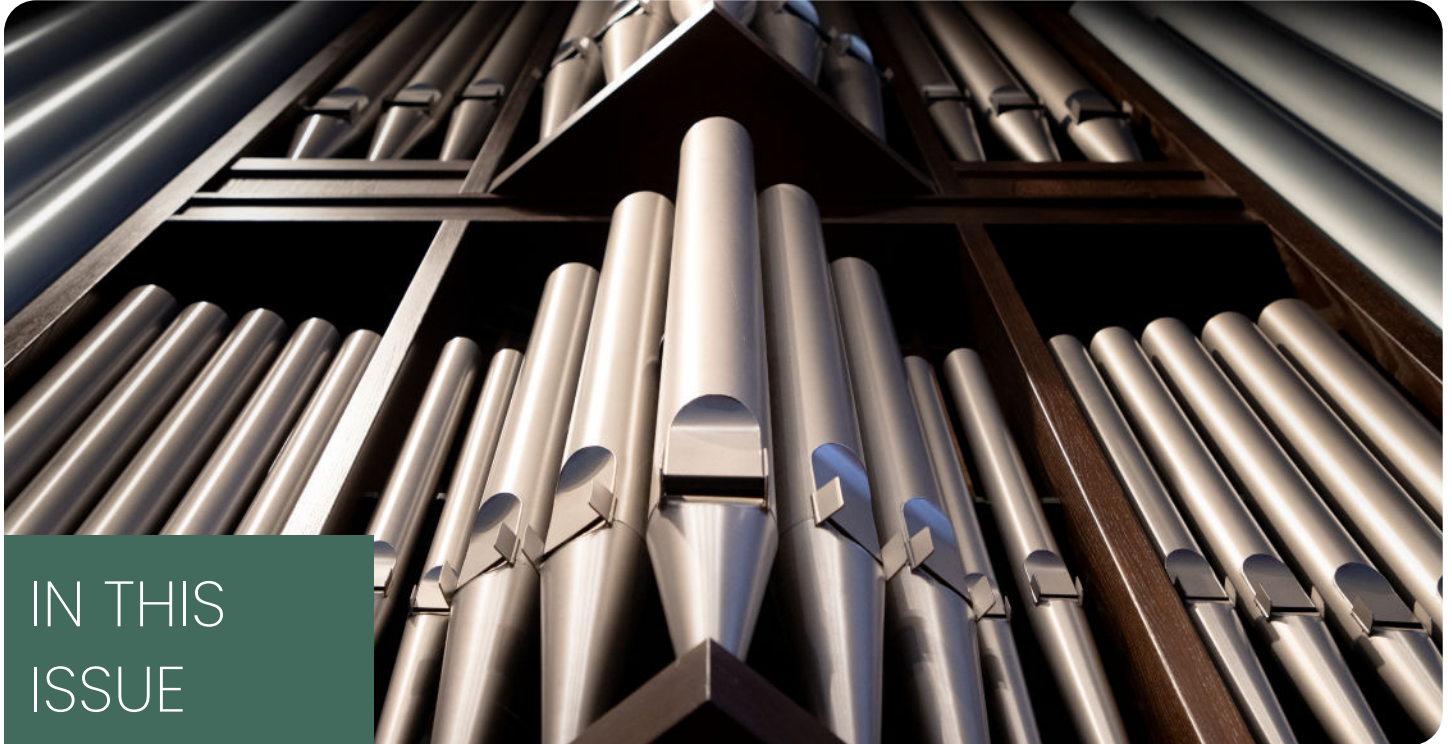


# The LaGrave News

Spring 2025



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## Phase One of Our Building Renovation Begins

After a long period of waiting, planning, and thoughtful discussion, renovations on our church campus are finally underway. If you've read your council notes, you know that last year, the Council approved hiring an architect to help guide this process. This architect has been listening to our ministry goals and responding with drawings that illustrate how we can renovate our buildings to better support our mission.

The most significant renovation will involve the Seventh-day Adventist building (the SDA). While no final decisions have been made about exactly how the SDA will be transformed, plans are beginning to take shape.

The architect has helped us see that these renovations will need to happen in phases. Phase one has already begun. Early on, we recognized the need to update our nursery space and make it more accessible for parents. To address this, we moved the two's and three's classroom to the main floor so that it could be adjacent to the nursery. This change has been well received by parents.



# There will be dust.

We are also in the process of renovating a couple of upstairs classrooms to create more “parlor-like” spaces. Our congregation loves using the parlor for meetings and Bible studies because of its welcoming, living-room feel, complete with soft seating and artwork on the walls. Recognizing the need for more spaces with that kind of ambiance, we are transforming two upstairs classrooms to have a similar atmosphere.

Another priority is updating LaGrave’s office space. Our staff has grown, and our 30-year-old facilities no longer have enough offices for everyone. After considering various possibilities, we determined that the current office footprint remains the best location for our staff. As a result, office renovations will begin in late spring or early summer, with the goal of completion by September.

Finally, plans are underway to renovate the chapel. While we still want it to serve as a space for small funerals and weddings, we also hope to make it more flexible for other types of gatherings. To achieve this, we will likely replace the pews with comfortable chairs, making the space more adaptable. Because the chapel is located right off the narthex, it is prime real estate, and everyone agrees that it is not being used as much as it could be. These renovations aim to make the space more functional and inviting.

One exciting aspect of this renovation process is that phase one is being completed without the need for a capital campaign—we are using existing funds! Of course, a capital campaign will eventually be necessary for the larger renovations, but we are grateful to begin phase one with the resources already in place.

We are thankful for this opportunity to update our facilities, and we look forward to seeing how these improvements will support and enhance our ministry.

# Welcome

New Members!



**Ken & Bette Frieswyk**

Joined: December 5, 2024



**Gerald VanderHart**

Joined: December 5, 2024



**Paul VanderHart**

Joined: December 5, 2024



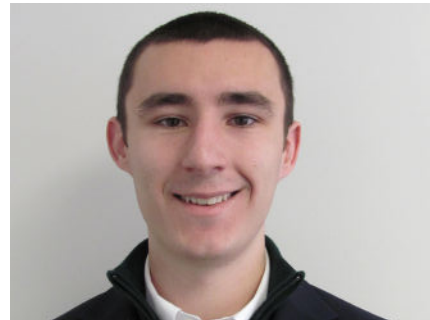
**Marilyn Kosters**

Joined: January 13, 2025



**Julie Farmer**

Joined: February 10, 2025



**Jonathan Curlee**

Joined: March 10, 2025



**David & Sarah Gebben**

( Shiloh, Jude and Acacia)  
Joined: March 10, 2025



**Judy Meyering**

Joined: March 10, 2025



**Ted & Julie Oostendorp**

Joined: March 10, 2025



**Don & Jan VandenBosch**

Joined: March 10, 2025



**Conrad & Roberta VanHaitsma**

Joined: March 10, 2025



**Kris Andres**

Joined: March 10, 2025

In the City,  
Under the Cross

# The Doorstep Ministry

providing vital assistance to our neighbors

By Julie Stover

The Doorstep Ministry is committed to helping people secure and maintain housing, prioritizing those who live in the 49503 zip code and within the Heartside neighborhood. We partner with Access of West Michigan and other organizations to financially assist qualifying individuals, always mindful of the crucial need for stable, affordable housing in downtown Grand Rapids.

Over the past four months, as I've facilitated requests through the Doorstep Ministry, I've encountered many stories from neighbors seeking assistance. Often, these individuals have faced unexpected obstacles that leave them unable to take care of their financial responsibilities on their own.

## A glimpse into the lives we've supported:

- Single parents who have encountered adversity and are doing what they can to keep their families housed.
- Individuals who have had employment challenges and have rent payments that have stacked up over the course of a couple months.
- Neighbors who have found themselves on the other side of substance abuse and are seeking stability in their housing.
- Individuals who have found themselves caught up in the process of government assistance programs and need help to bridge the gap.
- Young adults trying to be cycle-breakers as they support themselves and their families.
- Pregnant women who can't work and are trying to maintain their current home as they anticipate growing their family.
- Individuals moving into a new

apartment after being unhoused for an extended period.

- People finding their way out of domestic violence relationships, seeking the safety of a new home.
- Neighbors who have needed help with their outstanding utility bills in order to keep heat and lights on during the coldest and darkest parts of the year.

Many of the requests we receive ask for assistance that exceeds what the Doorstep Ministry alone can provide. As a result, much of our work involves coordinating with other organizations and churches so that, together, we can keep our neighbors housed. One of the most rewarding aspects of this ministry has been nurturing these partnerships—knowing that by working together, our collective impact is far greater than what we could accomplish alone.

The reality is that there is never enough money to support all the requests we receive from month to month—there is just so much need! With this in mind, I have come to deeply value the connections formed with each neighbor who reaches out for help. It's important to hear their stories, understand their situations, and—regardless of whether financial assistance is possible—ensure they feel seen and heard. In my view, true success isn't just in providing funds but in making sure our neighbors feel valued, supported, and cared for. When we are able to provide financial assistance, that is an added blessing!

As we move further into 2025, I invite you to pray for this ministry—that the resources we share would help our neighbors get back on track and, more importantly, that they would experience the love and care of Jesus through our interactions with them. This is the true mission of the Doorstep Ministry.

# Get Involved at LaGrave

A wonderful way to become more engaged at LaGrave is by joining our Sunday Volunteer team. The Welcoming Committee offers several meaningful opportunities to help greet and connect with both visitors and members as they come together for worship. If you're interested or would like more information, please reach out to Cindy Busscher at [cbusscher@lagrave.org](mailto:cbusscher@lagrave.org).

## What to Look Forward To

### Women's Floral Arranging Workshop

**April 19, 2025**

Back by popular demand, the floral arranging workshop is returning this year! All LaGrave women of every age are invited to create a beautiful fresh floral centerpiece on Saturday, April 19, just in time for Easter. Thanks to the generous Looks Fund, the cost to participate is \$10. This is a lovely opportunity to connect with other LaGrave women while enjoying the beauty of God's creation filled with spring colors. Sign-ups fill quickly so young adults, moms, daughters, grandmas, young or young at heart, register today.

### Clay Shooting

**June 14, 2025**

This intergenerational event returns for the second year at Kent County Conservation Club on Saturday, June 14 at 9:30 am. Following the competition, a casual lunch will be provided by the Fellowship Committee. Cost to attend is \$40 payable directly to KCCC. Don't have your own equipment? You can rent the club's for an additional charge.

### Golf Outing

**August 9, 2025**

Mark your calendars for the 2nd annual LaGrave golf scramble on Saturday afternoon, Aug. 9! Once again, Boulder Creek is offering tee times for those wanting to golf 9 or 18 holes. You are welcome to sign up as a two or foursome. Don't know any other golfers or signing up alone? Please don't worry! You will be paired with other friendly LaGrave golfers. Don't think you are good enough to participate? Please don't worry about this either. This is a scramble and will be a lot of fun!

### Lavender Life Farm

**June 11, 2025**

Calling LaGrave women of ALL ages! The next generous Looks event will take place on Wednesday, June 11, at Lavender Life Farm located at 464 Stanton Farms Dr in Caledonia from 6:00-8:00 pm. We will hear from the owners about the mission of Lavender Life, learn about the health benefits of lavender, clip a bundle of lavender to take home, enjoy a lavender treat and simply enjoy the beauty of the farm during peak lavender season. Be prepared to savor the beauty of God's creation while meeting and connecting with others from LaGrave. Cost to attend is \$10. Watch for sign-ups to come soon.

### Craig's Cruisers

**July 23, 2025**

Looking to connect with others mid-summer? All are invited to this big church-wide event on Wednesday, July 23 from 5:00 -8:00 pm. Whether you are 1 or 100, by yourself or with a family, new to LaGrave or have been a member for many years, you are welcome to come! Included is a buffet meal of pizza, pasta, salad, breadsticks, and more as well as tickets to four attractions (mini golf, go karts, bumper boats or cars, etc). Don't want to participate in the activities? No problem! Come anyway for a meal (LaGrave has a separate space reserved for dinner) and a chance to meet and chat with others in this fun environment. Watch the bulletin for more details and opportunities to sign up.

Stay up to date on events by signing up for our email newsletter. Scan the QR code or visit [www.lagrave.org/email-signup/](http://www.lagrave.org/email-signup/) to sign up.



# MUSIC

AT LAGRAVE



## Holy Week Services

Sunday, April 13, 8:40 and 11:00 a.m.  
Palm Sunday Services

Thursday, April 17, 7:30 p.m.  
Maundy Thursday Tenebrae Service with Communion

Friday, April 18, 12:00 p.m.  
Ecumenical Downtown Good Friday Service  
at First (Park) Congregational Church

Sunday, April 20, 8:40 and 11:00 a.m.  
Easter Sunday Services

## Guest Choir In Worship

Our worship will be enriched musically through the gifts of the NorthPointe Christian High School Chorale on Sunday, April 27 at the 6:00 p.m. service. The choir will sing several anthems under the direction of Lisa Spangler. LaGrave member Jude Scholten is a member of the Chorale.

## Visser / Hobgood Duo Returns

On Thursday, May 8 at 1:00 p.m. in the sanctuary Drs. Larry Visser and Rob Hobgood will once again collaborate in a duo-piano and organ performance for the LaGrave Primers.

## Spring Organ Recital

On Friday, May 16 at 7:00 p.m., Dr. Caroline Robinson will present a free organ recital at LaGrave. In 2024, Ms. Robinson was appointed to the organ faculty of the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre, and Dance. She has performed both in the United States and around the globe and was the winner of several competitions. This recital is co-sponsored by the Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

# Young Adult Ministry Now

By: Heidi Glover (Young Adult Ministry Coordinator)

**“The secret to successful young adult ministry begins with seeing today’s young adults for who they are, where they are, and what they are searching for.”**

— Fuller Youth Institute

Recently, I had the opportunity to take a four-week course titled Young Adult Ministry Now through Fuller Youth Institute. The course focused on young adults (ages 18-29), their relationship with the church, what they need from a faith community, and how congregations can minister to them well.

Through their research, Fuller Youth Institute identified seven key transitions young adults experience as they discover who they are, how they fit, and what their purpose is. They aren’t simply “going through a phase”—this is a developmental stage in which they have a greater capacity to reflect on their identity, invest in who they want to become, and navigate more choices on the road to adulthood. But they haven’t fully arrived yet.

As members of LaGrave Church, we need to recognize that “Young adulthood isn’t a choice to delay or avoid adulthood. It’s a period in life where emerging adults face new social and economic challenges that make their path to adulthood





longer and more complex. To make it through, they need our support more than our critique.” (YA Ministry Now, Fuller).

## 7 Transitions States:

**Self-Identifying:** “I’m figuring out who I’m becoming, in all its complexity.”

**Relating:** “I’m learning who I can trust in light of my past, present, and future relationships.”

**Contributing:** “I’m discovering what I can contribute for the betterment of myself and others.”

**Taking Responsibility:** “I’m figuring out how to bear more of the weight and direction of my life and relationships.”

**Self-Caring:** “I’m learning to care for myself now that my well-being is up to me.”

**Acclimating:** “I’m putting down shallow roots and trying to thrive where I am.”

**Meaning-Making:** “I’m making sense of my life and connecting my spirituality with a community.”

These years are often filled with excitement, challenges, and uncertainty as young adults navigate these transitions and learn how to “adult” in today’s world. As a church, how we respond to them during this time matters.

“The secret to successful young adult ministry begins with seeing today’s young adults for who they are, where they are, and what they are searching for.” (Fuller Youth Institute). The young adults who walk into LaGrave each week are longing for meaningful relationships and a community that will walk with them through these transitions. How might we recognize their journeys and adjust our expectations about their participation in church?

Are you interested in learning more about these transitions or walking alongside the young adults at LaGrave? I invite you to read more by scanning the QR code below or reach out to me at [hglover@lagrave.org](mailto:hglover@lagrave.org) to find out when our next Bagel & Coffee Sunday is! We would love to have you join us.

Learn more at [https://d36s6f2n3iyjqc.cloudfront.net/files/Lead-Magnet\\_7-things-you-need-to-know.pdf](https://d36s6f2n3iyjqc.cloudfront.net/files/Lead-Magnet_7-things-you-need-to-know.pdf) or scan the QR code.



**Young Adulthood isn’t a choice to delay or avoid adulthood. It’s a period in life where emerging adults face new social and economic challenges that make their path to adulthood longer and more challenging. To make it through, they need our support more than our critique.”**

— Fuller Youth Institute

# Grandma Kelly's Impact on my Faith Formation

By: James Webb

When you think about your own experiences growing up, I am guessing that there were people in your life that either mentored or guided you in your faith journey. James Webb, a Young Adult member here at La-Grave, shares the impact that his Grandma Kelly played in his life.

**Are we intentionally remembering the baptismal promises we made to pray, instruct, and encourage our young adults in their faith journey?**

As a young child, though my parents believed in Jesus as their Savior, we did not attend church as a family. The stories of Adam and Eve, Noah and the Ark, and Jonah and the whale—shared as bedtime stories by my parents—were all I knew of God until I grew a little older. But in spite of this, the Lord blessed me with a wonderful grandma who cared deeply about the spiritual formation of me, my sister, and my brother.

Whether she was reading through Genesis with us at her house or teaching us to pray by first stilling ourselves and then focusing on the Lord, she was instilling in us aspects of following Jesus that I believe will stay with us for a lifetime. And I greatly appreciated that. As someone who is naturally curious, hearing the story of God and how the world was created drew me in, and I believe the Lord used those

moments to bring me closer to Him. But I also think part of this came from the way Grandma Kelly interacted with us. She had a way of grandparenting that made everything feel enjoyable and personal. And it wasn't just that she spoiled us (though she certainly did plenty of that). There were also times when we weeded gardens, took care of chickens, and handled the unique responsibilities she assigned each of us grandchildren—mine was winding up the grandfather clock. But through it all, Grandma Kelly was present and fully engaged. She was the kind of person you could talk with for hours without noticing a minute had passed. She showed genuine concern for whatever we shared, encouraged us to think more deeply, and always pointed us toward doing what was right.

While I can't say with certainty just how much these moments with Grandma shaped me, I know they were essential. And even now, the ability to share what I'm going through with her continues to be a gift. Though I don't see her as often as I did as a child, our phone calls often stretch beyond an hour, covering everything under the sun. Her wisdom and humility have been a source of encouragement in so many seasons of life—when I moved to DC for two years and then back to Grand Rapids, when I faced stressful job transitions and challenges that felt beyond me, when I navigated friendships and communication, and so much more.

The wisdom she shares is always a reminder to focus on the Lord and to live life as a journey of deeper trust and obedience to Him.

**“Train a child  
in the way they  
should go, and  
when they are  
old they will not  
turn from it.”**

Proverbs 22:6

Check out James Webb's interview with the C.S. Lewis Institute that shares his experiences with his faithful grandparents and how he got to learn from them in his journey of Faith at [www.cslewisinstitute.org/resources/how-my-grandparents-faith-impacted-me/](http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/resources/how-my-grandparents-faith-impacted-me/) or scan the QR code.



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# A Light in the Darkness

By: Rev. Tricia Bosma, on behalf of the LiveSafe Team

In 1994, the CRC Synod created the Office of Abuse Prevention (now known as Safer Churches) out of concern that the CRC has “not always dealt justly and compassionately [with] those who have been sexually abused” and has “not always justly or adequately disciplined church leaders who have been abusers” (Acts of Synod 2010, p. 867). In response, LaGrave established a LiveSafe team in 2012, commissioning them to prepare our church in the event of an abuse allegation and to educate parishioners on the topic of abuse.

This year’s awareness theme is A Light in the Darkness. Jesus is the light which shines in the darkness of abuse. Abuse has historically been kept in the darkness. It hasn’t been talked about; it hasn’t been properly acknowledged. This has left those surviving abuse alone to suffer an emotional darkness. We are confident Jesus can, does, and will overcome the darkness of abuse. Until then, we partner with Jesus, being a light of hope dispelling the darkness of abuse.

During Lent this April, please pray that the darkness of abuse in our churches, schools, and homes will be replaced with the light of:

- Treating every person with dignity and respect.
- Actively listening with compassion and empathy for others.
- Respecting other’s boundaries.
- Admitting and apologizing after wronging someone.
- Advocating for the marginalized and the vulnerable.

If you or someone you love is experiencing abuse, please contact the LifeSafe team at [lifesafe@lagrave.org](mailto:lifesafe@lagrave.org). Your email will be forwarded to a member of the team.

**“We partner with Jesus, being a light of hope dispelling the darkness of abuse.”**

**“The light shines in  
the darkness, and  
the darkness has  
not overcome it.”**

***John 1:5***

# LaGrave's Partnership with Congress Elementary

LaGrave's partnership with Congress Elementary continues to grow, and we're excited to share the impact it's having on students and mentors alike! We currently have over 35 mentors who volunteer each week, spending time with students in a variety of ways—playing games, doing arts and crafts, solving puzzles, reading, and even kicking around a soccer ball. While it's not tutoring, mentoring at Congress is about building connections, leaning in, and making children feel seen and valued.

We have plenty of students waiting to be paired with a mentor, and we would love for you to consider giving just one hour a week to make a difference in a child's life. Our Congress teachers recently joined us during the 10:00 hour to talk about the real impact mentoring has on their classrooms. We heard firsthand how these simple moments of connection truly make a difference in students' lives, helping them feel supported and encouraged as they grow.

In addition to mentoring, LaGrave has also sponsored a new initiative at Congress Elementary: the Blue Ticket Store! Students earn Blue Tickets for positive behaviors such as being a learner, showing kindness, being a good friend, and listening. Once a month, they get to spend their hard-earned tickets at the Blue Ticket Store, where they can choose from a variety of fun items.

We are looking for volunteers to help students shop and also for donations to stock the store. You can support by purchasing items directly through our Amazon link or by checking out the PDF with a list of items to drop off at church. If you're interested in volunteering you can use the online sign up or reach out to Elizabeth Scholtens or Lisa Bauman.

Through mentoring and these new initiatives, we continue to strengthen our partnership with Congress Elementary and make a positive impact on the lives of students in our community. We hope you'll consider getting involved in this amazing opportunity!

Looking forward to partnering with you!

[e.scholtenskhusa@gmail.com](mailto:e.scholtenskhusa@gmail.com)  
[lcbauman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lcbauman@sbcglobal.net)



Want to help out with the Blue Ticket Store? You can help us supply the store or volunteer. Just scan the QR codes.

Amazon  
Wishlist



PDF list of  
Items



Volunteers  
Sign-up

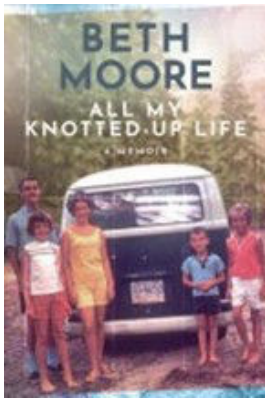


# Media Center

## Some Library Talk

Recently, we made a change in the library by placing all memoirs in the biography section. Biographies and memoirs can now be found together on the east wall near the window display. For all you library nerds out there, here's why we made the change.

The memoir is a relatively recent addition to the book publishing world. While both memoirs and autobiographies fall under nonfiction and are based on personal experiences, they differ in scope. A memoir focuses on a specific time or theme in a person's life, whereas an autobiography provides a comprehensive account of their entire life.



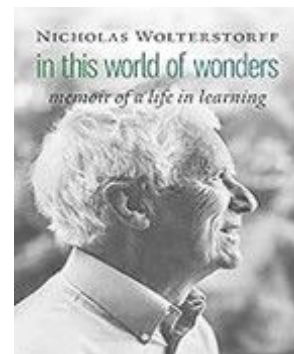
Like most smaller libraries, LaGrave's library uses the Dewey Decimal System to catalog its materials. Our online system relies on the Library of Congress (LC) to determine a book's classification number. Biographies are typically assigned the number 921, meaning they are all grouped together on the same shelves.

However, memoirs are classified differently. The Library of Congress assigns them various numbers based on their subject matter. For example, Beth Moore's memoir, *All My Knotted Up Life*, is cataloged under 248, the number for books about Christian practice. Nicholas Wolterstorff's *In This World of Wonders* falls under 285.7, the number for books about Reformed churches. Philip Yancey's *Where the Light Fell* is assigned 270.092, the number for church

history. Because of this, memoirs were spread throughout different sections of the library, making them harder to find.

To simplify things, we have re-cataloged all memoirs under 921, allowing them to be shelved alongside biographies under the blue label Biographies & Memoirs.

Drop in sometime and check out the many fine biographies and memoirs in our church library!



Books can be checked out by LaGrave members for free at the library or reserved through the Online Media Center.



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