take a map and a stack of paper grocery bags and leave one bag with instructions on the porch of every house on the map. The driver will slowly drive down the street as the other team members walk on each side of the street, placing bags on each porch (about a mile in the neighborhoods around the church). This is a drop off activity only. No door knocking required!

Saturday, September 21st

9:45 a.m.: About 10 people are needed to collect the filled bags from our neighbors' porches. Drivers slowly drive down each street on their map while walkers pick up filled (or empty) bags from the porches and load the full bags in the cars and deliver to CARES.



MUSIC MONDAYS WELCOMES MUSICIANS FROM LONDON

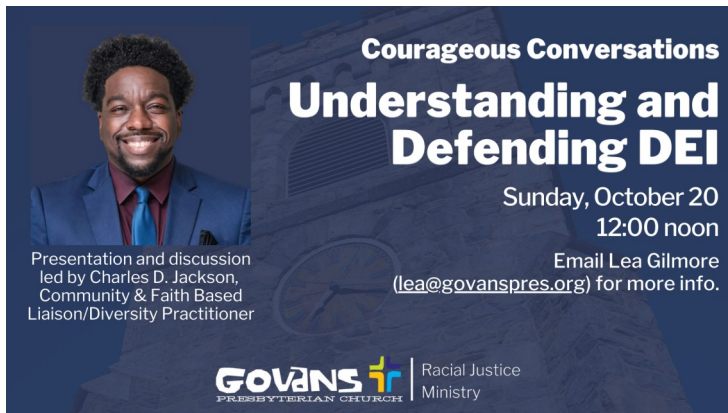
All the way from London, England Anna Tam and Jon Banks, will perform a special intimate concert as part of our Music Mondays series on Monday, September 30 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Enjoy a mix of wonderful traditional folk and original songs as well as Anna speaking about and demonstrating her instruments, including nyckelharpa and hurdy gurdy. Anna will also teach everyone a medieval song to sing along.

Singer and multi-instrumentalist **Anna Tam** (Mediaeval Baebes, Wilde Roses) weaves together genre-bending, synaesthetic threads of sound and emotion. Shortlisted as 'Instrumentalist of the Year' 2020 and 2021 by Fatea Magazine for her technical brilliance on nyckelharpa, hurdy gurdy, viola da gamba and cello; Anna has been touring internationally making TV appearances since she was 12 and has played her historic and folk instruments on computer game soundtracks for Grammy award winning composer Jason Graves. She is in the US for the release of her new album 'Vulnerable'.

Santouri and accordion player **Jon Banks** has recorded, broadcast and toured throughout Europe, the Middle East and the Americas as a member of The Burning Bush, The Dufay Collective and The Jocelyn Pook Ensemble. He has performed with the Royal Shakespeare Company and is a regular performer and Musical Director at the Globe Theatre. Recent recording sessions include 'The Grand Budapest Hotel' and Simon Armitage's 'Eurydice and Orpheus'.

Anna and Jon won a prize for their performance at Boysun Bahori World Music Festival, Uzbekistan.

UNDERSTANDING AND DEFENDING DEI PRESENTATION TO TAKE PLACE ON OCTOBER 20



DEI stands for diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is a set of values and practices that aim to create more inclusive and equitable environments. As seen recently in the media, DEI efforts by schools, governments, and businesses have been subject to unwarranted weaponization in our public space. Why is DEI necessary and how can we defend our values from these types of attacks? Our goal is to educate and inspire those who are committed to justice.

Join us on Sunday, October 20 at noon for an important and timely discussion on the Charles D. Jackson is a distinguished diversity, equity,

inclusion and belonging specialist with a proven track record of driving positive change. A native of Baltimore, Maryland, his passion for addressing racial disparities was ignited during his undergraduate years at Emmanuel College in Boston, Massachusetts. Furthering his expertise, he earned a Diversity Practitioner certification from NTL Institute and a Community Health Leadership certification from Morehouse School of Medicine.

Jackson's career is marked by a steadfast commitment to creating inclusive and equitable environments. His extensive experience spans diverse roles, including program management, community outreach, and organizational development. He has successfully led initiatives for prominent organizations such as the Baltimore City Health Department, Family League of Baltimore, and the National Organization of Black County Officials.

As a seasoned consultant, Jackson offers strategic guidance to organizations seeking to foster diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice. His expertise in change management, coupled with his ability to build strong community partnerships, has been instrumental in driving impactful social change. Currently serving as Health Equity Director in Baltimore City, Jackson is at the forefront of addressing complex health disparities and implementing equitable solutions. His dedication to empowering marginalized communities and his ability to translate data into actionable strategies make him a highly sought-after leader in the field.

"Courageous Conversations" are presented by the Govans Presbyterian Church's Racial Justice Ministry. Light refreshments will be provided. Email Lea Gilmore, Minister for Racial Justice and Multicultural Engagement (lea@govanspres.org) for more info.

YARN NEEDED FOR UPCOMING GUATEMALA TRIP TO BENEFIT CEDEPCA

On November 2, Cordelia Alexander, Stephen Gaede and Tanya Morrel as well as two members from Knox Presbyterian, Yvette McEachern and Sarah Walker, will be traveling to Guatemala to learn about migration from a Guatemalan perspective and the work of our Presbyterian partner organization, CEDEPCA, in supporting migrants and more generally. The trip leaders will be taking donated yarn with them for the women weavers in some of CEDEPCA's partner organizations to use in making scarves to help support them and their families. One of the ways you can support this trip and partnership is by donating any type or color of yarn. Drop off yarn in the basket in the Gallery or you can contact the church office to arrange to drop it off.



RACIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION PRESENTATION TO TAKE PLACE ON SEPTEMBER 22

Join David Harris and Myra Brosius of the Truth and Reconciliation Subcommittee of Govans' Racial Justice Ministry as they share their research into Govans' relationship with race beginning with our founding in pre-Civil War Baltimore in 1844 up to the present. Both David and Myra have been researching this topic, conducting interviews over the last couple years.

This will be an opportunity to both learn about our past and to begin the conversation about restorative justice as we move forward with our work. Light refreshments will be provided. You don't want to miss it!



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The Historical Truth of Govans Presbyterian's Relationship With Race and Why it Matters

Sunday, September 22 following the 10:30 a.m. worship service

Email Lea Gilmore (lea@govanspres.org) for more info.

GOVANS 
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | Racial Justice Ministry

Gardening Volunteers Needed!

Have you walked by the Bio-Retention Garden or the Labyrinth lately? YES—they need our help! The Earth Care Committee is organizing a workday for Saturday, October 5, from 9:00–12:00.

If you can help out for any or all of that time, the plants and environment near our church would be so grateful! We are working with Blue Water Baltimore, and with our neighbor/Master Gardener Dave Barrett, to come up with plans to make these areas more pollinator-friendly using native plants and home-grown helping hands (yours!). It's even more helpful if you can bring some implements (rakes, shovels, hoes, clippers—but some will be provided) and, of course, your elbow grease! It'll be a fun morning of working with each other and enhancing our welcome mat! For information, please contact Claire Storey (mcstorey4@gmail.com) or Bonnie Thomson (Blt218@aol.com). Refreshments and hydration provided!



MUSIC NEWS FROM MARIE HERRINGTON

Greetings Govans Community!

We have some exciting events coming up this fall that I want to bring to your attention.

🎵 Do you remember? Choir starts in September 🎵

Welcome back to the season of music! We are delighted to be back together for the fall, and we have some great things in store for you all this year. You can come ring or sing with us starting in September - 6:30pm for the Handbell Choir, and 7:30pm for the Chancel Choir!

Not sure how you fit into either group and want some guidance or suggestions? **This fall I'm offering a FREE music consultation/lesson** along with helpful take-home material to help you ease into the world of collaborative music. Nothing we do in these groups is too hard for anyone, but we love to all push each other to our musical limits in order to achieve a very cool sound. If you are interested in these options, please send me an email at marie@govanspres.org. - I'd love to connect with you!



CHOIR REHEARSAL IS EVERY
THURSDAY STARTING
SEPTEMBER 5!

Handbell Choir: 6:30-7:30PM
Chancel Choir: 7:30-9:00PM

ALL ARE WELCOME!



GOVANS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Interested in handbells but don't know where to start? email me!
marie@govanspres.org

I'm offering a **free** music lesson this fall, with take home material, that gives you everything you need to know about being in our handbell ensemble!

The Govans Handbell Choir meets every **Thursday** at **6:30pm** starting **Thursday Sept 5**, and we hope to see you there!
-Marie Herrington

MUSIC MONDAYS RETURNS! - WIND AND STRINGS - A MUSIC SAMPLER FROM MYRA BROSIUS AND PETER CONRAD

Come hear Myra and Peter share their musical talents with us live in the Sanctuary on Monday, September 16 at 7:00 p.m. Myra has been playing the flute since she was twelve years old. Classically trained at Carnegie Mellon University, she is a member of the Baltimore Flute Choir, recognized nationally among their peers. She also is a member of the Govans Presbyterian Church Band and Choir. Myra enjoys all genres of music but prefers the personal dynamics of small ensembles. With her husband of thirty years, guitarist Peter Conrad, she plays an eclectic mix of folk, jazz, rock and blues.



ADULT OPTIONS

Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in Waverly Room and on Zoom

GOVANS/KNOX ZOOM BIBLE STUDY

Every Wednesday at Noon.
Scan QR code for link.



LAY LEADERS NEEDED



USHERS NEEDED



RACIAL JUSTICE SANCTUARY ART PROJECT TO BE UNVEILED ON OCTOBER 13

Join us during worship on Sunday, October 13 for the unveiling of new artwork in our sanctuary by Black Baltimore artist Ky Vassor. The work, a striking pair of panels, was chosen by a committee of the congregation seeking to celebrate racial diversity.

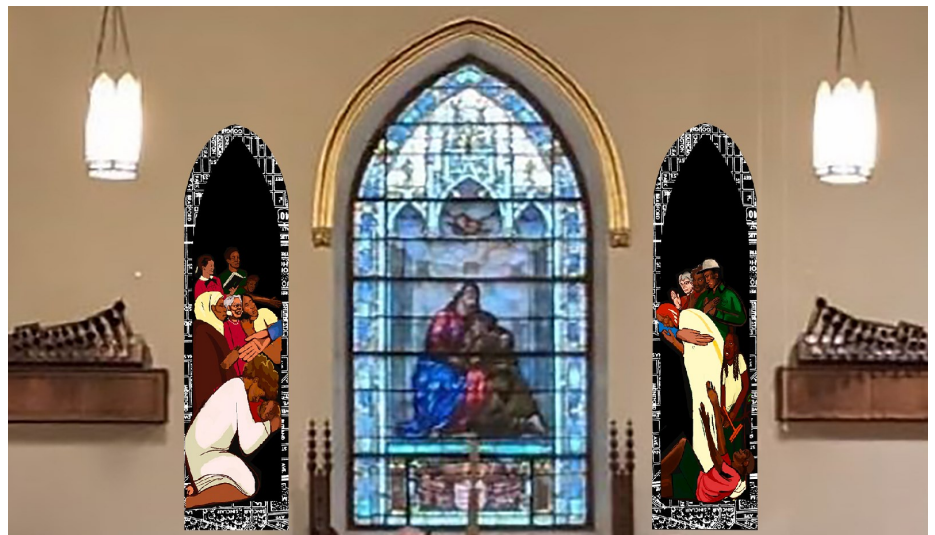
We are seeking donations to pay for the professional installation of the work. To contribute use the QR code to the left. Also, moving forward we are seeking new members for you subcommittee. If you would like to join our subcommittee, email Patreena Parsons at govansart@gmail.com. New members are welcome!



Scan to donate to art installation



Ky Vassor



GOVANS BOOK CLUB

The group meets on Zoom on the second Friday of the month and chooses from a wide array of books. We would love to have you join us. Contact Bobbie Cook at cookbobbie347@gmail.com for the link and for more information..



PASTOR RON'S JOURNEY...continued from cover page.

chapter as a search is underway for a permanent replacement for Tom Harris, a process that can take more than a year. In the meantime, he intends to explore the church's "system of operation" – from the committee structure to the relationship between elders and the pastor – with an eye toward "posing questions" about but not dictating potential changes.

"An interim calms the ship so the pastoral committee can do its job," he says. At the same time, he says, "My job is to have the church examine its system of operation.

What sort of system do you want to evolve into?"

Serving others and shifting directions comes naturally to the gregarious pastor, who turns 62 on Oct. 25. He enlisted in the Marines shortly after high school in 1982 intending to become a Navy pilot. He ended up specializing in aviation ordinance instead but while doing that got his first taste of being a faith leader, serving as a lay leader to other Marines. After active duty he applied to law school, hoping to get involved in civil rights and immigration law, as well as the Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Va.

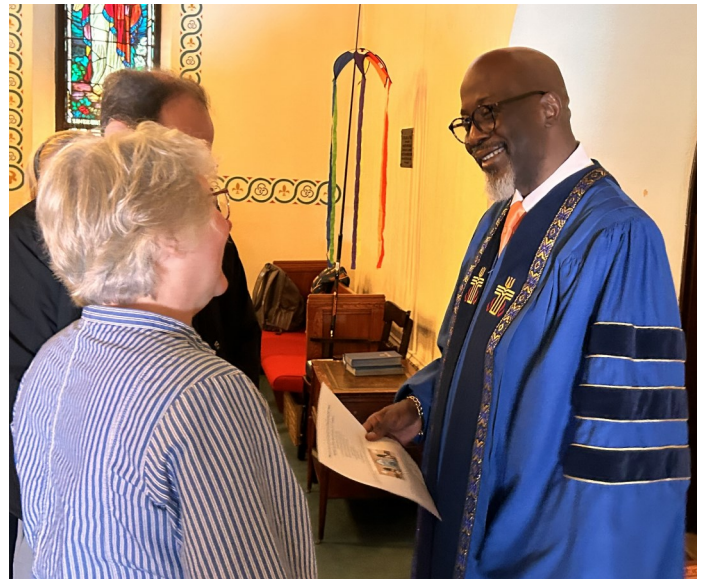
His placement exam score wasn't quite good enough for law school, but the seminary offered him a full scholarship. "I took that as a yes" from God, he says.

He obtained a Master of Divinity at the seminary and got his start as pastor of Woodville Presbyterian in Richmond. Also in Richmond, he met his future wife, Linda, while he was shopping for soap at a Walgreens where she worked. "That smile stopped my heart."

They've been married 22 years and have four children between them from previous marriages, along with seven grandchildren. She works as a cashier in food service at the McDonogh School in Owings Mills. They live in Fairmont Park in West Baltimore.

His 23 years of military service includes 13 as an enlisted Marine, six in the Naval Chaplain Corps and four with the District of Columbia Air National Guard as a captain and reserve Air Force chaplain based in Virginia.

It was during that last posting that he was called up and ordered to report to the Pentagon after the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks. He was assigned as a



Pastor Ron greeting the congregation following worship on a recent Sunday.

chaplain to greet family members making pilgrimages to the site where a hijacked jetliner was flown into the building. He took some of them, including the older brother of the airline pilot lost in the crash, to an observation area that still smelled of jet fuel.

"It was at times a very tough experience," he says. "A pastor has to compartmentalize, but it was very tough."

The disaster could lead some to question their faith. But Pastor Ron says it had the opposite effect on him.

"It caused me to double down – that God is there in sunshine and rain," he says. "The experience took me to another level."

That eventually led to a Doctor of Ministry degree from Regent University School of Divinity in Virginia Beach, Va., and stints as pastor of churches in Odessa, Texas, Silver Spring, Maryland and 15 years at Trinity Presbyterian in Baltimore. He's been successful helping churches establish food pantries, clothing drives and recovery programs while encouraging discussions on dismantling racism.

He's well known in the Baltimore Presbytery where he's held several posts, including as the first African-American pastor (Teaching Elder) moderator of the Baltimore Presbytery.

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE CONCERT SERIES...continued from cover page

ensembles, and masterclasses. Ramilya enriches the cultural landscape by organizing the Tatar Music Concert Series in the USA, blending music with history, poetry, and art to create a unique and immersive experience. This coming winter, she eagerly anticipates the release of her debut solo CD, featuring works by Medtner, Brahms, and contemporary composers Crozier and Latchford.

We asked Ramilya what her favorite thing about Baltimore is, and this was her response:

“From the very first day, Baltimore has embraced me warmly with its care and love. I received an excellent education here and met many new friends and wonderful musicians. The city itself has an interesting and unique atmosphere, rich in history and culture. What I appreciate most is the kindness and responsiveness of the people. I love this city, and I am grateful that my life has brought me here.”

Nicolle Avila, a violinist from Bogotá, Colombia, whose musical journey was deeply influenced by her mother, Janeth Avila, and her violin teacher, Amparo Botero. About seven years ago, she moved to Baltimore after receiving a transformative opportunity from Richard Young (Vermeer Quartet). She pursued her studies at the Peabody Conservatory on a full-tuition scholarship, earning both undergraduate and master’s degrees under Herbert Greenberg mentorship and graduating with high academic honors. Joining Pi Kappa Lambda marked the end of her student journey and the beginning of her professional life. In 2024, she began a full-time position at the Peabody Preparatory and regularly substitute with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

We asked her, what do you like the most about Baltimore?

“Baltimore is one of my favorite cities. It may be an unpopular opinion, but having traveled around the world with my violin, I find that Baltimore always holds a special place in my heart. It’s the city that opened my perspective and offered me incredible opportunities, and it’s where I’ve met some truly wonderful people. I love the city’s diversity and the fact that there’s always something to do, whether it’s relaxing in a park on Mt. Vernon or exploring its rich cultural scene. The architecture in Baltimore is also a standout, with its charming historical buildings and vibrant neighborhoods adding to the city’s unique character. It’s funny how sometimes Baltimore reminds me of Bogotá, the city where I grew up. As a city girl, I really appreciate the energy and opportunities that urban life provides. Baltimore offers ample opportunities for both performing and teaching music, and I truly appreciate the strong sense of community and mutual support here. Even though I don’t eat crabs, I enjoy the many restaurants and coffee shops that create welcoming spaces for different communities. After seven years in Baltimore, I’m still excited to explore more and continue sharing our unique musical experiences.”

You can see Ramilya and Nicolle performing concerts separately and together here at Govans for the next three years, starting Friday, October 4 at 7:00 p.m.!

Contact Marie at marie@govanspres.org to learn more.



Ramilya Saubanova
at the piano

Artist in Residence for the Concert Series at Govans

FRIDAY, OCT 4, 7:00PM
GOVANS SANCTUARY
5828 YORK RD, BALTIMORE,
MD

The concert will be followed by a light reception in Sharp Hall where you can meet and greet Ramilya.

GOVANS PRESBYTERIAN COMMUNITY

**GOVANS**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
5828 York Road
Baltimore, MD 21212
410-435-9188
www.govanspres.org

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



NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD DRIVE*

September 18 Bag Drop-off
September 21 Bag Pick-up

***See inside page 4 for details!**

**GOVANS**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH