

“The CHIMES” – July / August

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2019

Continuing the Conversation...



“On hearing it, many of his disciples said, ‘This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?’ Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, ‘Does this offend you?’...He went on to say, ‘This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.’ From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. ‘You do not want to leave too, do you?’ Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.’”

—John 6:60-61, 66-69

“Jesus came near and spoke to them, ‘I’ve received all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I’ve commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age.’”

—Matthew 28:18-20

Mission of Sparta UMC: We are called to make maturing disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

So, just what is a disciple, and how do we make them? In an attempt to find answers to those questions for this particular church I asked the members present at the May Administrative Council meeting to give me their definitions of discipleship. I received several good responses and no bad ones. But, I also discovered from that small sampling that we are not all on the same page in our understanding of what discipleship means so it would be very difficult to be on the same page as to how we make disciples.

I want to make an important distinction here. Making church members is not the same as making disciples. Unfortunately in the church it can seem like we are encouraged to make members because that is what is counted on our year-end statistical reports. Now, to be sure, members can be disciples and disciples can be members, but being a member does not

automatically make one a growing, maturing disciple of Jesus Christ. The following may help illustrate some differences:

Members

Goal: Get people to join the congregation.

Church role: Keep the members satisfied.

Leadership role: Encourage members to be involved in church activities.

Responsibility for growth: Church assumes primary responsibility for motivating people in their spiritual journey.

Maturing Disciples

Goal: Create disciples who are increasing in their love of God and neighbor.

Church role: Provide opportunities and relationships to foster spiritual growth.

Leadership role: Encourage disciples to grow in obedience to God and service to others.

Responsibility for growth: Disciples assume primary responsibility for spiritual growth as the church provides opportunities and encouragement.

As you consider the above distinctions between membership and discipleship I also ask you to consider adopting the following definition of a disciple: *In response to God’s loving invitation, a disciple is a follower of Jesus Christ who is committed to: 1) being part of the body of Christ, 2) becoming more like Jesus, and 3) joining Jesus in ministry.*

Those three dimensions of commitment are not chosen randomly, but through the lens of Scripture, recalling the familiar words of Jesus in Matthew 4:19: “Follow me (being part of the body of Christ)...And I will make you (becoming more like Jesus)...fishers of men (joining Jesus in ministry).”

What we are talking about here is a lifestyle—a way of living—that imitates Jesus in every moment, in every action. Discipleship is a lifelong journey into the abundant life for which we were created. It is a process of continual development through which we grow in maturity. In a culture obsessed with end results and perfection, it is crucial to remember that, for a disciple, it’s the journey itself that is most important. Discipleship in the biblical tradition is not just learning about Jesus, but becoming like Jesus—doing life as Jesus did life.

It’s important to note here, the three dimensions of the life of a disciple (being part of the body of Christ,

becoming more like Jesus, and joining Jesus in ministry) are broad strokes of commitment. They do not limit the options for the unique ways in which one may be a part of the body of Christ. They do not constrict the options for how one grows to become like Jesus or even dictate how one must be partnered in ministry. They only point to the reality that discipleship includes all three of these dimensions of growth. Each disciple must personally discover how God has “wired” them and is calling them to be engaged. There is no “one size fits all” for discipleship.

For example, there are many valid ways a person can commit to being part of the body of Christ: participating in corporate worship, being part of a small group, participating in Bible study, serving other people, texting someone in need with a notification that you and your church are praying for them, etc. Similarly, becoming more like Jesus can take several forms. For example: studying the Scriptures, acting in mercy, praying, practicing means of grace, etc. Joining Jesus in ministry to the world might include things like: random acts of kindness, serving on a mission team, supporting a community service organization, sharing our resources with those in need, participating in any of the many ministry opportunities offered by Sparta UMC, etc. The possibilities are endless!

Jesus is our guide. The words and actions of Jesus present a clear model for making choices that lead us more deeply into **being** part of the body of Christ, **becoming** more like Jesus, and **joining** Jesus in ministry. And when talking about this definition of discipleship, I like to add the words “for life” after “follower of Jesus Christ,” because we never retire from being a disciple. A disciple is a follower of Jesus Christ for life...

- A life of worship: “A time...has now come when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.” (John 4:23)

- A life of hospitality: “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples.” (John 13:34, 35)

- A life of opening to Jesus: “You have heard it said...But I tell you...” (Matthew 5)

- A life of obeying Jesus: “Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19)

- A life of service: “You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world.” (Matthew 5:13, 14)

- A life of generosity: “You cannot serve both God and money.” (Matthew 6:24b) “I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these...you did for me.” (Matthew 25:40) —from *Membership to Discipleship*, Dr. Phil Maynard)

Being a maturing disciple and making new and maturing disciples of Jesus Christ is a lifetime commitment, a journey following the one who calls us into abundant life; it is not for the faint of heart. Some today may still say, “*This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?*”...and then turn away from following Jesus. But, like Peter I cannot imagine turning away from this call, I echo Peter’s words, “*Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.*”

Jesus himself has called us to the work of making disciples. A disciple is one, who, *in response to God’s loving invitation, is a follower of Jesus Christ who is committed to: 1) being part of the body of Christ, 2) becoming more like Jesus, and 3) joining Jesus in ministry* (see Matthew 4:19).

God bless you as you seek to know and love God fully!

Pastor Loretta



Working Together to Make a Difference

Thanks to your generosity and work, Pastor L was able to deliver 48 kid’s kits, 12 women’s kits, and 12 men’s kits to the Annual Conference Ingathering. Those hospitality kits will then be distributed in Wisconsin among Harbor House, Northcott, UM Children’s Services, and Solomon Outreach. Thank you for helping to make a difference.



Congregational Connections



This month we are back, featuring some members and friends of Sparta UMC. I appreciate their willingness to share here and keep our connection alive and well. Please consider sharing your story here to help keep us all connected.



Eileen Gajewsky is a lifelong member of the United Methodist Church. She has been married to Dick Gajewsky for 53 years.

Some of Eileen's personal interests include: morning devotions, reading, playing cards, shopping, convertible rides, Wednesday morning lady's coffee, and Friday breakfast with church friends.

When asked what keeps her coming back to the Sparta UMC, Eileen stated it is her friends and church family, the worship services where she hears the word of God, the music, and her faith and love of God in her life. Along with attending worship services Eileen is active in UMW, Tuesday soup supper, nurture committee, ushering, health ministry visitation, money counter, providing refreshments for Sunday coffee fellowship, salad luncheon, harvest dinner, acting co-chair of the dining fellowship hall with duties including decorating tables with flowers, setting tables, contacting workers to help with special events.

Some favorite memories from church are: getting married 53 years ago with two pastors, Rev. Nulton and Rev. Wiese marrying us. Ruth Hering playing the organ so beautifully, and David Hering singing. It was 90+ in the church that day! Organ and piano concerts and choir music and Cyndi Wise continuing to play the organ beautifully. So many pastors we have had over the years that have touched our lives. Church dinners. Wonderful church members who have passed away and always the friendliness and welcoming of our church family.

Priscilla Hemmersbach was baptized and confirmed and attended this church on and off when she was young. She started attending full time in 1996. She has been married to Jeff Hemmersbach for 15 years.



Some of Priscilla's personal interests include: going to movies with a group of friends (when she has time). She enjoys reading, learning, studying about the Bible, going for lunch with Jeff and friends on the weekend, and spending time with her granddaughters.

The main reasons Priscilla keeps coming back to church is to hear the preaching of the word and to praise/worship/learn about God. The people (aka my church family) whom I love and know they love me, and our pastor also keep her coming back. Priscilla is active in Tuesday soup supper, as a liturgist, providing refreshments for fellowship time, as a parish nurse, lay leader, lay speaker, leading the health ministry visitation team, and serving on the shepherding team.

Some of Priscilla's favorite memories are the Christmas Eve services; sunrise services on Easter, and being with other believers as we worship, many of the potlucks, serving soup supper. Mainly, this is a special place to come and praise God and feel His presence.



Long-time member, **Tom Hemstock Sr.** celebrated his 100th birthday on June 20, 2019. A party in his honor was held at Mary Crest on Saturday, June 15. Tom enjoyed many years of golfing, so it was very appropriate that his birthday cake was decorated as a golf course, complete with a sand trap and a water

hole. About 75 people attended. We are so thankful that we could celebrate this milestone birthday with those in attendance.

LifeTouch Pictorial Directory Update:

Are YOU still waiting to receive YOUR Complimentary Photo? As a part of the Lifetouch program, each photographed family and staff member, is to receive a complimentary 8 x 10. Some elected to have theirs sent directly to their home, others had them sent to the church. Unfortunately, one shipment to the church was damaged and had to be returned, so we know some have not yet received theirs....we just don't know who!

If YOU have not received yours, please contact LifeTouch Customer Care as soon as possible at 888-313-1746 to specifically check on the status of them! You may need to reference the ID # 369043 for Sparta United Methodist Church's Directory.

Once again, thank you **all** for supporting our new church directory. From what we've seen so far...this congregation is VERY photogenic!

Fund Raising that Doesn't Hurt

We are looking at a new fund raising opportunity for the church and the best news is it turns your everyday shopping into earnings for the church. This means we raise money without having to spend time selling products, asking for donations, or planning events. It is called ShopWithScrip

ShopWithScrip has over 23 years of experience helping nonprofit organizations with their fund raising needs, making them the largest scrip fund raising provider in the United States.

By paying for purchases with the gift cards, also known as scrip, you'll earn money for the church when you buy your groceries, gas, dine out, buy school supplies, clothing, home improvement projects, etc. depending on which businesses we purchase cards for. This is possible because many local businesses have agreed to be a part of this rebate program and give a designated percentage of money per gift card sold back to the organization selling them—that would be us!

You may be thinking, "This sounds too good to be true; how does it work?"

Every scrip program is led by a coordinator; in our case Cheryl Isensee has agreed to head this up and Donna Burnham has agreed to help. The coordinator spreads the word about scrip, recruits volunteers (she already has one), sets the order schedule, decides how many families will place their orders, and places the order for our church. The church receives the gift (scrip) cards to sell.

So it would be helpful if you can let Cheryl know which businesses you regularly shop at so she has an idea of which cards to buy because there is an upfront cost to the church. The church has to purchase the cards and have them on hand to sell to you. But again, if you know you generally purchase \$400 a month in groceries at Walmart, it won't cost you any more for those groceries and you can give Cheryl an idea of how many cards we will sell. You then purchase the gift (scrip) cards at church, use the cards, and Walmart (in this example) would rebate the church a percentage of that \$400.

The more of us that use this program the greater the potential earnings for the church. This is a win-win for us and the church because we aren't spending any more than usual on purchases we already make and the church is benefitting financially. If you already give gift cards for birthdays or holidays your impact would be even greater if you give scrip cards. If you would like more information on ShopWithScrip or would like to give input on businesses you regularly shop at contact Cheryl Isensee.

Have Questions on Medicare?

Is it time for you to start thinking about Medicare coverage because you will soon be 65? Are you already receiving Medicare and wonder if you have the best coverage for your circumstances? The Sparta UMC will host an information session for anyone who has questions regarding Medicare. This opportunity may be just the ticket for your peace of mind.

Blia Yang, Medicare educator from Physicians Mutual Insurance, will explain the intricacies of Medicare on Wednesday, September 25 at 10 a.m. This information session is free and open to the public.

Yang teaches participants about the basics of Medicare, the A, B, C, Ds of Medicare, and the options to Medicare open enrollment and how it works. She is a teacher who likes to help folks find peace of mind with their choice of options. Plan to come and bring your questions.

Beth Nowak, from our congregation has worked with Yang in the past and affirms, "Blia is very good at what she does. She takes all the time you need, she truly wants to be sure you get what you need and want."

Yang will have informational resources available for participants. If anyone would like a one-on-one meeting for a more personal approach she would be open to setting that up also. Stay tuned for more information on this important opportunity as we get closer to the date.



Summer Bible Study Opportunity

Pastor L is offering a study on the book of Nehemiah starting on Monday, July 8 at 6 p.m. at the church and continuing for six weeks. This study will come directly from the Bible so you won't have to purchase any extra books; just bring your favorite version of the Bible and maybe a notebook and pen to take notes or keep track of questions that you may have along the way.

Much of the book of Nehemiah consists of a first-person narrative recounting Nehemiah's role in reconstructing the walls of Jerusalem, expanding its population, correcting social abuses, and supporting the worship life of the community. For these reasons Nehemiah has long been a favorite character of Pastor L's as she gains inspiration and insight reading how Nehemiah works through his heartbreak of hearing of the demise of God's city and people, prayerfully seeks direction from God, and then goes to work rebuilding a community of faithful.

Nehemiah's story is not only inspirational but also provides practical tools, revealing the people God is asking you to encourage, the walls God is calling you to repair, the ministry you might be called to lead. In preparation for the study you may want to do a quick read through of Nehemiah (it's only 13 chapters), but if you don't find time to do that come to the study anyway.



Save the Date?

Enjoy an Evening with

4 ONE Quartet



Sparta UMC will host a summer concert by **4 ONE Quartet** on **Sunday, August 18, from 6:30-7:30 p.m.** with opportunity for fellowship and light refreshment after the concert.

4 ONE Quartet is an all-male southern gospel group, with their name deriving from 4 men who sing for ONE God! Their mission is to encourage, uplift, and serve by:

- Encouraging each person on their journey to come into a relationship with our Savior
- Uplifting each person on their walk to see our Savior
- Serving each person either in the local, regional, or national concert or church service setting.

These 4 men use the gifts God gave them, their voices, to spread the message of the gospel through their songs. Never is there a concert or church service where people don't feel blessed by their music.

4 ONE Quartet began their ministry in March of 2012. Their lineup of singers has years and years of experience singing southern gospel music.

Plan to attend and bring a friend for a relaxing evening of music on Sunday, August 18 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Comments from a recent concert:

"What a blessing today at church!! Ministry in music was such a gift to all who heard it."

"I felt that God was here this morning with me."

You can preview some of their music for yourself on their web site at: <https://4onequartet.com/>

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

(Matthew 25:23)

From *Writing a Money Autobiography* by Dan Dick:

A money autobiography is a reflection process on the role and influence of money and material possessions in our life. It challenges us to explore the past to see how our attitudes, assumptions, and values concerning money and wealth were formed.

Management Questions Concerning Money and Wealth

- In what ways are you a good manager of money? In what ways are you a poor manager of money?
- How do you feel about talking about your finances with other people? Why do you feel this way?
- Do you use credit cards? Do you pay the monthly balances in full? How does buying on credit make you feel? Why?
- How much money do you wish you had in the bank/invested? How did you arrive at this figure? How close is this to what you have?
- How much money do you give to church and charity? Do you tithe? How do you decide how much to give? Where to give?
- Do you have a personal budget? Why? How do you make decisions about what to spend, what to save, and what to give?
- What are your greatest financial concerns? How have you made decisions concerning retirement, insurance, drafting a will, etc? If you have not done so, why not?

It is useful to create a money autobiography journal to record your thoughts, reflections, and feelings. Then, you can return to the money autobiography journal months and years afterward.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation
Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation
at www.wumf.org or [Facebook/wumf.org](https://www.facebook.com/wumf.org)
Or call 1-888-903-9863

Thank You to all the wonderful volunteers who are mowing and tending to the church and parsonage lawns. It has really been a job keeping up with the constantly growing grass! Your time and energy is very much appreciated!

Why I Give:

I give because my parents taught me by example that it was the thing to do. When I received my allowance I was taught to give a portion of it for the work of the church.

I give out of gratitude for what God has given me and the growing I have experienced in various churches in the many communities I have lived.

I give because people in various churches were there to support me and encourage me during difficult times.

I give because I know that my gifts touch the lives of people in so many ways through the wonderful outreach ministry of the United Methodist Church.

I encourage you to ask yourself the question why do I give to the Ministry of the church. How has the ministry provided through my gifts touched people's lives and how have these gifts enhanced my life?

Also, remember the challenge I presented to the congregation? Consider giving an additional \$5 or \$10 or whatever additional gift you feel you can give per week to enhance the ministry is Sparta UMC.

Thank you for your support.

Paul Foulke, Finance Chair



Report of Annual Conference 2019

I was honored to be the laity delegate for the 2019 WI UMC Annual Conference. My first annual conference was an eye opener. The numerous Bible studies, worship music, and sermons were wonderful, and spirit-filled. However, the clergy and laity spent most of the three days on electing the general conference delegates and voting on submitted action items.

The two annual conference events I enjoyed the most were Bishop Hee-Soo Jung's opening Wilderness sermon and the ordination and commissioning. Bishop Jung's message identified that the WI Conference is currently in a time of disagreement, hurt, anger, anxiety, and possible division. This is not where we would like to be, but it is where we find ourselves. He received the Sacred Resistance, Call to Action after February 2019 General Conference and understands the faithful leaders feel the Methodist inaction has harmed the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Queer (LGBTQ+) community. Bishop Jung said the wilderness can be a scary place, but we are in the wilderness with God and each other, seeking a promised land. God is not finished with the WI Conference and United Methodist Church. Together, we can become the church God needs us to be. As you know, Bishop Jung is an eloquent speaker and the whole sermon can be found WI UMC website:

<https://www.wisconsinumc.org/Resources/Documents/AnnualConference/2019/OpeningSermon-BishopJung.pdf>

Second, the Service of Licensing, Commissioning, Ordination and Sacrament of Holy Communion was Sunday afternoon. It was an amazing ceremony and

unbelievable to see four bishops and around 200 clergy honoring the 15 clergy licensed as local pastors, six commissioned for the work of elder, one commissioned for the work of deacon, and three ordained as elders in full connection in the Wisconsin conference. The service was touching, and spirit-filled. It was astonishing to see these leaders follow God's calling to demonstrate their unfathomable service to Jesus Christ.

The Clergy elected three delegates to general conference (May 5-15, 2020), three delegates to jurisdictional conference (July 15-18, 2020), and four reserve clergy delegates. The Laity elected three delegates to general conference, three delegates to jurisdictional conference, and four reserve laity delegates.

Numerous action items were voted on and passed, some topics included: clergy rental/housing allowance, past service annuity rates, anti-racism training, clergy compensation, 2020 budget, and covenants for Christian Community Homes, Morrow Memorial Home, and Schmitt Woodland Hills; and 2020 General Conference constitutional conformity petitions removing homosexual, heterosexual, gay, and lesbian language.

A resolution creating a conference-wide dialogue program for understanding human sexuality was denied. Additionally, a resolution of a vision forward for the WI Annual Conference calling for Methodism rooted in Jesus, grounded in Wesleyan theology, inclusive of all persons and engaged in the work of justice, reconciliation and liberation...that affirms the sacred worth of persons of color, queer, and transgender, celebrates their gifts and commits to being in ministry together, was not voted on and forwarded to the Wisconsin Way Forward task force created by Bishop Jung after receiving the faithful leaders Sacred Resistance and Call to Action after February 2019 General Conference.

The conference workbook and additional action items can be found at: <https://www.wisconsinumc.org/Resources/Conference-Secretary>

Finally, Global UMC leaders and members are having to address the possibilities of changing our Book of Discipline with its traditional wording around human sexuality. This subject will be addressed again at the May 2020 General Conference. So, as UMC goes through the wilderness of the unknown, I feel we should all include our UMC leadership in our daily prayers.

In God's Love,

Donna Burnham

You can read the Sacred Resistance, Call to Action after 2019 General Conference that was written and signed by many throughout the Wisconsin Conference at:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-sD83OjV-1ZUFbOmfU6TlQm6-KDz7yN3k9p-YHduIFfQIgA/viewform?fbclid=IwAR3vRHYw_qsWAreywRZeWp389p7FSa2zCMjN1dJd-0cejoMEE6vRAN75Q0s

Administrative Church Council Review

There were twelve people present for the June Council meeting. We started with a presentation from Nate Hull of Hull Audio Video, out of Brandon Wisconsin. Toni contacted several audio visual companies to come and look at the need for updating our current sound system and the potential for installing big-screen TVs in the church for various uses. Nate was the only one who responded and specializes in working with churches. He had walked through the church two weeks prior with Pastor Loretta and Toni and came back with several options for our consideration. We will continue discussing the options to decide what will work best for us and fundraising opportunities that will balance with our current budget and maintenance needs.

The next order of business was supper (since we have been meeting at an earlier time over the summer). Thank you Toni Burrows for the delicious lasagna and Margie Lakowske for the chocolate chip ice cream for dessert. We were able to provide a good supper to Nate before he headed back to Brandon.

Our lay member to Annual Conference, Donna Burnham gave a brief report on Annual Conference, which was held in Green Bay on June 14-17. Donna was a great first-time delegate, taking many notes throughout the conference, and taking inspiration from the worship. Please see her full report in this edition of *The Chimes*.

Our finances have been looking better this month. Thank you to all who have stepped up. Expect to see your 6-month financial statement the second week of July. This will help us keep track of where we are in our commitment to the church and make adjustments, if necessary. Jim Wells from the Foundation will join us for worship on August 25 to share a message on stewardship. He will plan to stay for a while after worship, if anyone has questions related to the work of the United Methodist Foundation. Cheryl Isensee shared information about the Scrip Program for fundraising. You can read more about that in this edition of *The Chimes*.

Pastor Loretta had more information about the Accountable Leadership Structure. If we decide to proceed, it will be a one-year process of change that will begin with letting our District Superintendent know of our plans so training can be requested for our congregation. This would change our regular structure of Administrative Church Council and committees to a 9-12 person Accountable Leadership Board and some work teams.

The church was contacted by *4 One Quartet* asking if we would be willing to host a concert on Sunday, August 18 in the evening. After reviewing their information, the council agreed to host the concert.

There will be a free will offering to cover the group's expenses and the church will supply refreshments after the concert. You can read more about them in this edition of *The Chimes*.

Pastor Loretta will be on vacation June 30-July 6. Paul Foulke will fill the pulpit and be available, if needed. When she gets back from vacation she will offer a six-week Bible Study on Nehemiah starting on July 8 at 6 pm. You can read more about this opportunity in this edition of *The Chimes*. She is also looking forward to having a confirmation class this fall and is taking over a classroom for those classes.

Our Parish Nurse, Pricilla, will not be doing blood pressure checks after services until fall. She, and the visitation team, will continue with home visits. Priscilla will also be meeting with Chaplain Captain Hendrickson about Jail Ministries.

Lynn reported on the Walk Thru the Bible held at the Sparrow's Nest and encourages anyone given the opportunity to attend upcoming sessions.

The Council members are continuing to discuss a new meeting time for Ad Council when we begin meeting regularly in the fall. You can read the full minutes from this meeting on the bulletin board located in the ground floor hallway near the elevators.



Nurture News...

Summer...the season to be out and about and enjoy the lovely warm weather. Within the church, there are fewer planned events and committee meetings, but this gives us more time to “nurture” our congregation, neighbors and community friends.

Consider...visits, phone calls, encouraging notes, invitations to worship, Bible studies, Soup Supper, coffee fellowship on Wednesday mornings for the ladies, breakfast gatherings for the men and ladies on Friday mornings, concerts, volunteering—the list goes on!

“Stay connected to God – stay connected with others.”

When September arrives, we will begin B.A.S.H. (Bible Activities Story Hour) again on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. We sincerely welcome ALL children **ages 3 through 6th grade**. If you don't have children or grandchildren of your own to bring, do you have children in your neighborhood that would enjoy this special weekly ministry? How about inviting them?

The next Nurture Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 1st, at 6:00 p.m.

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You...

Thank you to Dean Olson and Larry Humphrey for their faithful work each week, keeping the church and parsonage lawns mowed and looking good. I am blessed each week to see you out there working. I don't know all the others who pitch in, but thank you to all who work behind the scenes, pulling weeds, caring for shrubs, trimming trees, just plain doing what needs to be done to keep these properties safe and looking good. You all work behind the scenes to not bring attention to yourselves, but I want you to know your work is noticed and appreciated. --Pastor L



We want to give a BIG thank you to Jack Buswell and Diane & John Noonan for purchasing mulch for the church landscaping. Special thanks also to the Noonans, who took time to spread the mulch for us. Your generosity and hard work are very much appreciated!

The Trustees Committee



Dear Worship Community,

Your congregation's offerings of love help the United Methodist Church to launch and strengthen Native American Ministries, both urban and rural, and to recruit and prepare Native American pastors.

Thank you for your participation! Thanks to your church's giving to Native American Ministries, we equip and empower Native American outreach, congregations and seminary students. Thank you for being a part of it!

Blessings, The Rev. Glen Chebon Kernell
Executive Secretary of Native American and
Indigenous Ministries, Global Ministries



A Note of Thanks...

Thank you to Cyndi Wise and the ladies of the United Methodist Women for the beautiful hydrangea plant! It has brightened my living room during my recuperation.

Sincerely, Ellen Hemstock



Dear Friends:

Thank you for your generous gifts to the Church World Service (CWS) Blankets program. As families and communities around the world recover from emergencies and struggle in the face of challenges, you are standing with them. You are providing relief and hope.

Your contribution provides hope to neighbors near and far, from migrant families facing cold and wet conditions to refugees who have just arrived in the

United States to build a new future to guests at homeless shelters. Around the world, your support of this program means vital supplies and support for those in need.

Because of you, Church World Service is able to respond when disasters occur and support is needed. We thank you!

May God bless you for your support,

Rev. John L McCullough,
President and CEO, Church World Service

P.S. To find out more about the individuals, families and communities you're helping, please visit cwsblankets.org.



May 2019 General Budget Contributions/Expenses

Date	Revenue*	Expenses
5/05/2019	3,309.80	1,862.17
5/12/2019	7,386.08	4,576.29
5/19/2019	2,545.00	34.46
5/26/2019	2,371.75	5,526.70

*\$3,895.73 is necessary every week to meet annual budget.



June 2019 General Budget Contributions/Expenses

Date	Revenue*	Expenses
6/02/2019	3,918.40	2,449.31
6/09/2019	3,458.09	2,384.65
6/16/2019	4,411.31	3,711.81
6/23/2019	2,400.60	3,085.41
6/30/2019	Not yet available	Not yet available

*\$3,895.73 is necessary every week to meet annual budget.



We welcome into our Christian Fellowship through the Sacrament of Baptism:

Adeline Ann Simplot, infant daughter of Jacqueline (Miller) & Benjamin Simplot. Her sponsors were Jerad Olver and Lonnie Simplot.



Our Deepest Sympathy To:

The family and friends of Nancy Hendricks (wife of Dave), for the loss of Nancy.

The family and friends of John Perry, for the loss of John.

The family and friends of Joan Cook, for the loss of Joan.

The family and friends of John Harrison (father of Brittany & Cody Flury), for the loss of John.

The family and friends of Mark Mattke, for the loss of Mark.

The family and friends of Randy Harris (son-in-law of Bob Olson), for the loss of Randy.

Looking Ahead to Confirmation

Classes...

Confirmation classes start on Wednesday, September 18 at 6 p.m. (the same day and time BASH starts back up). We will meet in the classroom next to pastor's office.

Each confirmand will be required to find a mentor so students should be considering who they would like to ask to be their mentor; boys should ask a man from our congregation and girls a woman. Your mentor should be someone you look up to in their Christian walk. **Adults out there**, if a confirmand asks you to be their mentor consider it an honor that they look up to you and prayerfully say yes. Pastor L is looking forward to getting to know the confirmands, parents, and mentors!

Pastor is planning a two-year cycle for confirmation beginning with Christian foundations. Parents and students that have already shown an interest (basically our BASH students who are going in to 7th grade) will receive a detailed letter in August. If you would like to get on the confirmation class role please call the office and get your student's name, address, etc. to pastor.

Confirmation is an opportunity for young people to affirm the faith into which they were baptized and, for those who were baptized as infants or small children, to renew the baptismal vows taken for them by their parents or guardians. For those who have not been baptized, they will be baptized as part of the confirmation service.

Confirmation also makes young people aware of how God is and has been at work in their lives, even before they were old enough to realize it. And confirmation affirms a new commitment—a new covenant relationship—between a young person and Christ's body, the church, as they become members of the church.

The confirmation program is grounded in these three core principles:

- Confirmation is the continuation of one's faith journey (a journey begun at baptism) and the beginning of one's covenant relationship with the church—it is not graduation from church school but the beginning of a new and more mature faith life.
- Confirmation is more than just a series of classes. Confirmands must be fully engaged in the life of the church through worship, service, small groups, and involvement in other ministries.
- Confirmands should emerge from their confirmation experience prepared for a life of continued Christian discipleship.

Confirmation Goals

- Teach confirmands the story of their faith, as contained in the Old and New Testaments and in the history and traditions of Christianity and The United Methodist Church.
- Give confirmands a basic understanding of Christian theology, including the doctrine of the Trinity, creation, sin, and grace.
- Teach confirmands the traditions and doctrinal emphases that make United Methodism unique.
- Foster relationships between confirmands and Christian adults in the congregation who can set an example of how to live as a mature Christian.
- Give confirmands an understanding of the importance of Christian education as a lifelong endeavor, and help confirmands develop a habit of participating in Christian education.
- Give confirmands an understanding of Christian worship as practiced in The United Methodist Church and why worship is an essential part of Christian discipleship.
- Challenge confirmands to serve God and others through the life and ministry of the congregation.
- Give confirmands an opportunity to participate in Christian mission and ministry beyond the local church.
- Teach confirmands about the vows they will have an opportunity to take and the commitments that one makes when one says yes to those vows.



**Featuring Sparta's own hometown girl:
Erin (Daly) Schneider and her daughter, Addy!**



Beken

Come and experience Beken, a folk-country mother and daughter duo immersed in family harmonies. Their newest hit "Mason Jars & Fireflies" will transport you back to the simpler times of childhood.

Date: July 14, 2019
Place: Faith Evangelical Free Church
Hwy 16 / Sparta, WI
Time: 6:30PM "Free Admission"

The image shows the album cover for 'Beken' by Erin (Daly) Schneider and her daughter Addy. The cover features a photograph of the duo sitting on a wooden bench in a bright, sunlit room. The title 'Beken' is written in a large, elegant, cursive font at the top. Below the photo, there is a short promotional text and a box containing event details for a performance on July 14, 2019, at Faith Evangelical Free Church in Sparta, WI, at 6:30 PM with free admission.