

## Rev. Dr. Gary L. Clark



Gary and Martha Clark

Gary was born on June 19, 1942 in Parsons, Kansas. Gary's father was a Methodist minister, and thus Gary grew up in several small towns in Kansas with a rich heritage in the ministerial lifestyle.

His education included graduation from Beloit High School of Beloit, Kansas, a Bachelor of Arts degree from Kansas Wesleyan University, Salina, Kansas, a Master of Theology degree from St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, Missouri and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. Specialized training included an internship at Kansas Neurological Institute for Children in Topeka, Kansas and an internship in Oncology in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Gary and Martha Robison were united in marriage on August 25, 1963. Their children included Scott (deceased), Joseph and Amy. Martha and Gary have been blessed with four grandchildren, John, Thomas, Emma and Victoria.

Gary worked first as a Youth Coordinator and then accepted his first pastoral assignment in 1964 as a student minister of a small United Methodist Church in Potwin, Kansas. Following his ordination as a "Deacon" of the United Methodist Church in 1965, he was assigned as to the United Methodist Church in Delphos, Kansas. After graduation from seminary and full ordination in 1969, Gary and Martha accepted assignment to the United

Methodist Church in Whitehall, Wisconsin.

While in seminary, Gary had become familiar with the United Church of Christ and its polity. So, in 1971 he requested and was granted "Privilege of Call" in the United Church of Christ. Shortly thereafter Gary accepted a Call from the United Church of Christ in Neillsville, Wisconsin. For the next thirteen years Gary served as Pastor in Neillsville and the children spent the majority of their childhood growing up in the rural atmosphere of America's farmland.

Zion United Church of Christ in Sheboygan, Wisconsin called Gary to serve as Senior Minister in 1984. The next three years spent at Zion Church were very formative in Gary's approach to church administration.

June of 1987 brought a call to serve as Senior Minister of Church of the Isles United Church of Christ in Indian Rocks Beach, Florida. Church of the Isles was a dynamic congregation of older adults who had immigrated to the warm weather of Florida. During Gary's time at Church of the Isles, a vigorous program was developed that met the unique needs of the congregation and welcomed newcomers to the congregation and the opportunities that it offered.

After eight years in Florida, family responsibilities necessitated the Clark family to move north to be closer to aging family members. St. Lucas United Church of Christ in St. Louis, Missouri invited Gary to become their Senior Minister. The return to a multi-aged congregation was a delight to Gary and Martha. Of the many programs developed in Gary's time at St. Lucas, among the most exciting was the "Catch the Spirit" campaign. The membership gathered shoes and baseball gloves for poverty stricken children in the Dominican Republic. A representative group of various age groups traveled to the mission site and personally delivered the gifts. As a result of the "Catch the Spirit" campaign, St. Lucas Church enlarged the mission focus of the congregation. Gary retired from St. Lucas after 10 years of service.

Gary and Martha moved to Florida to relax and play golf during their retirement years. When that grew old, Gary enjoyed pastoring two nearby, small congregations for about three years. He has now returned to full retirement.

As a pastor, Gary Clark has connected to the communities in which he served by becoming involved in the everyday lives of his people. He has served as a Boy Scout leader, hospital board member, fire department chaplain, and volunteered with several community improvement groups as well as a supporter of local school programs.