



## A Love Story

**“I picked her up on a street corner in Flint, Michigan.”**

Fountain  
of Love

May is Older Americans Month, and we would like to introduce you to a loving American couple who lives in one of our Methodist Homes. Meet Gayle and Leonard Shults, residents at Wesley Gardens in Montgomery.

It doesn't take new staff members and residents long to notice the deep love and respect that Leonard and Gayle demonstrate to one another. They are almost always together, enjoying friends, fun and food. When love is this genuine, it is not difficult to capture photographs of their endearing glances or their innocent kisses. It's a true love story.

“I picked her up on a street corner in Flint, Michigan,” Leonard laughs, a joke no doubt told innumerable times during their almost 66-year marriage. Leonard explained that he had just come home from a two-year stint in the Navy aboard a ship. His mother and father had met a young lady named Gayle who needed an escort to a dance. Leonard waited for her on a street corner with another man as Gayle and a couple of other girls approached. “I took her from the curb to the dance.” And a love story began.

The couple married in June of 1958. Together they raised three children, and now also enjoy the company of 10 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.

Leonard served in the United States military for a total of 32 years, with five additional years in the reserves. Following his military career, he entered the ministry and served in the pulpit for 32 years in various assignments. It was when his appointment brought him to Dalraida UMC that the couple was introduced to Methodist Homes. Gayle was involved as a volunteer in the 90s, during the early days of the Auxiliary at Wesley Gardens. She volunteered for bingo or birthday parties, or whatever was needed.

While Gayle was volunteering in the gift shop, Leonard started to preach on various Sundays in the chapel area at the community. Leonard also found that he enjoyed adult coloring, and so he began a class at Wesley Gardens.

After retiring officially from the ministry, both Gayle and Leonard felt the need for additional health support. So, in September of 2022, they decided to make Wesley Gardens their home.

Gayle and Leonard are two among more than 800 people living in one of five Methodist Homes care communities, each person bringing their own unique background and story. And like Gayle and Leonard, most residents will never need the assistance of the Fountain of Love Fund. But for those who do, the Fountain of Love is a lifeline.

Last year the Fountain of Love provided more than \$383,000 in support to people who would not have been able to remain in the place they call home. This is why we ask for your support of the Fountain of Love Fund, so that we can continue to say, “No one has ever been asked to leave a Methodist Home due to their inability to pay.”



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*of Alabama & Northwest Florida*

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