

Salem Nurse Honor Guard

A tribute to Gaye McDougall

Tribute date: November 21, 2025

This is an excerpt from the service:

Nursing is a calling, a way of life. The Salem Nurse Honor Guard is here today to honor Gaye McDougall for her life as a nurse.

Gaye went into nursing school immediately after graduating from high school in the early 1960s. She attended Sacred Heart School of Nursing in Spokane, WA, where she earned her RN degree. For the next 60 years, Gaye devoted her life to nursing and found great joy in caring for others throughout her nursing career. She worked at the Marion County Health Department, Weight Watchers, Willamette Lutheran Retirement, Capitol Manor, and at her church (here) as a parish nurse. She also received her geriatric certification.

She was very passionate about being a nurse and helping others. She saw no boundaries in treating and caring for people - she volunteered at Salem free clinics for the homeless, immunization clinics, and in the jail. Molly, her daughter, enjoyed listening to her reminiscence about how she used to help administer the polio vaccine (back in the day) by giving sugar cubes to children. It's truly remarkable to consider all that she experienced and witnessed in her life, as well as the significant advancements in medicine over the past 60 years.

She was a devout Catholic and volunteered in many capacities here at St. Edward's Church, including helping with blood drives, blood pressure clinics, the prayer chain group, the grief support group and communion outreach.

Gaye is remembered, not by her years as a nurse, but by the difference she made during those years by stepping into people's lives, by special moments, Gaye was there.



SNHG from left to right: Lorna Dryden, Katie King, Cris Hatzenbihler, Nancy Dunn, Dana Hart, Mindy Close, Kristie Lawrence, Lori Phillips

