

Chimes

The Newsletter of Gary Church
and Winfield Community Church
December 2020



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Sunday Worship

Livestream at 9 a.m.
at garychurch.org

Recording online later in the morning

Church Office Hours

Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–3 p.m.
by appointment, 630–668–3100



Submissions for the February *Chimes* newsletter are due by January 15. Announcements for the Sunday bulletin and weekly enews are due each Tuesday at noon. Send all submissions to office@garychurch.org.

Gary and Winfield Churches use 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 on our website.

Sharing the Light of Christ

As we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, so too have we prepared our building to shine light into the season, welcoming our community to join us in celebrating “Love’s Pure Light” and the hope and peace found in Jesus.



Prepare Your Heart

by Rev. Dr. Chris Pierson

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. John 1:9

Really, it seems impossible that we are trying to prepare our hearts for Christmas when for some of us the last time we saw one another was during Lent. We were at about the half-way point in the season of Lent, looking forward to a meaningful Holy Week, and singing Hallelujahs again as we celebrated the raising of Jesus on Easter morning when the global coronavirus pandemic led to the suspension of in-person worship gatherings.

Lent is often described as a wilderness experience and in many ways it is as if we are still living in the wilderness, uncertain of what lies ahead. Still, we committed ourselves to “stay at home” as an expression of love to care for ourselves and our families, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We committed ourselves to “flattening the curve.” Yet, here we are again. I grieve the loss of being together in community to fully embrace the season of Advent and Christmas.

As positivity rates began to rise across the world and in our community, we began to face reality. Advent and Christmas, this year, would be radically different. The Christmas holiday for many is the one time of the year that we get to spend time with family members from across the country and around the world.

Although Advent and Christmas will be markedly different due to our inability to gather together as a faith community, even COVID-19 can't stop the spirit of Christmas. We will decorate the sanctuary. And, I encourage you to decorate your home, if not for family and friends who will not be coming, consider doing it for yourself. Yes, for yourself. More importantly, prepare your home and your heart for the coming of Christ.

I encourage you to light candles with us the four Sundays during Advent as we focus on Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love and as we explore *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes*. I invite you to engage in daily meditations and prayer as a spiritual discipline through our podcast. Whether in the comfort of your home or outside Gary Church, I encourage you to light a candle and sing “Silent Night” on Christmas Eve as we celebrate “Love’s Pure Light,” the true light, which enlightens everyone, that came into the world.

TOGETHER WITH GOD

*For we are co-workers in God's service;
you are God's field, God's building.*

1 CORINTHIANS 3:9 NIV

Environmentalist Bill McKibben once said, "There is no ideal Christmas; only the one Christmas you decide to make as a reflection of your values, desires, affections, traditions." These words are an encouragement to me. We have found numerous ways to have a meaningful Advent and Christmas season and have also found ways to carry that spirit into Epiphany that are detailed in the pages that follow.

Finally, I invite you, in those difficult moments, to meditate upon this prayer by Henri Nouwen:

*Lord Jesus,
Master of both the light and the darkness,
send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas.
We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.
We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.
We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom.
We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.
We are your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light.
To you we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"*

~ Henri J.M. Nouwen

Congregational Care

Thank You

Hello Friends and Gary Gardeners, A big THANK YOU goes out to the dozen or so in the clean-up fall crew! Thank you, Boy Scouts for pitching in. Also, Liesl Mann has offered to deliver greens from her family evergreen farm. We will use them in the outdoor pots. Many thanks!

~ George & Linda Masek

Thank you to the Gary Church family and the Gary Cares Team for the notes, calls, and prayers. They mean a lot to me because of the limited outside contact that I've had since the COVID-19 restrictions were implemented in March.

~ Bev Jones

Thanks to my church family for your cards, care, and support to me and my family. That has given me the support I needed. May God bless all of my church family.

~ Marge Merriman

Thank you so much for all the cards and letters. They have been a joy to receive and have cheered me up immensely.

~ Sandra Thacker

Congratulations

Verla Jefferson and Debbie Riley on the birth of their great-grandson and grandson, Matthew Taylor Krick, on October 27

Our Sympathy

Holly Trueblood on the death of her step-brother-in-law, Ron Cheek, on November 13

Reg & Barbara Heeley on the death of Reg's brother, Fredrick Heeley, on November 15

Bernard & Susan McGuan on the death of Bernard's step-father, Jack Doyle, on November 25



Advent Devotions with the Pastor Brian Podcast

Daily through January 6

Advent is a wonderful time to start a new tradition...or continue a favorite one in a slightly different way! You can create your own Advent Wreath with four candles and any décor you like and use it with the Pastor Brian Podcast to bring the light of Christ into your home. Every day of Advent and the following 13 days of Christmas, these 10-minute podcasts will concentrate on all of Jesus' birth stories in the Bible (read by Gary Church members and special guests), as well as provide a time for you to light the Advent wreath, sing, and of course pray. Simply subscribe to the Pastor Brian Podcast wherever you get podcasts (or at www.pastorbrianpodcast.com).

These podcasts are made with people who do not or are just beginning to pray in mind...so share it with friends and family who want to start something new in their walk with Christ! We hope too that you will feel connected to other Gary members participating in this same practice. So place your phone in the middle of your family table next to your Advent Wreath, push play, and experience the excitement of the coming of our Lord and Savior together.

Love's Pure Light: A Service of Music and Scripture

Sunday, December 20, livestreamed at 9 a.m. at garychurch.org

Our worship services during the Sundays of Advent will focus on the light of hope, peace, joy, and love—with a special focus on music and scripture on the fourth Sunday. Familiar Gospels and beloved carols will tell again the wondrous story of Christ's birth. A string ensemble, percussion, silvery bells, the rich timbres of the Steinway and the mighty organ—these are the gifts we bring to honor the King. We invite you to continue to prepare your heart for Christmas.



The Longest Night Service

Monday, December 21, recorded and available at garychurch.org and on Vimeo beginning at 5 p.m.

This quiet meditative worship service not only makes time for remembering but also gives us an opportunity to share our hurting places with God. This year, it may be particularly difficult to prepare your heart for the coming of Christ and feel the joy of the season, especially if you have lost a loved one or if you have experienced some other type of loss. This service is an opportunity to remember loved ones, acknowledge loss, and step aside from the regular rhythm. We invite you to join us for this special evening of worship.



Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve Service

Thursday, December 24, recorded and available at garychurch.org and on Vimeo beginning at 4 p.m.

Experience music, joy, and community in worshiping Jesus Christ from your home! Our Christmas Eve service will be intergenerational and meant for everyone. Children will tell us the Christmas story (in their own words), our amazing virtual choir will sing a Christmas hymn, and we will enjoy a photo montage of past Christmas Eve services. Of course, there will be fun surprises, additional excellent music, a powerful sermon, and ways for you to participate in your home. We are sad to not be able to worship together in person. However, the Christmas Eve Service will be available any time *after 4 p.m. on Thursday, December 24* that fits your schedule. Enter into the amazing story of the incarnation and the light of salvation Christ brings!

Silent Night by Carillon and Candlelight

Thursday, December 24, 7 p.m. outside Gary Church

Join in one of Gary's most beloved traditions as we gather outdoors on Christmas Eve to sing "Silent Night" by candlelight. Our voices will fill the air and our candles will light the night as our carillon leads the Christmas hymn at 7 p.m.

Please arrive early to find parking at Gary Church, Hultgren Funeral Home, Clare Woods Academy, or any side street. Luminaries will glow in a perimeter around the building and adjacent sidewalks, showing proper distancing of six feet. (People of the same household may stand closer together.)

Be sure to dress for the weather, and all carolers over the age of two will wear masks. You may bring your own candles (or flashlights or cell phones!). We will be in place at 7 p.m., light our candles, and sing four stanzas of "Silent Night." You may find the lyrics on the back page, in the Advent booklet mailed to your home, or online at garychurch.org.

*Let's share "Love's Pure Light" with one another and
with our community on Christmas Eve.*



Adult Christian Education and Discipleship

Worship Talk

*Sundays, 11 a.m. on Zoom
facilitated by Rev. JoAnne Chase*

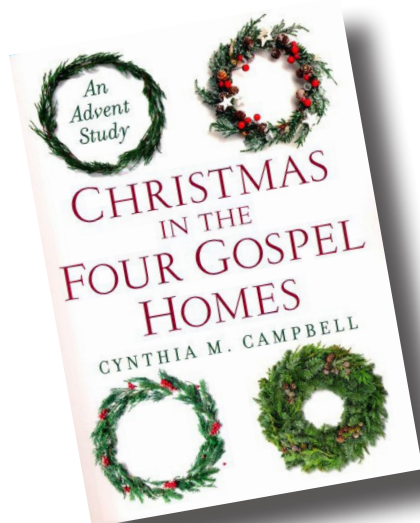
We love the connection created by this group and welcome others to be part of the conversation. Grab your cup of coffee, click on the Worship Talk link on the website, and join the discussion of the morning service.



Advent Study | Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes

*Mondays, through December 21
7 p.m. on Zoom*

How might a house look for Christmas based on what each Gospel says about it? In *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes*, beautiful illustrations from architect Kevin Burns reimagine each of the four Gospels as a “house,” which the church visits at Christmas. In each section, author Cynthia M. Campbell reflects on the distinct perspective of the birth of Jesus or the incarnation offered by each Gospel. Register on the Adult Study Opportunities page of our website for this creative and inspired discussion on the true meaning of Christmas and the light it brings to every heart and home.



Anti-Racism Book Club

*Wednesday, December 16
7 p.m. on Zoom*

With the hustle and bustle of the holidays upon us, this month's Anti-Racism Book Club is shifting gears to watch the critically acclaimed film **13th**. Filmmaker Ava DuVernay explores the history of racial inequality in the United States, focusing on the fact that the nation's prisons are disproportionately filled with African-Americans. Nominated for the Academy Award for Best Documentary and winner of the Emmy Award for Outstanding Documentary, this fiercely intelligent film is a “must see.” Participants can view the movie on their own and join in the conversation.



Want to read ahead? Get started on the January Anti-Racism Book Club selection, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson, and save the date for our conversation on January 27.

Spiritual Practices for the New Year

*Mondays, January 4 and 11
7 p.m. on Zoom
led by Kimberly Penrod Pelletier*

Worry is so 2020. Engage some fresh, pandemic-proof spiritual practices in the New Year. Start 2021 off with solid teaching and guided experiences in meditation and Gospel contemplation—both to renew your mind and heal your soul. These classes are based in Scripture, grounded in Christian tradition, and backed by neuroscience.

Kimberly Penrod Pelletier is a spiritual director, writer, speaker, and podcaster. She is passionate about journeying alongside others as they discern the invitation and movements of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Her work has been featured by Loyola Press, *Christianity Today*, Herald Press, *The Mudroom*, and *The Redbud Post*. She is the creator of the course *Meditating with Christ*. You can connect with her and download a free, guided meditation at <https://kimberlypenrodpelletier.com>.



Gary Youth | Christmas Trees Around the World

Monday, December 28, time determined by you

Did you know that every year, the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago presents beautiful Christmas Trees from all over the world? Let's go and see them together! In normal circumstances, we would go as a group, at the same time. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we invite families to purchase tickets and get to the museum on their own.

Visit tickets.msichicago.org to purchase tickets for your family for Monday, December 28. In order to avoid a bigger crowd, we encourage the 9:30, 10:30, or 11:30 a.m. time slots. We will also be able to run into each other!

Please send pastor Dan an email at dlee@garychurch.org when you purchase tickets!

*The museum will provide refunds in all circumstances so please sign up even if you are not sure of your availability or even if you don't feel confident in where we are with COVID-19.

Pricing
Adults: \$21.95
Child: \$12.95

December Youth Activities

Our December schedule includes more interesting and challenging questions from our Re:Form curriculum early in the month. Come explore them together! Then let's have fun as we celebrate the season!

Re:Form: Did Jesus know he was God?

Middle School: *Wednesday, December 2, 7–8:30 p.m. on Zoom*

High School: *Sunday, December 6, 6–7:30 p.m. on Zoom*

Jesus was all about reaching out to people. He taught, healed, fed, loved, and forgave them of their sins, but have you ever wondered if Jesus knew he was God while doing all those things? Let's grow together!

Re:Form: Is believing in Jesus really the only way to get to heaven?

Middle School: *Wednesday, December 9, 7–8:30 p.m. on Zoom*

High School: *Sunday, December 13, 6–7:30 p.m. on Zoom*

In John chapter 14, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Does this really mean Jesus is the only way to get to heaven? Let's find out together!

Gary Youth Christmas Parties

Middle School: *Wednesday, December 16, 7–8:30 p.m. *in the Activity Center*

High School: *Sunday, December 20, 6–7:30 p.m. *in the Activity Center*

Gary Youth are invited to come and jingle all the way! We are going to have a trivia game to see how much you really know about Christmas and play other hilarious games. Come wearing your most ugly Christmas sweater for our ugly sweater contest! There will be prizes. Also, bring a unisex wrapped gift for our white elephant gift exchange. Gift must be new and cost between \$10 to \$15.



*Please note that in-person events may need to be changed to meet COVID-19 restrictions.



Hey Parent! You have probably heard the story of Jesus's birth many, many times before. You may have even played baby Jesus, Mary, or Joseph as a kid! Even though you have heard the story of baby Jesus' birth several times by now, your kids have not. To them, it is still a fairly new story that they usually only hear once a year. Help them feel the wonder and excitement of Christmas each week by setting aside time for your family to learn about the true meaning of Christmas.

what we're teaching

In this four-week series kids will learn the real reason we celebrate! They will hear that we can celebrate God; we can celebrate Jesus' birth: we can worship God; and we can celebrate God because God keep his promises.



what's happening

Gary Kids @ Home Lessons

Weekly, sent by email on Friday or Saturday

Check out these weekly emails with a family friendly Bible lesson, activity, preschool video, and Grow T.V. video!

Take-Home Craft Kits

Families will find this month's craft in the Advent Gift Bags, which were distributed to the congregation. Teach your child the story of Jesus' birth by creating a beautiful 3D Paper Lantern!

Zoom Christmas Party

Sunday, December 13 at 2 p.m. on Zoom

All children ages preschool 3s-grade 5 are invited to a virtual Christmas party with actual fun! Join Pastor Carey online for this special Christmas celebration!

Helping Hands Mission

Kids Above All Holiday Gift Drive

Donations accepted through December 15

Gary Kids are supporting the Kids Above All Holiday Gift Drive. This year more than ever, Kids Above All needs unwrapped toy donations for children and youth of all ages. Toys can be brought to the Church Office or contact Carey Williams Bebar to schedule a pick-up.

4th & 5th Grade Fellowship Gingerbread House Party

Saturday, December 12, 2-3:30 p.m.

Fourth and fifth graders are invited to decorate gingerbread houses in Gary's Activity Center and then play a few socially-distanced Christmas games. RSVP to Carey Williams Bebar at cbebar@garychurch.org.

Please note that this event is subject to change if Tier 3 mitigation measures remain in effect the week of December 12. If they do, we will reschedule for Friday, December 18 at 7 p.m. on Zoom. Gingerbread houses will be delivered to registered participants before the Zoom party.





Fun with Gary Kids @Home Lesson activities!



A Recommendation from our Gary Kids Librarian, Sarah Kovac

These past several months have brought on situations that have been tough to handle. A great way to bridge the gap uncomfortable topics can create is through books. Because of this, we will be sharing a book each month to help you connect with your children. For this month, we recommend *The Rabbit Listened* by Cori Doerrfeld. In this picture book, a child's block tower is knocked over, and he needs someone to let him feel his anger and sadness. The holiday season is going to look a lot different than in years past, and it is natural that we will be feeling some grief about the temporary loss of traditions. This book will help your family acknowledge and process these feelings.

resource of the month

Advent Blocks

This set of blocks helps kids—and parents!—anticipate the birth of Jesus, and not just presents. This practice is a tangible, Bible-based, 25-day guide to creating an exciting environment in the home around God coming to earth. Check out advent-blocks.com to learn more.



Holiday **MISSIONS**

As you read this edition of the *Chimes*, the election is just a memory, Thanksgiving has past, and Advent is well underway. Many of us have much to be grateful for and to celebrate but, unfortunately, the pandemic and recession are still exacting a toll on many members of our communities. So we ask you to consider extending your Christmas generosity to help the homeless through PADS and the food insecure through PRC or Outreach Community Ministries. Please also consider reaching out further through a gift to UMCOR or Feed My Starving Children. On a lighter note, consider a gift to Heifer International and dedicate it as a gift for someone you love.

May the Light of Christ gladden your heart this Christmas and keep you and yours safe through the pandemic.

Have a blessed Holiday
~ **Gary Missions Team**

Christmas Peace and a Pillow for a Senior

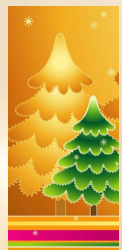
There is still time to contribute to the Christmas celebration for the seniors supported by the Outreach Community Center. Due to the COVID-19 virus, there won't be a Christmas Luncheon, which the seniors look forward to each year. Instead, they will receive a special holiday box meal along with a gift of a new bed pillow, handmade pillowcase, and a touchless door opener pusher device, all of which will be delivered to each of them on December 18. Please help make their Christmas a joyful one and let them know that others care by sending your donation to the church *by December 13*, noting Outreach in the memo section on your check. If you have questions, please contact Barbara Holmes through the Church Office.

Heifer Project Alternative Gift Program

Looking for different gift ideas this year? Heifer Project makes it possible to give a gift in honor of a friend or loved one and help families around the world become self-sufficient. View the gift catalog at heifer.org/gift-catalog/index.html or contact the Church Office for a list of prices. Gift options begin at \$10. Checks with Heifer Project in the memo can be sent to the Church Office. If the donation is made in honor of or as a gift to someone, cards to send are available in the Church Office.

Christmas Sharing

On December 11 and 12, 600+ families in need in Wheaton/Warrenville School District 200 will receive food and gift cards during a drive-through distribution. Gary will be joining St. John Lutheran and Trinity Episcopal at St. John's location (410 N. Cross St., Wheaton). If you would like to volunteer, look for the registration form at garychurch.org to see if spaces remain. Additional monetary donations are always welcome to provide for the needs of the families. Contribute at garychurch.org/give.



Holiday **MISSIONS**

The PRC Steps Up

During this pandemic, beginning in March, the People's Resource Center (PRC) had to reconfigure the operations to make sure everyone would be safe. We went to an outside operation with only the volunteers going into the building. The food pantry became a drive-through process. The clients drive in, give their information out of the car window, including family size, to a volunteer who passes the info on, the appropriate food and other needs are put in the client's trunk, and off they go! It works like a charm.

The only people who go into the building are staff and clients who need financial services, which can be done by phone or appointment. Since mid-March, we have provided our clients with over 24,500 food boxes. Our social services team has fielded almost 2,500

phone calls with clients needing financial assistance and other resources. This is an amazing feat, and we thank all the volunteers and donors who make this operation a success!

The next event on the calendar is "Share the Spirit" on *December 7 and 8*. This will also be a drive-through event. Though the format is different, the focus remains the same: to make sure our neighbors in need have holiday gifts for their children.

If you are interested in volunteering at the PRC or helping with "Share the Spirit", please email volunteers@peoplesrc.org.

~Mary Landreth



Koinonia House National Ministries UNBANQUET

Koinonia House is a national faith-based ministry, originally founded in Wheaton, which seeks to bring Christ to the incarcerated and those recently released from prison. Working with individual churches and other non-profits, it brings the Gospel into prisons and jails. It also provides support, guidance, and nurturing to the recently incarcerated, working to help them reintegrate into the society and avoid falling into recidivism. Through Radical Time Out and associations with other organizations, they provide support to families and children of the incarcerated and continuing support for former prisoners.

Koinonia House Ministries are totally dependent on the voluntary contributions of individuals, churches, corporations, and other foundations. A significant portion of their support comes from their annual banquet, which because of COVID-19 restrictions will not occur this year. So, they kicked off this year's fundraising with their UNBANQUET, requesting that individuals donate as if they actually attend the banquet. The pandemic puts heavy stresses on prisons, prisoners, their families, the recently released, and the ministries that strive to serve them. So they are prayerfully asking for our support. If you find it in your heart to help, please send a donation by check to the Church Office and specify Koinonia/RTO. You can find more information at koinoniahouse.org.



2020 Mission Trip to Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette, IN

During the week of October 26, Gary's Work Force traveled to Lafayette, Indiana to put our hands and feet to work for the local Habitat for Humanity (HFH) chapter. We've been working with this chapter for 11 years, and this was our 15th trip to demonstrate God's love in action and promote Habitat's vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live.

The group this year included Lois Davisson, Jamie Geiger, Elaine McCluskey, James Langill, Gerry Schmidt, and Robert Trauner.

Most of the week the team put the finishing touches on a new home in Wolcott, IN, about 30 miles north of Lafayette, for homeowner Sandi Pedorza. Our tasks included painting and installing closet doors, finishing the interior trim, touching up the paint on the walls, installing window blinds, installing towel bars and mirrors in the bathrooms, and finishing the exterior siding and trim. By noon on Thursday the place was ready for appliances. We then drove back to Lafayette and had lunch at the Sacred Grounds Reclaimed Coffee Shop. This is one of our favorite places to visit and is near the Lafayette HFH offices.

On Thursday afternoon and Friday, we did some painting at Wabash Community Center. What a wonderful week of service helping our friends in Lafayette, IN! We are planning to return in April to kick off the framing of the chapter's first new house for 2021. To get involved in Habitat for Humanity or if you have questions, contact Gerry Schmidt through Church Office.



Gratitude and Giving

We are grateful for the ways our congregation, as “co-workers in God’s service,” has continued to share the love and hope found in Jesus Christ. We are grateful for those who have supported Gary Church through their service, prayers, pledges, and gifts. We are grateful for those who are participating in our annual stewardship campaign. Your ongoing generosity allows our ministry to continue and flourish.

If you have returned your pledge card or completed the form online, thank you. If you have not yet returned your Stewardship Commitment for 2021, you may still do so by mailing it, dropping it off, or submitting the online form.



Christmas Giving

The special Christmas offering will look very different this year without our three in-person worship services. Please consider making your Christmas offering online at garychurch.org/give or by mail.

There will be an opportunity to leave your offering during the singing of “Silent Night” at 7 p.m. on Christmas Eve. An usher will be available outside Door 5 in Gary’s parking lot to collect Christmas offerings.

Important details for year-end contributions:

- Envelopes must be postmarked by December 31, if you intend to mail your gift.
- Stock transfers must be completed by December 31. The transfer process is currently taking seven to ten business days. Please contact Deb Evans through the Church Office for more information.
- Church Office hours are limited. If you would like to drop off your gift, call ahead to schedule a time Monday–Friday between 10 a.m.–2 p.m. The office will close at noon on December 31.

Thank you for your generosity.



Gary United Methodist Preschool



Parents' Morning Out Returns in January

Our Parents' Morning Out program is currently accepting applications for January–May 2021. Please submit an application with a \$50 (reduced) registration fee to the preschool. Class will be held on Monday and Wednesday mornings at 9–11:30 a.m. Families are welcomed to sign up for one or both days. One day per week is \$80 a month and two days per week is \$120 a month. Class size is limited to 10 children with two teachers. Please see the description below for more details on the class structure.

Preschool Registration for 2021–2022 Open!

With the holidays upon us, it is hard to believe but it is already time to begin preschool enrollment for the 2021–2022 school year. We have classes available for both three- and four-year-olds. Church families with a child who is 3 or 4 by September 1, 2021 have the opportunity to register between December 2 and January 4, 2021 prior to registration opening up to the public.

We are proud of the reputation we have maintained for over fifty years. We offer a three-year-old preschool class on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, a four-year-old preschool class on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings, and a Pre-K class on MWF afternoons. The Pre-Kindergarten class itself is very similar to the AM class, but focuses more on pre-reading skills, while also fostering confidence in the child's learning abilities, social relationships, and general problem-solving skills learned through play. We also offer a fourth day which is an Enrichment Class. Parents may opt for the regular three-day classes or for a four-day program which includes the Enrichment Class on Thursday afternoons. Parents of Kindergarteners may also send their children for the Enrichment class. For questions regarding differences in classes, please contact Kirsten McCluskey, Preschool Director.

We also offer a Parents' Morning Out program for younger children, on Monday–Friday for the 2021–22 school year. Families can register for one, two, or three days a week. Our program opens for children as young as 18 months and is a great way for children to “enter school” and begin to spend some time away from parents or other caregivers. In PMO, children spend most of their time in free play with opportunities to explore art supplies and various sensory materials. There is a group snack time with stories and songs. The children also spend some time playing in our gross motor area, which has large foam blocks, balls, and space to run. The teachers change diapers and assist in potty training, following the parents' directions.

Enrollment is simple. Just return a completed application with a \$100 registration fee, payable to “Gary Preschool.” The registration fee is non-refundable but does include a health and recreation fee. If you would like to schedule an appointment to visit our preschool and PMO programs you may do so by calling the church or emailing Kirsten McCluskey at preschool@garychurch.org.



Gary Gift Cards

It is not too early to start your Christmas shopping! And what easier way then to let Gary Gift Cards do the shopping for you. Gary's Gift Cards is a Gary United Methodist Preschool program that enables you to purchase gift cards for use at local retailers and have them delivered directly to you. We buy the cards at a discount, you buy the certificates for full face value and redeem them for full face value, and the preschool keeps the difference. The profit may not seem like a lot, but every dollar adds up!

If you would like to purchase Gary's Gift Cards, please complete the form and return it and your check (made payable to Gary Preschool) to the Church Office or the preschool by **11 a.m. on December 10**. You may shop online at www.shopwithscrip.com (Enter code: E278BD5913386 for Gary Preschool), drop your check at the church, and have your cards delivered. **Orders will be collected and processed each Thursday through December 10.**

Do you need some gift ideas: **For Her:** Macy's, Kay Jeweler, Williams Sonoma, Sephora, Zappos.com **For Him:** Bass Pro Shops, Cabela's, Home Depot, Best Buy, Dick's, BP, AutoZone, Ace **For Teens:** iTunes, Amazon, GameStop, J Crew, Bath & Body Works, Nike **For Kids:** The Children's Place, Disney, American Girl, Build a Bear **For Teachers:** Barnes & Noble, Container Store, Target, Starbucks **For Everyone:** Visa, Starbucks, TJ Maxx, AMC, Ticketmaster, Overstock.com, Wal-Mart For Crafts/Cooking: Michaels, JoAnn Fabrics, Jewel, Shutterfly.com **Business Gifts:** Omaha Steaks, Fannie Mae Candy, Harry & David, Honey Baked Ham **For a night out:** Buffalo Wild Wings, Outback, Chili's, AMC Theatres, Lettuce Entertain You

These are just a few of the hundreds of retailers offered by Gary's Gift Cards! See reverse side for more retailers, or visit www.shopwithscrip.com for a complete list of available retailers! And remember gift cards are not just for gift giving! If you know where you will do some of your holiday shopping, you can buy a gift card to use like a debit card as part of your payment.

The fine print:

All sales are final. Gift certificates and debit cards cannot be returned for any reason, with the exception of a malfunctioning card.

Payment must be made at the time a participant places an order. Checks and money orders are the only forms of payment and should be made to Gary Preschool.

Please do not send cash. Gary's Gift Cards payments are not tax deductible because you receive dollar for dollar value. Gary's Gift Cards does not accept credit cards.

All Gary's Gift Card orders are double-checked. However, it is also the participants' responsibility to verify their order at the time of receipt. Any discrepancies should be addressed immediately. Gary's Gift Cards is not responsible for lost or stolen orders. If Gary's Gift Cards is unable to fill an order due to back orders from our vendor, we will make every attempt to get your certificates or cards to you as soon as possible. In the event your order will not be ready for scheduled pickup, we will contact you.

Something You Should Know—A Savior for All People

by Pastor Bruce Anderson

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” Luke 2:10-12

On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh... Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” Matthew 2:1-2; 11 & 13

Here we are, getting ready for Christmas. It seems like this year has both flown and crawled by. Thanksgiving was different for us this year, with missing family members due to COVID-19 considerations. No doubt it will be the same for Christmas. Christmas will be even more unusual for us as we usually host the whole family, stacking them like cord wood around the house to make room for everyone. That won't be possible this year.

The good news is that what makes Christmas special has not changed at all. We still find the Christ child, born to Mary and Joseph in a manger in Bethlehem. Immanuel—God with us in living, breathing human flesh—visited first by the lowly shepherds and then by the high-born magi. A savior for all people, born in troubled times in a country led by a paranoid, homicidal king. Today, wise people still seek him.

It may help us to realize that the family of Jesus had to go into hiding to remain safe, sort of what we are needing to do this Christmas. It would not have been an easy thing to move a recent mother and a new born infant over one hundred miles on foot, or donkey; but Joseph did it to keep his family safe.

This Christmas we need to do things to keep our families safe as well. I hope that you will join me in limiting the exposure to COVID -19. Due to pandemic concerns, our Christmas Eve service will be available on YouTube only. We will not be having in-person worship to help keep everybody safe. Gerald Chaney had agreed to provide special music for us again this year and we are working on arrangements to include that music in this year's service. So please plan to join us for what should still be a special service of worship glorifying the newborn savior.

Stay well and glorify God from home.



Gary's Gift Cards Retailers/Order Form

Retailer (Profit) Amount #ordered

Grocery Stores & Pharmacies

Jewel/Osco (4%) \$25 \$100
 CVS (6%) \$25 \$100
 Mariano's (4%) \$100
 Pete's Fresh Market (4%) \$20
 Walgreens (5%) \$25

Restaurants

Applebee's (8%) \$25
 Arby's (8%) \$10
 Buca di Beppo (8%) \$25
 Buffalo Wild Wings (8%) \$25
 Burger King (4%) \$10
 California Pizza Kitchen (8%) \$25
 Cheesecake Factory (5%) \$25
 Chili's (11%) \$25
 Chipotle (10%) \$10
 Chuck E. Cheese (8%) \$10
 Cold Stone Creamery (11%) \$10
 Dairy Queen (3%) \$10
 Dave & Busters (13%) \$25
 Denny's (7%) \$10
 Domino's Pizza (8%) \$10
 Dunkin Donuts (3%) \$10
 Einstein Bagels (10%) \$10
 Honey Baked Ham (12%) \$10
 Jamba Juice (6%) \$10
 Lettuce Entertain You (12%) \$25
 Lou Malnati's (8%) \$10
 Noodles & Co. (8%) \$10
 Olive Garden (8%) \$25
Also good at Red Lobster
 Outback Steakhouse (8%) \$25
 Panera Bread (9%) \$10 \$25
 Papa John's Pizza (8%) \$10
 Pizza Hut (8%) \$10
 Qdoba (7%) \$25
 Rainforest Café (9%) \$25 \$100
 Red Robin (8%) \$25
 Rock Bottom (8%) \$25
 Ruby Tuesday (8%) \$25
 Smashburger (10%) \$10
 Starbucks (7%) \$10 \$25
 Steak n Shake (8%) \$10
 Subway (6%) \$10
 Wendy's (6.5%) \$10

Entertainment

AMC/Loews/Cineplex (8%) \$25
 Century Theatres (4%) \$25
 Regal Cinemas (8%) \$25

Gas & Auto

Auto Zone (8%) \$25
 BP (1.5%) \$50 \$100
 Jiffy Lube (8%) \$30
 Mobil/Exxon (1.5%) \$50
 Shell (1.5%) \$25 \$50

Retail Stores

Ace Hardware (4%) \$25 \$100
 American Eagle (10%) \$25
 American Girl (9%) \$25 \$100
 Bass Pro Shops (10%) \$25 \$100
 Barnes & Noble (8%) \$10 \$25
 Bath & Body Works (13%) \$10 \$25
 Bed, Bath & Beyond (7%) \$25
 Best Buy (4%) \$25 \$100
 Bloomingdale's (12%) \$25
 Brooks Brothers (16%) \$25
 Build-A-Bear Workshop (8%) \$25
 Cabela's (10%) \$25 \$100
 Claire's (9%) \$10
 Container Store (9%) \$25 \$100
 Crate & Barrel (8%) \$25 \$100
 Dick's Sporting Goods (8%) \$25
 Disney (3%) \$25 \$100
 Express (10%) \$25
 Foot Locker Stores (8%) \$25
 Gap (14%) \$25
 Hallmark (4%) \$25
 Home Depot (4%) \$25
 J Crew (13%) \$25
 JCPenney (5%) \$25
 JoAnn Fabrics (6%) \$25
 Kohl's (4%) \$25
 L.L. Bean (16%) \$25
 Lands' End (15%) \$25
 Lord & Taylor (8%) \$25
 Lowe's (4%) \$25
 Macy's (10%) \$25
 Menards (3%) \$25
 Neiman Marcus (12%) \$50
 Nordstrom (4%) \$25
 Office Depot/Max (5%) \$25
 Pottery Barn (8%) \$25
 REI (8%) \$25
 Sephora (5%) \$25
 Staples (5%) \$25
 Talbots (13%) \$25
 Target (2.5%) \$25 \$50
 The Children's Place (12%) \$25
 TJ Maxx, HomeGoods, Marshalls (7%) \$25
 Walmart (2.5%) \$25 \$50
 Williams Sonoma (8%) \$25

Online & Other Services

Amazon.com (2.25%) \$25 \$100
 iTunes (5%) \$15 \$25
 Overstock.com (8%) \$25
 Wayfair (6%) \$100
 Zappos.com (8%) \$25

Travel

Best Western (12%) \$25 \$100
 Budget Car Rental (8%) \$50
 Celebrity Cruises (8%) \$100
 Fairmont Hotels (9%) \$100
 Hilton (2%) \$100
 Southwest Airlines (4%) \$250

Total cards ordered:

Total amount due:

Name:

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

Pick up (please circle one):

Mail (add \$5)

Preschool

Church Office

Please write checks payable to "Gary Preschool"

Orders are processed each Thursday, starting November 5. Final orders are due on December 10th at 11:00 am.



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Silent Night

Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

~ Joseph Mohr, 1818

LOVE'S *pure* LIGHT