

# Chimes



The Magazine of Gary United Methodist Church  
March/April 2026



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Chimes VOLUME LXXIV, ISSUE II

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## Sunday Worship

**9 a.m. & 11:11 a.m.**

In person  
Livestream and recording  
later in the day at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org)  
Nursery available

## Church Office Hours

Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.  
630–668–3100  
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*At Gary Church, our mission  
through Christ is to grow  
in joyful faith and serve all  
in love.*

## On our cover

Our Gary Youth enjoying some relaxation and rejuvenation at their annual **Winter Chill**. This year their theme was *Courageous Love*.

Submissions for the May/June *Chimes* magazine are due by noon on *Wednesday, April 1*. Announcements for the Sunday bulletin and weekly e-news are due each Monday at noon. Send all submissions to [office@garychurch.org](mailto:office@garychurch.org).

Gary Church uses photos and videos of adults taken at events, classes and worship for use in our printed and online publications and in social media unless an individual directs the church not to do so by completing a form available in the Church Office. We use photos or videos of minors only when their parents or guardians have given permission by signing the Gary Kids or Gary Youth registration forms, available at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org).

# Come, Lord Jesus!

I wonder what will happen in our community, our country and our world by the time you

***The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!***

**Revelation 22:20 NSRV**

read this. I guess it's impossible to predict. Global and local politics seem to be shifting quickly, yet what direction we will ultimately shift toward seems to be anyone's guess these days.

We don't know what is going to happen in our politics, but we have an unchanging hope in our Christian faith. Our hope is summarized in the second to last verse in the Bible. Revelation 22:20 basically says, Jesus is coming, and that is something to look forward to. In fact, pray for that. "Come, Lord Jesus!"

It doesn't matter what year, month or day it is — the prayer remains the same. Whether you read this in times of peace or while at war, this prayer does not change. Whether you lived in the first century, or live in the 21st century, our Christian prayer is consistent. "Come, Lord Jesus!"

I hope you will consider joining me in praying this prayer as we look toward the dawn of Easter morning 2026. It will remind you of several important things:

- Our hope lies beyond our current politics. Our hope is in Christ, not in the politician of the day. A human being can make things better or worse for a while, but only God can create a kingdom eternally built on love.
- The eternal kingdom of God unites us in a way that cannot be unraveled. God will be fully in charge, and the souls that reside there will have no desire to compete for that role. The souls that reside in the eternal kingdom rejoice that God's way is the only way.
- Loving God, and loving others as we love ourselves is the order of the day when Jesus comes. People will not need to fear being abandoned, oppressed or harmed. Nor will they need to manipulate others to get what they need.
- Each day of our earthly life is an opportunity to practice living in God's coming kingdom. In Luke 17:20-21, Jesus taught, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you."

Come, let us pray together in one voice, and live together as Christ's one body. Amen!

**Pastor Mary**



**Love**  
**Courageously**

1 Corinthians 16:14

# ADULT Christian Education and Discipleship

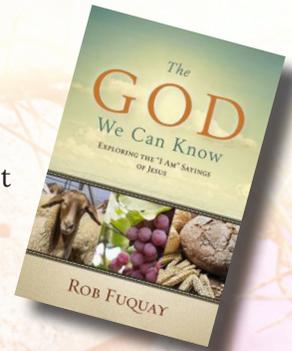
## Lenten studies

Sundays

### **The God We Can Know: Exploring the “I Am” Sayings of Jesus**

Sundays through March 29, 10:10 a.m., Anderson Room  
led by a team of pastors and biblical scholars

This study will build on Rob Fuquay’s *The God We Can Know*, aligning with our Lenten preaching series exploring the “I Am” sayings of Jesus. These significant yet beautifully ordinary images – bread, light, shepherd, vine and more – offer meaningful ways to experience Jesus and answer one of the most essential questions in the Christian faith, “Who do you say I am?” Book will be available for \$10, but reading is not required to attend the class.



Wednesdays

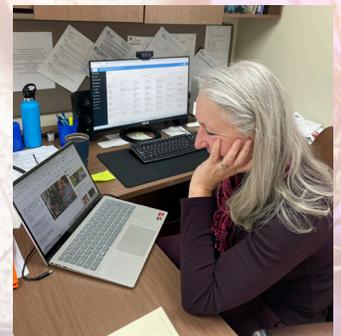
### **Cultivating a Resilient Faith in a Turbulent World**

A Lenten Study Over Zoom  
Wednesdays, March 4-April 1, 7 p.m., led by Pastor Mary Zajac

In *The Long Winter*, Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote about her father tying a guide-rope from the house to the barn during blizzards so he wouldn’t get lost while walking the short, well-worn path. It was a matter of planning ahead. He knew that storms can be dangerously disorienting. Yet he also knew that the animals needed to be tended every day.

We live in changing times that can be disorienting, and yet the work of Christ still needs to be done every day. Let’s gather during Lent to learn some spiritual practices that can serve as our guide-rope through turbulent times. We’ll discuss a new practice each week.

There’s no book needed for this journey. Participants will be asked to stay current with the news, and engage in a practice during the week. Register at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org) for the Zoom link.



### **Anti-Racist Book Club | *The Three Mothers: How the Mothers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and James Baldwin Shaped a Nation* by Anna Malaika Tubbs**

Wednesdays, March 25 (Parts 1-5) and April 22 (Parts 6-8), 7 p.m., led by Kim Austin

Berdis Baldwin, Alberta King and Louise Little were all born at the beginning of the 20th century and forced to contend with the prejudices of Jim Crow as Black women. These three extraordinary women passed their knowledge to their children with the hope of helping them survive in a society that would deny their humanity from the very beginning. These women used their strength and motherhood to push their children toward greatness, all with a conviction that every human being deserves dignity and respect despite the rampant discrimination they faced. Read the book on your own and register at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org).



## Sacred Jazz

Sundays, April 12 & 19, 10:10 a.m., Anderson Room, led by Dr. Deanna Witkowski

In advance of leading a jazz worship service on Sunday, April 26, Deanna Witkowski will present *Makes the Heart to Sing: Jazz in Worship*. On Sunday, April 12, the focus will be the liturgical music of Mary Lou Williams. On Sunday, April 19, Deanna will share from her own catalog of original choral, congregational and instrumental sacred jazz. Come ready to sing, listen and experience the sacred art of jazz. Books and CDs will be available for purchase at both classes.

Deanna Witkowski is a pianist, composer, author and scholar and winner of the 2002 Great American Jazz Piano Competition.



## Love Your Neighbor

Sunday, April 26, 10:10 a.m., Anderson Room, led by Dr. Andrew Decorte



This course will offer an immersive history of ‘love your neighbor as yourself’ – not as an abstract idea or moral imperative but as a world-shaping movement. We will explore the contemporary implications amid national events that the UMC Council of Bishops have described as causing “deep grief, concern and alarm,” centering the conversation on the embodied ethics of Jesus and the invincibility of love.

Andrew DeCort founded the Institute for Faith and Flourishing and cofounded the Neighbor-Love-Movement in Ethiopia, which has reached over 20 million people with the invitation to nonviolent spirituality.



## Creative Arts Open Studio Class

Saturday, March 7, 10-11:30 a.m.  
Gary Youth Rooms

Unleash your creativity in our Creative Arts Open Studio. This flexible, hands-on class invites participants to design and create a project of their choice in a welcoming, inspiring environment. The Creative Arts team will provide a wide range of materials, including:

- Drawing materials
- Watercolor and acrylic paints
- Mixed media paper canvas
- Collage supplies
- Creative writing prompts
- Illustration tools

Bring your own ideas, projects and materials from home, or use the materials provided – it’s all about your vision! Our experienced Creative Arts instructors will be available to offer guidance and support as you work.

Your masterpiece could be featured in our Art Gallery this June. Suggested donation: \$5 for materials. Register at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org).



**creative**  
**arts** ministry

## Young Adult Pastor's Lunch

Sundays, March 29 and April 26, 12:15 p.m.



Each month, our “post-High School/ college/ early on in adulthood/ probably in your 20s or 30s” adults are invited to join **Dan Lee** for lunch in downtown Wheaton on the last Sunday of the month. Our treat! We will meet at Door 5 and go out for lunch and fellowship. RSVP to Dan at [dlee@garychurch.org](mailto:dlee@garychurch.org) or just come!



## Hey Families!

We can't wait to be in ministry with you throughout the holy season of Lent. Blessings and see you Sunday!

## what we're teaching

### March Kids' Church and Sunday School Series **YOU'RE INVITED**

Getting invited to a party is one of the best feelings, and being left out is one of the worst. But there's good news – Jesus never leaves anyone out! He invites everyone to spend time with him, experience his love and share it with others. This series will remind kids that Jesus' invitation is always open, and we're never too far away to join the party! Kids will learn that **I'm invited to believe in Jesus, love like Jesus does, experience Jesus' miracles, ask Jesus for help and worship Jesus.**



### April Kids' Church and Sunday School Series **CLUE**

This series kicks off with the greatest news ever – Jesus is alive! But even his closest friends were surprised by what they discovered. Each week, kids will follow the clues in the Bible, looking at the stories leading up to Easter and connecting them to other moments in Jesus' life and ministry. Along the way, they'll see that the Bible isn't just full of clues about who Jesus is – it's the complete story of God's love. Kids will learn that **the Bible says Jesus is alive, the Bible tells us Jesus loves us, the Bible reveals who Jesus is and the Bible shows us how to share God's love.**



## what's happening

### Registration opens March 1 **Rainforest Falls VBS**

Monday, June 22–Thursday, June 25

Register your 4-year-old preschoolers through fourth graders for Vacation Bible School starting Sunday, March 1. We're also looking for volunteers! Register at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org).



### Parent's Night Out

Fridays, March 13 & April 10, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Drop off your kiddos at Gary Church and enjoy some well-deserved time away. Each month features a movie, craft and free play for kids ages preschool 3s through fifth grade. Limit 20. Suggested cash donation of \$5 per child. Register at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org).



### Love Snack Packs for DuPagePads

Friday, March 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Kids will learn about the DuPagePads ministry, assemble love snack packs, and hang with friends! Donations of individually packaged and sealed food items (like chips, beef jerky, nuts, protein bars, fruit snacks, granola bars, etc.) appreciated!

### Good Friday Dinner and Worship

Friday, April 3, 5 p.m.

Fourth and fifth grade fellowship students are invited to a special dinner with **Carey Williams Bebar** and **Dan Lee**, where they'll learn about Good Friday, attend worship together and participate in a powerful way.



### Camp Gary

Monday, March 30, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Looking for something fun for your kids to do on their day off from school? Kids will spend the morning playing, crafting, snacking and hanging out with friends. And if you need it, you'll have access to a quiet workspace stocked with coffee and donuts. **Registration is open for preschool 3s through fifth grade at garychurch.org.** We're also looking for volunteers (psst...high schoolers, this is an easy way to earn service hours!).

## Holy Week Events

### Telling the Story of Holy Week

Sunday, March 29, 10 a.m. Sunday School

During this rotation model Sunday School event, kids will journey through the story of Holy Week as they create resurrection eggs.

### Palm Sunday Parade

Sunday, March 29, 9 a.m. worship

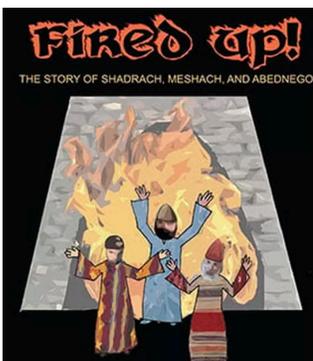


All Gary Kids are invited to join in a Palm Sunday Parade! We will gather in the Narthex (rear of the Sanctuary) at 9 a.m. Children will process with palms down the center aisle, place their branches on the altar, then sit with their families until Children's Time. Parents are encouraged to escort children age 5 and younger.

### Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 5, 10:15 a.m. Memorial Park

Grab your baskets and head to Memorial Park for a traditional Easter Egg Hunt. Easter egg donations needed! Please donate filled Easter eggs by *Friday, March 27*. Donations can be dropped off in the bin near the Missions bulletin board.



## Fired Up Musical plus Chili Cookoff and Auction

Sunday, March 15

**Musical:** 4-5 p.m., Activity Center

**Chili Cookoff and Auction:** 5-6:30 p.m. Commons

See page 15 for more information.





# Gary Youth

## Weekly Gathering Middle School

Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m., Youth Rooms  
(No meetings on March 11 and April 1)

## High School

Sundays, 6-7:30 p.m., Youth Rooms  
(No meetings on March 15 and April 5)

## Sunday School

10-11 a.m., Middle School and High School Rooms  
In April, Gary Youth will be looking at the Book of Daniel and what it means for us to be counter cultural.

On Easter Sunday, April 5, we will not have Sunday School.

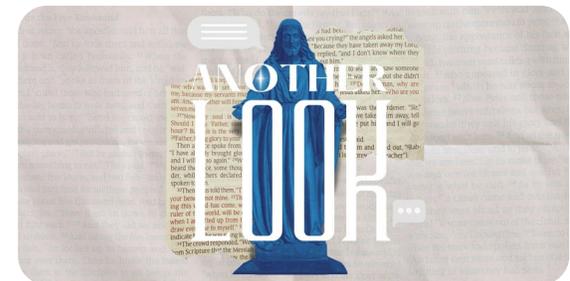
## What are we learning in March?

Whether you've gone to church your whole life or just started today, it's understandable if you have questions about God and the Bible, especially when some things seem unbelievable. But our doubts don't have to destroy our faith. We might just find our voice when we speak up about questions we have. In this series from the Book of John, we'll look at how Jesus met people where they were, how he's always listening and that even when we don't understand, we can trust God.



## What are we learning in April?

Have you ever had a conversation that opened your eyes to something you'd never thought about before? Or maybe someone asked you a single question that completely shifted your perspective. Words have the power to change everything, and that's never been more true than with Jesus. He asked questions that changed people's perspectives and caused them to take another look at themselves, their lives and what they believed about God. In this series from the Book of Luke, we'll discuss: What can you trust Jesus with today? How can we put Jesus' words into practice today?



## Stay connected

Visit [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org) and navigate to our youth page, receive weekly Gary Youth emails, plus follow us on Instagram ([gary\\_youth](#)) and Facebook ([Gary Youth](#)).

## Let us know



We want to celebrate your accomplishments and gifts! If you have a graduation, concert, game, exhibit, ceremony, party, etc. tell us about it. Fill out a form on our youth page at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org). We will do our best to attend and cheer you on.

# Upcoming events

## BLAST Camp

### Registration opens March 1

Monday, June 22- Thursday, June 25, 9 a.m.-noon



Incoming fifth through eighth graders are invited to a week of summer fun, missions and growing in faith together. At BLAST, campers will have the opportunity to partner with community organizations in hands-on mission. We will engage in team-building activities as we learn that we are one body, the church. And most importantly, we will have plenty of fun in the sun!

We need you to help make our campers feel loved. Adults and high school youth are invited to be camp leaders. Register to be a camper and/or a leader using the QR code below or at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org).



## Mindfulness with Mary Megan Bagnall

Middle School: Wednesday, April 22, 7-8:30 p.m.

High School: Sunday, April 19, 6-7:30 p.m.

Our youth are often bombarded by the stress of constant activity, expectations and achievements. Mindfulness can help students connect with themselves, with others, with this moment and with God. When we tune into God's presence, God is always available to us. **Mary Megan Bagnall** will lead our youth in embracing a practice of mindfulness that will help them find stillness and peace in body, mind and spirit.

## Mother's Day Gift Making

Middle School: Wednesday, April 29, 7-8:30 p.m.

High School: Sunday, April 26, 6-7:30 p.m.

**Lisa Grigsby** will lead our youth in a special craft that our youth can give for Mother's Day. Don't miss this opportunity to prepare something meaningful for all the mother figures in your life!

## Enchanted Castle

Wednesday, May 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

1103 S. Main St., Lombard



Middle schoolers will celebrate the end of the school year with some laser tag, arcade and pizza! We will meet at Enchanted Castle. Cost is \$12.50 (Each youth will be given \$10 credit to the arcades but feel free to bring extra money.) Check Gary Youth's weekly emails for sign-up information.

## Korean BBQ

Sunday, May 3, 6-7:30 p.m.



**Dan, Stacey and Mina Lee** invite high school youth to their house for a Korean BBQ dinner. If you need a ride, let us know when you sign up. Check Gary Youth's weekly emails for sign-up and location information.

## What has Gary Youth been up to?

Take a look at photos from some of our gatherings over the last few months.



# GARY CHURCH *makes a difference*

## Current mission needs

 **The People's Resource Center** needs volunteers, food for our hungry neighbors and clothing for the PRC clothes closet. Find more information at [peoplesrc.org](http://peoplesrc.org).

 **DuPagePads** (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) has a list of needed items, along with volunteer information for the Interim Housing Center in Downers Grove or the Client Access Center at 703 W. Liberty Dr. in Wheaton at [dupagepads.org](http://dupagepads.org).

 **Northern Illinois Law and Justice** (formerly Northern Illinois Justice for Our Neighbors) needs funding to help fight the legal battles immigrants face. Find more information at [nijfon.org](http://nijfon.org).

You can donate to the PRC, DuPagePads, Northern Illinois Law and Justice and many more missions at [garychurch.org/give](http://garychurch.org/give).

## Missions, by the numbers

Gary Church members volunteer countless hours to help missions. In 2025, Gary Church distributed \$118,593 to 36 causes. Our top missions were Christmas Sharing, Immigration Law & Justice Network (local & national), DuPagePads, UMCOR (United Methodist Committee On Relief) and Educate a Girl / Change the World.

## Educate a Girl 2026

### You can still participate

Many thanks to Gary Church for your support throughout the year and at the 2026 Bake Sale. The bake sale raised \$2,500, which will fund several scholarships in the coming year.



Bakers provided a large variety of delicious treats, and many braved the winter weather to buy, bid and eat. A special shout-out goes to the Gary Youth middle schoolers who made jars of trail mix, which flew off the shelves at the bake sale. Also, we appreciate the Gary Kids who wrote notes to the Educate a Girl scholarship recipients for their Helping Hands mission project.

This year, EAG also shared a video during worship, highlighting a few of the scholarship recipients who expressed their appreciation for Gary Church's support. We also joined the Voices of Hope adult education class to provide information about the challenges of girls' education in South Sudan. EAG is providing scholarships for two teens from South Sudan.

With your donations, we are able to help girls of all ages and many locations around the world receive life-changing education. Our goal is to support 15 girls and young women, including new recipients in Chicago, Cambodia and Kenya. **You can still donate** at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org) or through the Church Office.

## Gifts to last year-round

Our sincere thanks to all of you who helped make the Christmas missions Gary Church supports a great success; whether you helped physically, monetarily or through prayers, we were able to share love with our neighbors in need.



The Outreach Luncheon (with 15 Gary helpers and our financial support) provided a holiday celebration and treat for 142 seniors who might have otherwise had no real Christmas at all. Your support of the Heifer Project raised \$1,700 to provide livestock and help for families in need. Joy Circle distributed 80 pairs of mittens and gloves, and their Holiday Cookie Walk raised more than \$6,000 for various missions. Christmas Sharing at Gary Church served 108 families (220 adults and 287 children), providing 310 coats, plus loads of toys and books for the kids. The Oranges and Oreos project served 108 families (412 adults and 496 children). Thanks to the 68 registered Christmas Sharing volunteers at Gary Church (plus the Susanna Wesley Circle, Gary Kids and members helping at the St. John's food distribution).

Thank you to all who share the love of Christ at Christmas and throughout the year.

**Joe Ruth**, Missions Chair

## Gary's **GREEN TEAM** Spring ahead with the Green Team

The Green Team at Gary is excited about new opportunities to support our collective care for creation in 2026. Here are a few items to note, and be sure to watch the weekly e-news and bulletins for more detailed information:

### **Styrofoam Recycling**

*Sunday, April 19, 8:45-10:30 a.m., South Driveway*

We could use more volunteers to collect and/or drive material to Dart Container Corp in Aurora. Many thanks to **Bob Barnes** and **Paula & Fred Wayland** for keeping three carloads of Styrofoam out of the landfill.

### **Illinois Prairie Path Cleanup**

*Saturday, April 25, morning, Prairie Path*

Gary Church supports the annual Illinois Prairie Path cleanup. Watch for more details about how to sign up.

### **One Earth Film Fest**

*Wednesday, April 22-Sunday, April 26, various locations*

We are not hosting a watch party this year but encourage you to attend at another location. Check out [oneearthfilmfest.org](http://oneearthfilmfest.org) for details.

### **Creation Care focus**

*Sundays, May 3-17*

In worship, we will focus on creation care. Between services, we will have opportunities for adult education. More details in the next *Chimes*.



### **CROP Walk**

*Sunday, May 3, 1 p.m. check in, 2 p.m. walk, host church to be determined*

The 2026 CROP Walk raises funds for and awareness of the ever-present food insecurity issues in DuPage County and around the world. Portions of our CROP funds support DuPage Seniors, the People's Resource Center and Glen House Food Pantry.

Donate and/or register to walk at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org). Donations are welcome through the end of May. Contact **Judy Selby** through the Church Office with questions.



### **Prescription for Life fundraiser to begin**

Pick up a prescription bottle on *Sunday, April 12*, and fill it with money to help seniors at the Outreach Community Center in Carol Stream. Isolation, poor access to social services, limited access to shopping and medical visits because of lack of transportation, lack of community and social connections are just a few things that plague the seniors who receive assistance. Many of the seniors live on an income of \$15,000-\$20,000 with no one to reach out to in the event of an emergency.



Outreach supports seniors with many programs including health support, the friendly visitor program, casework assistance, social activities, the Christmas party and more. Gary Church and First Presbyterian Church have partnered with the center since 2006.

You can fill a bottle with your loose change (bills and checks are ok too!), donate at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org), or write a check. Please donate by *Sunday, May 3*. Questions? Contact **Barb Holmes** or **Holly Trueblood** through the Church Office. Look for more information in the e-news.

## Plants with a Purpose

Orders due *Sunday, March 15*

Pick up plants *midday on Saturday, May 2*

You can support the ministries and missions of Gary Church while beautifying your home. Last year's proceeds of \$3,150 benefitted several missions, including Christmas Sharing, Educate a Girl, Gary Gardeners, Habitat for Humanity, Immigration Law and Justice, Radical Time Out and Sharing a Story.



Q: Would you enjoy a cheerful splash of color on your porch or patio this summer?

A: We have pre-planted pots and baskets of beautiful flowers for you!

Q: Do you love to create your own combo pots, or plant flower beds around your yard?

A: We have 4-packs, accents and premium plants for you!

Q: Do you like to cook with fresh home-grown tomatoes, peppers and basil?

A: We have those, too!

Q: Is help needed on delivery day?

A: YES! Adults and youth are welcome to help with unloading the plants and sorting them into individual orders on *Saturday, May 2*, between approximately 8 a.m. and 1 p.m.



Order through [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org) or pick up a paper order form in the Commons. Got more questions? Contact **Linda Tresner** through the Church Office.



# *Fired Up* Musical

Sunday, March 15, 4 p.m.

and

# Chili Cookoff and Auction

Sunday, March 15, 5-6:30 p.m.

You are invited to a night of fun, fellowship and the lighthearted re-telling of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego! Gary Kids and Gary Youth have been practicing for months to share this musical with the message that we follow a loving God worthy of trust.

Enjoy the *Fired Up* musical, eat dinner and make bids at the auction. We need chilis, soups, desserts and auction items. If you can help, please register by *Sunday, March 1* at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org). The cooks who make the crowd-favorite chilis and soups will earn the Golden Ladle Trophy.

Suggested donation of \$10 per person; \$20 per family at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org). All proceeds will be used to help fund the Gary Youth mission trip this summer with the Appalachian Service Project. If you have any questions, please contact the Church Office or **Dan Lee** at [dlee@garychurch.org](mailto:dlee@garychurch.org).



## **Wesley Festival: An Afternoon of Hymns and Singing** Saturday, April 18, 3 p.m., Sanctuary

Enjoy an afternoon of **Bill Phemister** on the piano, sharing the music from his latest album, "And Can It Be." You'll have a chance to participate in singing hymns with the words from Charles Wesley, followed by a reception in the Commons. Free and open to the public, with an opportunity for a freewill donation.

# Volunteer Appreciation Month Spotlight:

## A peek “behind the scenes”

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and we are grateful for all those who serve here at Gary Church year round. This month we want to highlight the many folks who help worship run smoothly and ensure our Sunday mornings include an abundance of loving hospitality.

Our beautiful paraments change throughout the year and are updated by **Kara Calderwood**. Members of our Creative Arts Ministry continue to evaluate our paraments and some newer pieces were made by **Linda Tresner**.

**Betsy Boyd** provides the altar flowers each week with assistance from **Stephanie Dalton** who coordinates flowers on certain dates.

Communion is prepared by **Casey** and **Judy Webb** on the first Sunday of every month. **Leigh Ann Gaul** and **Melinda Keske** prepare the table on the third Sunday at 11:11 a.m. Several communion servers offer their time during worship distributing the bread and cup.

Our Scripture readers share God’s word during worship, taking time to read, practice and convey each verse with intention. Throughout the year **Cindy Plate** organizes and schedules our Scripture readers.

Recently **Karen Binkerd** and **Rebekah Stoneberg** started serving as our baptism coordinators, helping to prepare the Sanctuary and welcome families as they arrive.

Almost every service at Gary Church is live-streamed and recorded in order to offer a welcoming, accessible virtual worship experience for all those outside our physical walls. On average, almost half of those worshipping each week attend online, made possible by our AV Team.

Members of our Welcome Team generously offer warmth, hospitality, kindness and attention to all who enter our doors. They also complete a myriad of tasks before, during and after every worship service. Our greeters, ushers and Welcome Desk hosts continue to answer God’s call to serve in this vital ministry.

Our Special Blend Team, led by coordinator **Larry Blackburn**, provide us all with hot coffee, tea and delicious treats every week. They bake, brew, prepare, set up, clean up and add fun touches to our fellowship time on Sunday mornings. Recently our Green Team partnered with Special Blend to identify ways we can improve our sustainability efforts. We are especially grateful to **Joe** and **Jennifer Ruth** who gifted us with be Special Blend for many years.

Our Care Card artists create beautiful cards throughout the year. **Nancy Turner** and **Barbara Holmes** write them out every week for all of us to sign.

**Cheryll Kelly, Barb Holmes, Nancy Brunner, Kim Tresner** and **Dan Wible** assist our office staff each week with numerous tasks. From proofreading bulletins and other worship materials to creating production elements for the AV Team, their contributions provide essential support for worship. We are blessed by the loving and generous service of all those who endeavor “behind the scenes” to help us keep growing in joyful faith together. Thank you, volunteers! If you are interested in joining any of these ministry teams, please contact the Church Office.



# Gary's directory is online

## Get the church app; update photos for the online directory

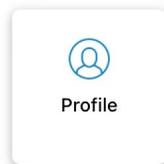
Do you know about the Gary Church app? Do you have a photo you like in the online directory? If you answered “no” to either of these questions, please read on!

The Gary Church app puts the church calendar, membership directory, worship recordings, event sign-up, online giving and more at your fingertips. Get started by opening your device's app store. Search and download “Church by MinistryOne.”

Once downloaded and opened, you will be asked to “Find Your Church.” Type “Gary United Methodist” or the Zip code “60187,” and select Gary United Methodist Church when it appears in your search.

Once Gary Church is selected, you should see a screen like this:

For full access to all the information available, please scroll to the Profile tile and click it to sign in.



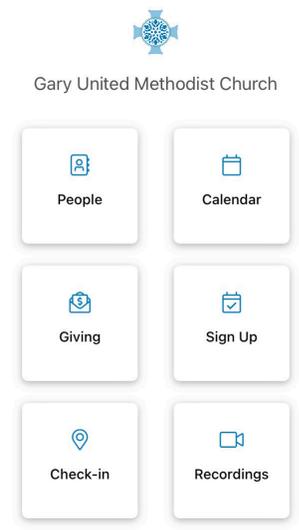
You can sign in using your email and mobile phone number. (If your email and phone number do not match exactly with our database, there may be a slight delay while we verify the login.) If you have problems signing in, please contact **Deb Evans** through the Church Office.

Once signed in, you will have the use of all the app's features. Please be sure to verify your information in the Profile tile. You can also add or change your photo there.

## Photo opportunity

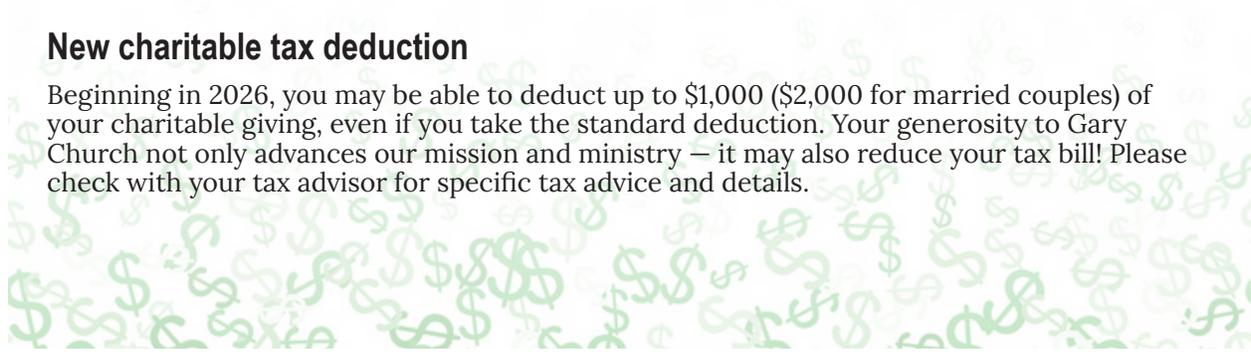
*Sunday, March 1, between worship services, Commons Parlor area*

A photographer will be available to take your photo for the app. Staff will also help with any questions about downloading or navigating the app.



## New charitable tax deduction

Beginning in 2026, you may be able to deduct up to \$1,000 (\$2,000 for married couples) of your charitable giving, even if you take the standard deduction. Your generosity to Gary Church not only advances our mission and ministry — it may also reduce your tax bill! Please check with your tax advisor for specific tax advice and details.



# Welcome new members!

**Rebekah and Jason Stoneberg** have been a part of the Wheaton community for over 20 years. Having first met as undergraduates at Wheaton College, they will celebrate 19 years of marriage in January. Jason has worked in the investment management industry for over two decades. Rebekah is currently a second-year graduate student in a clinical mental health counseling program. Their sons, Liam and Jacob, attend local Wheaton schools and enjoy music, art, tennis, golf and basketball. Rebekah is a member of Gary's Creative Arts team, and Liam is currently a confirmand.

The Stoneberg family was drawn to Gary United Methodist Church by its welcoming spirit and its commitment to serving the broader Wheaton community. They are grateful for the opportunity to be incorporated into the living body of Christ, publicly affirming their commitment to Gary United Methodist Church, and they praise and thank God for the grace he extends through shared life, worship and service.

**Welcome, Stonebergs!**



## Exploring Membership

We will receive new members during worship on *Sundays, March 15 and April 19.*

### Exploring Membership

*Sunday, March 22, 10 a.m., Chapel*

Get better acquainted with pastors and staff, learn more about what it means to be United Methodist and about the history of our Gary Church congregation. Register at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org) if you plan to attend. Questions? Contact **Jennifer Castino**, [jcastino@garychurch.org](mailto:jcastino@garychurch.org).

### Exploring Membership Lunch

*Sunday, April 12, 12:15 p.m., Commons*

Interested in learning more about Gary Church? Would you like to chat with our pastors about membership or our many missions and ministries? Join Pastors **Mary Zajac** and **Daniel Cochran** for a casual lunch followed by a building tour! Register at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org). If you have questions, please contact **Jennifer Castino**, [jcastino@garychurch.org](mailto:jcastino@garychurch.org).

## Mark your calendar



### Gary Golf Outing to benefit Gary Youth

*Sunday, Aug. 2, tee times begin at 1 p.m., Klein Creek Golf Club*

If you're dreaming of summer, set aside an afternoon in August for golf, fellowship and fun. All proceeds benefit the Gary Youth program. Watch the e-news for registration information.

## February birthdays\*

We are so sorry we missed this February birthday! Let's celebrate all year long.

### Happy (90+) birthday to:

Beverly Land

## March birthdays\*

### Happy (90+) birthday to:

Joan Stevens  
George Smith

## March anniversaries\*

### Happy (50+) anniversary to:

Gene & Deb Green  
Steve & Barbara Wernicke  
John & Cheryl Trent

## April birthdays\*

### Happy (90+) birthday to:

Daniel Fridley  
Joyce Fahs

## April anniversaries\*

### Happy anniversary (50+) to:

Dick & Julie Raab  
Joe & Jennifer Ruth

## Congratulations!

Anne and Craig Dettmann on the birth of their son, Joseph, on Dec. 27. Grandparents are Jack and Lisa Rozwat.

## Baptisms

Owen Prout, son of John and Erin Prout, on Jan. 18

Brooklyn Keate, daughter of Rebecca Keate and Timothy Mitchell, on Feb. 15.

Isaac O'Malley, son of Michael and Christina O'Malley, on Feb. 15.

## New opportunities

Joan Long and Andy Long on their move to Oklahoma.

Juanita Hobbs on her move to Tennessee.

## Our sympathy

Reg and Barbara Heeley on the death of Barbara's brother, Douglas Brian Clark, on Dec. 3.

Michelle, Nic, Adalynn and Landon Younkin on the death of Michelle's uncle, Bob Cotton, on Dec. 18.

Bonnie Wheaton, Anne, Matt, Will and Kate Wanzenberg, on the death of former Gary member, Mary Tylman, Bonnie's sister-in-law and Anne's aunt, on Dec. 19.

Grant, Abbey and Jace Davis on the death of Abbey's great-grandfather, Rev. Thomas Jarrell, on Jan. 1.

Michael and Donna Capra on the death of Michael's cousin, Domenico, on Jan. 5.

Pam Keller, Hanna Keller, Dani and Matt Huppert and their family, on the death of their husband and father, Bruce, on Jan. 14.

Marge Merriman on the death of her nephew, Timothy Zymanski, on Jan. 26.

The family of Patricia Sullivan. Pat passed away on Jan. 29.

Scott and Betsy Boyd on the death of Scott's stepfather, Roger, on Feb. 4.

Bob and Virginia Isgren on the death of Virginia's brother, John Dufour, on Feb. 5.

\*If we've missed your special day, please contact the Church Office. We'd love to include the date in our records.

## New this year for Lent

### Gary Knitters provide prayer squares

When Gary knitters knit blankets for baptism, afghans for high school graduates and prayer shawls, they pray for the recipients. This year for Lent, they decided to expand their reach, and they knit prayer squares for the entire congregation.

Take a square from the basket in the Commons. Hold it in your hands when you pray, and know that it was knit with love. Feel the warmth and texture of the fiber. Trace the cross formed by some stitches. Enjoy this gift.



### Thank you

Dear Gary Church friends,  
Thank you for your prayers and for the lovely card. My procedure went well, in part due to your beautiful caring.

Love & Gratitude,  
**Nan Krull**

To Gary United Methodist Church,  
Andy and I have moved to a retirement facility in Norman, Oklahoma where we will be close to family. We will miss our friends and our life in Wheaton (57 years). Gary Church has been special for us, and we send best wishes to all.

With love,  
**Joan Long**

There are not enough words to fully express our heartfelt gratitude for the sympathy, love and support you have extended to our family during this time of loss.

Thank you,  
**The Ewoldts**

I'm so grateful for the cards, calls, emails, food, conversation, medical equipment and encouragement during my recent recovery from surgery. The warm embrace of the Gary Church family certainly is speeding my healing!

**Elaine McCluskey**

Gary United Methodist Church friends,  
I would like to thank you for the lovely card I received from you and the Christian love you shared with me through it. Although I do not know many of you who signed it, still it meant a great deal to me. My daughter (**Liesl Mann**) introduced me to each of you when she read your names. And so, in the Body of Christ, we are part of the Family of God.

I attend the 9 a.m. service online. I appreciate the phone calls from **Holly Trueblood** who checks in on me from time to time. Gary Church has become my church and through folk like you I am being ministered to. Thank you.

Grace and Peace,  
**Warren D. Pettis**

Thank you Gary Church for all you have done to help make this time a little easier. Losing our wonderful Bruce has been an abrupt change and a lot of pain for our family. I feel so blessed to have each and every one of you in my life. You have stood by my side and reached out to us in every way. All of your offers and efforts to help have not gone unnoticed and we are so thankful. I don't know where I would be without you. I am forever grateful to have this wonderful church and all of your friendships surrounding me.

**Pam Keller and family**

# Holy Week and Easter

## Palm Sunday

March 29, 9 a.m. and 11:11 a.m., Sanctuary

A week before Easter, Palm Sunday marks the “triumphal entry” of Jesus into Jerusalem. We remember that he was welcomed as a king but then, by week’s end, betrayed and crucified. We reflect on both our faith and faithlessness with vibrant worship services at 9 a.m. and 11:11 a.m., including waving palms.

## Maundy Thursday

April 2, 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m., Gary Commons

On this holy night we remember the Last Supper and the new commandment or “mandatum” that Jesus gives to the disciples after he washed their feet: to love one another, just as he loves them. This worship service will take place in the Gary Commons. We will enjoy a soup supper, Holy Communion and an opportunity to wash each other’s hands or feet as a sign of our humble service to others.

**Register for the soup supper at [garychurch.org](http://garychurch.org).**

## Good Friday

April 3, 7 p.m., Sanctuary

All are invited to observe this solemn day commemorating the crucifixion and death of Jesus with a Tenebrae (“shadows”) worship experience. Together we will meditate on the sacrifice of Jesus through Scripture and song as we slowly extinguish the lights of the church, leaving in relative darkness and silence until we meet again on Easter morning.

## Easter Sunday

April 5, Outdoor sunrise worship at 6:30 a.m.

Sanctuary worship at 9 a.m. and 11:11 a.m.

## “Christ Is Risen; Christ Is Risen Indeed!”

All are welcome to an outdoor sunrise service at 6:30 a.m. on the lawn between the Main Street doors and the Wesley Center. This brief service of word and song will include Holy Communion.

Worship in the Sanctuary will have nearly identical services at 9 a.m. and 11:11 a.m., featuring wonderful music and a joyful Easter message.

At 10:15 a.m., everyone is invited to the annual Easter egg hunt in *Memorial Park*.

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[See page 19 for more details.](#)