



## Chimes News Letter

### Sparta United Methodist Church

210 North Court St. Sparta, WI 54656 | (608) 269-6949

office@spartamethodist.com | www.spartaumc.net

Reverend Lourdes Magalhães

July 2025

### Unpacking Burdens, Planting Hope: A Freedom Rooted in Christ

*"Come to me, all you who  
are weary and carrying  
heavy burdens, and I will give  
you rest."*

— Matthew 11:28 (CEB)

Dear Beloved Sparta UMC  
Family,

This July, as we walk through  
sun-drenched days and  
starry nights, our nation  
pauses to  
celebrate **Independence  
Day**—a time when fireworks  
light the sky and flags wave  
high in tribute to freedom.  
But beneath the celebration,  
many hearts are heavy. We  
live in a time when **fear has  
quietly crept into our lives**—  
fear for the future, fear for  
our children, fear of division,  
war, loss, or simply the  
weight of too much change,  
too quickly.



This summer, our sermon series *“There is Summer Baggage: Unpacking the Weights That Hold Us Back”* offers us something more than reflection—it offers **release**. Jesus invites us not only to survive but to **rest**. Not just to carry on, but to **lay down** the invisible burdens that wear us thin. His words in Matthew 11:28 are like a cool breeze on a scorching day: *“Come to me... and I will give you rest.”*

**This is the freedom we most deeply need**—not just political liberty, but the kind that comes from being set free from fear, shame, and striving. As John Wesley wrote, “Christian liberty is not a freedom from duty, but freedom to love, to serve, and to live holy lives.” True freedom, is not found in doing whatever we want, but in becoming who we were created to be—people of courage, mercy, and purpose.

**Adam Hamilton** reminds us:

*“God doesn't promise to take away every burden, but to walk with us and help us carry it. What He offers is peace in the storm, rest in the labor, and hope in the chaos.”*

This is the message we need to **plant like seeds**—into the soil of fearful hearts, into the fields of our community, into the souls of our children and elders alike. And just like seeds, it begins small:

- A kind word spoken.
- A shared prayer under a tree.
- A laugh over a meal at our July 2 Park Event.
- A young person feeling safe in church.
- An older friend hearing, “You still matter.”

These are holy moments. They may seem ordinary, but they are how **God waters weary hearts**.

In Galatians 5:13, Paul tells us: *“You were called to freedom... but don't use it for selfish gain. Serve one another in love.”* So as we unpack our summer baggage—anxiety, resentment, isolation—let us plant something new: **courage, connection, and Christ-shaped community**. Whether you're young or aging, tired or just beginning, you belong in this work of hope.

This July, may we choose to be **seed-planters of the Kingdom**. Let us be the people who lighten the burdens of others, who walk with the weary, and who proclaim—not with shouts, but with our lives—that **love is stronger than fear**, and that **Christ is still the hope of the world**.

In the warm light of grace and the freedom of Jesus,  
see you at worship, and in the park on July 2nd!

With love and hope,

**Rev. Lourdes Magalhães**

Sparta United Methodist Church

*“The best of all is, God is with us.”* — John Wesley

**Happy and blessed 4th of July!**

## UWOF Update...

The Wesleyan Circle women hope you are having a wonderful summer so far.

There is no scheduled potluck in July. Our energies will be used to help with the church wide fundraiser on July 2 at Concert in the Park.

At the August 12<sup>th</sup> potluck, held at the home of Bob and Cyndi Wise, members will be brainstorming ideas for our monthly meetings beginning in September.

A theme to use as a guide is Community Connection. Our purpose is mission outreach. Our annual giving reflects that with local organizations such as Brighter Tomorrows, St. Clare Mission, Restorative Justice and the SASD Backpack program to mention a few. A representative from different local organizations will be invited to update our group. Do you know of an organization we aren't aware of where someone can come and share their mission during a meeting? We will also seek Pastor's guidance for enrichment programs for some months. Be prepared to plan at least for September through January. Everyone's input has value.

The women who mentored us (without knowing it) for years are still in our community and we need to stay connected to them.

Now, pray on the matter of Wesleyan Circle still needs a chairwoman to guide us through our meetings. The position comes with free mentoring and grateful hearts.

Through Christ our Lord, we continue our purpose and mission.

Cathy N., retired chairwoman



## A Pastoral Word to the Sparta Women of Faith "Carrying Our Own Kind of Baggage"

[*"Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."*

— Matthew 11:28 (CEB)

Dear Sisters in Christ, in our July sermon series, "*Summer Baggage: Unpacking the Weights That Hold Us Back*," we've been naming the quiet, often unseen burdens we carry. And I want to take a moment to speak directly to **you, the women of our church and friends**—whether you are a mother or not, whether you work outside the home or within it, whether your hands are filled with caregiving or clasped in prayer.

**Women carry their own kind of weight.** Sometimes it's hormonal, emotional, relational, or spiritual. Sometimes it's all of these wrapped in silence. There's the woman going through **menopause**, feeling like her body no longer follows predictable patterns. There's the **mother whose children are growing up**, walking out of the house, and sometimes away from the faith she planted. There's the woman sitting alone in a kitchen filled with memories, feeling the **ache of the empty nest**. There's the **aging woman**, still wise, still strong in spirit, but fighting the slow betrayals of her body. There's the woman whose health falters, and she wonders, "What can I still offer?" And there's the **career woman**, balancing faith and deadlines, or the **stay-at-home mom**, wondering if her life is still seen and her worth still spoken.

To all of you I say: **Jesus sees your baggage.** He doesn't tell you to hide it. He doesn't say "get over it." Instead, He whispers, "*Come to me.*" Come with your tiredness, your questions, your regret, your longing, and even your laughter. Come with your hopes still rising, even if faint. **Jesus invites you to put the heavy bag down**—not because you're weak, but because you're loved.



Theologian **Kate Bowler**, who has lived with chronic illness, once wrote:

*“God does not need you to be strong. God only asks you to turn to Him, even with tears in your eyes.”*

And **John Wesley** reminded his Methodist sisters and brothers that *“The world is our parish,”* but **God is our source**. You are not defined by your productivity, your roles, your looks, or your achievements. You are defined by being a **beloved child of God**, fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14).

This month, let the church be a safe space where you are free to feel what you feel—where grief has a name, and joy finds its song again. Let us be a community that **walks beside you**, prays for you, and lifts your arms when you're too tired to hold them up.

Whether you are starting a new season or letting go of one that has ended, **you are not alone**. In Jesus, you are accompanied by grace. As Methodist pastor and author **Elaine A. Heath** puts it:

*“God speaks to women not as a separate class, but as bearers of light for the whole body.”*

So this July, dear woman of God, **you are invited to unpack your burdens**, release the fear that says, *“I am not enough,”* and embrace the Savior who calls you by name.

We see you. We bless you. We walk with you. And most of all—**Christ carries you**.

In His rest,

**Rev. Lourdes Magalhães**

Sparta United Methodist Church

## Bibliography & Quotes

- Bowler, Kate. *Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I've Loved*. Random House, 2018.

- Heath, Elaine A. *The Mystic Way of Evangelism: A Contemplative Vision for Christian Outreach*. Baker Academic, 2008.
- Hamilton, Adam. *Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times*. Convergent, 2018.
- Wesley, John. *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 1777.
- Scripture: Matthew 11:28 (CEB), Psalm 139:1



## "Grace Bowl" – Summer Restorative Quinoa Salad

Inspired by Matthew 11:28 – “Come to me... and I will give you rest.”

**Serves: 4 | Prep Time: 25 min | Dairy-free, Gluten-free, Heart-healthy**

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup quinoa (rinsed)
- 2 cups water



- **1 cup chickpeas** (cooked or canned, rinsed and drained)
- **1 cup cherry tomatoes**, halved
- **1 cucumber**, chopped
- **1 avocado**, diced
- **¼ red onion**, finely sliced
- **½ cup shredded carrots**
- **½ cup fresh parsley** or mint, chopped
- **¼ cup toasted sunflower seeds or slivered almonds**
- **1 cup fresh spinach or baby arugula**

### Lemon-Turmeric Dressing:

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of 1 large lemon
- 1 teaspoon **honey** or maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon **turmeric powder** (anti-inflammatory and healing)
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- Fresh ground black pepper, to taste
- Optional: a pinch of cayenne for a gentle kick

### Directions:

#### 1. **Cook the Quinoa:**

In a medium pot, bring quinoa and water to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 12–15 minutes, or until fluffy. Let it cool for a few minutes.

#### 2. **Prepare the Dressing:**

In a small bowl or jar, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, honey, turmeric, salt, and pepper. Set aside.

#### 3. **Assemble the Salad:**

In a large bowl, combine the cooked quinoa, chickpeas, tomatoes, cucumber, avocado, red onion, carrots, and parsley.

#### 4. **Toss with Greens and Seeds:**

Add in spinach or arugula and sprinkle with sunflower seeds or almonds. Pour the dressing over and gently toss.

#### 5. **Let It Rest:**

Allow the salad to sit for 10–15 minutes before serving. This “rest” lets the flavors deepen—just like our souls when we pause.

### A Word of Blessing:

As you gather to eat, may this dish remind you that **rest is sacred**, and nourishment is more than food—it’s also love, laughter, and presence.

Whether shared around a busy table or eaten in a moment of quiet - alone, may this Grace Bowl be a taste of the comfort Christ offers to every weary soul.



Lord bless this food, bless my live and restore, nourish my body and my soul, amen!

“You are not defined by your productivity... You are defined by being a beloved child of God.” – This recipe was inspired by the article above

*Contribution:* **Reverend Lourdes Magalhães - Pastor]**

### Finance Update:

[I begin by thanking the people who have given generously to the ministry of Sparta UMC. Your generosity allows our church to honor all our bills to keep our ministry going including paying our apportionments in full for 2025 honoring our



connection as a UMC. Your faithful generosity also help the Pastoral Care Ministry to develop what is needed to revitalize our church ministry reaching out the unchurched, and blessing those who faithfully keep Sparta

UMC as their Spiritual Home. I praise the Lord for your response, we were able to pay our connectional giving (apportionment) 100% Again, thank you to all the people who support our church with their gifts of different kinds. May God reward you with His richest blessings he has just for you.] Paul Foulke, Finance chair



## Servant Leadership Board Report (SLB)

Our last meeting was held June 3 at 6pm. Here are some of the highlights:

### **Finance** – Paul Foulke, chair

- We applied for the Equitable Compensation Grant to help supplement our Pastor's Salary. This was something we applied for and received last year. Our application has been put on hold and will be revisited in the fall.
- Ellen sent a letter to the District Superintendent, Amanda Stein regarding apportionment reduction request – this must be approved by the Wisconsin Annual Conference.
- Amy reported that the Workman's Comp insurance did not get paid due to a glitch with transfer of vendors. She later found out that the next vendor just needed our Tax-Exempt number. We are all paid up now.

### **Staff Pastor Relations Committee (SPRC)** – Ellen Hemstock, chair

- Beth Jerman is doing well as our new office admin.
- Beth will be taking some time off. We will need to recruit volunteers to sit in the office during her absences.
- Ellen will be attending Annual Conference June 6-8.

### **Trustees** – Scott Naeseth, chair

- The memorial committee has asked that some of Elaine Lee's memorial be used toward an upgrade to the sound system. Ron and Toni will work on this.

### *Unfinished and New Business*

### **Fundraisers**

- Selling Concessions at the Concert in the Park on July 2
  - Cathy Nichols has offered her

expertise to help with coordination. She met with the other group who selling that day (VFW Auxiliary) to see what their menu was and then made some recommendations to SLB.

- SLB decided on Walking Tacos, Nachos, cans of soda, bars, and cookies
- Cathy and Toni will meet to finalize the clipboard items needed for helpers and donations.

### **Summer Plans**

- SLB will host "Ice Cream Sundays" on the last Sunday of June, July, and August.
- Ellen has coordinated special music for each Sunday during the summer.
- It was suggested to have another Ice Cream Social like last summer.
  - Because of many other events already on the calendar that might conflict during the evening, we discussed having a Pie and Ice Cream event after service instead.
- Ellen suggested August 10 which is the Sunday that the Barbershop Quartet is singing. Group approved.
  - We will not serve Bar-B-Q, just pie and ice cream out on the lawn (weather permitting).

### **Town Hall Meeting**

- Ellen reported that she had received positive feedback from the Town Hall Meeting in March. She also said there was interest in us holding another soon.
- We decided to hold a quarterly Town Hall meeting with the next session on Sunday, June 29 after the worship service.



Toni Jensen, SLB Chair

## Trustees Update....

Things are moving slowly concerning the sale of the Parsonage. We may have to consider dropping the price if we want it sold this year.

During the Summer, there is a lot of groundwork to be done to maintain the outside of the Church. Please consider volunteering an hour or two to help with this. It would be greatly appreciated.

Have an enjoyable Summer.

Scott Naeseth Trustees Chair



## Annual Conference 2025 Report

June 5 – 8, 2025

Madison Marriot West Convention Center  
1313 John Q. Hammons Drive, Middleton, WI  
53562

“Grace is Sufficient”

The United Methodist Church Annual Conference was held in Middleton at the Marriot West Convention Center on June 5 – 8, 2025. It was an amazing gathering of clergy, laity, youth, and friends. There was worship, praise, connections, prayer, voting on resolutions and more.

The conference was led by our new Bishop of the WI/NIL conference, Bishop Dan Schwerin. He was elected bishop in November 2022 and consecrated in January 2023. As a point of interest, his Haiku collection won the 2018 Haiku Foundation Touchstone Award. The newly formed WI/NIL conference has four divisions – Northeast, Northwest, Southwest and Southeast. There are 800 churches in our conference. We are in the Southwest division and our District Superintendent is Rev. Amanda Stein. Bishop Schwerin started off the conference with, “This is the year of Grace, let us begin with gratitude for what God has given us. Bring hearts of appreciation.”

Worship highlights were:

- Bible Study: Dr. Ahyun Lee (previously a pastor at my hometown church in Mayville and currently at Garret Theological Seminary) led the Bible studies on Paul’s letter in 2 Corinthians 12:9 “Grace is Sufficient.”
- Retiree Recognition Service: There were 26 retirees recognized by Rev. Dan Dick. They ranged from 25 years of service all the way to 72 years of service.
- Ordination & Commissioning Service: led by Rev. Dr. Jerry Devine. There were 6 Deacons (One newly commissioned deacon, Jill Nolan, started her faith journey in my hometown, Mayville.)
  - There were 3 Elders
  - There were 4 certified Lay Speakers
  - There were 3 certified Lay Ministers
  - There were three transfers of ministers from other conferences
  - There were 8 newly ordained ministers
- Memorial Service: led by Bishop Dan Schwerin, a meaningful service to remember those clergy and spouses who passed this year.

Voting:

- 4 Constitutional Amendments were passed by a 2/3 majority. They will be recognized at the next General Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Other Statistics:

- There were 4 Wisconsin churches that closed their doors this year.
- The average church size is 94 and the median is 55 members
- 30% of churches can afford a full-time pastor.
- Memberships have dropped by 36% since 2018.
- 40 ministry grants were given out \$404,000.
- 50% of Wisconsin clergy were born outside of the United States.

The Delegation of Youth and Young Adults spoke:



They spoke of Real Connection, shared Faith and making their own decisions to get involved in the church. Outreach needs to bring the love of Christ in their lives so that Faith becomes personal. Spaces are needed that help them serve and grow. We heard about: Revive - a non-profit team of dedicated individuals who collaborate with faith-based organizations to reimagine their site use and configuration. Their focus is on sustainability and effectiveness, allowing these organizations to return to their core mission of ministry.

[info@revivecommdev.org](mailto:info@revivecommdev.org) This might be a good resource for our church.

Highlights for me as an attendee of Annual Conference:

- I was able to sing with the 50 voice choir for the Ordination Ceremony. The choir was directed by Rev. Sangwook Park.
- I was able to connect with Rev. Rey Diaz who is out of retirement and serving at Fennimore. His family is doing well. He has 8 grandchildren and a new great grandson.
- I also connected with Rev. Dr. Hae Jung. She is in West Bend and says that things are going very well. It was a good move!
- I saw Pastor Loretta Waughtal. She is also out of retirement and serving Melrose.
- Many of you will remember Pat Spors. I sat with Pat for the duration of the conference. She is in Janesville. Their church is struggling financially as ours is, but they have an amazing mission program that send quilts, and needed items to churches all over the world. She is traveling to Africa soon on a mission trip.
- I enjoyed dinner two nights with Pastor Lourdes and David. It was a time of relaxation and connection.

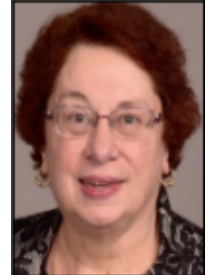
The 2025 Annual Conference offered a rich blend of worship, governance and fellowship anchored by the theme, “Grace is Sufficient.” Highlights included ordained clergy, memorial moments,

retiree recognition and engagement with critical denominational amendments. The conference fostered renewal, connection and clarity moving into another year of ministry. (To read all the materials go to

<https://www.wisconsinumc.org/conference> materials - the conference website.) Bishop Schwerin assured us that “We

are not alone. We are in this journey together. God will not leave us. There is more grace to come.”

submitted by Lay Member  
Ellen Hemstock



## Sparta UMC Men

["The Silent Weights Men Carry":

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."*

— Matthew 11:28 (CEB)



Dear Brothers in Christ,

I want to speak directly to you, the men of our church—fathers and grandfathers, single and married men, hard workers, quiet listeners, veterans, visionaries, and faithful volunteers.

You carry weight too. But often, you carry it in silence.



The pressure to “be strong” can be unrelenting. There are men in our pews and out there who are wrestling with **what it means to grow older**—to be respected, yet overlooked. There

are men managing **health concerns** they rarely speak of. Others feel the **financial pressures of providing**, or the invisible burden of always needing to “have it together.”

Some of you are looking at a career that no longer fulfills you—or a life that hasn't turned out the way you hoped. Some of you are quietly grieving—for a parent, a spouse, a dream, or for children who've grown distant. Others carry **guilt** over things done or left undone, words spoken or withheld.

To all of you, Jesus says: "*Come to me.*" Come not because you are failing—but because **you are human**. You were never meant to carry it all alone.

**Adam Hamilton** writes,

*"So many men have been taught to hide their fear, their sadness, even their love. But Jesus never asked for silent strength. He asked for trust."*

And **John Wesley**, though often remembered for his intellect and action, never stopped emphasizing the **heart of faith**—a personal, healing encounter with God. He preached not just to save the mind, but to **set the soul free**. That includes your soul, brother.

Men often feel they must *do* something to be valuable.

But Christ's invitation in Matthew 11 is not, "*Do more,*" but rather, "*Come to me.*" You matter—not for what you produce, fix, or protect—but because **you are God's beloved son**.

So, let me say to you:

- You are more than your job title.
- You are not alone in your quiet fears.
- You are not less of a man for needing help.
- You are seen.
- You are strong—not because you carry everything—but because you have the humility to lay it down at Jesus' feet.

**The church needs men who will pray boldly, confess honestly, mentor wisely, love deeply, and lead gently.** Whether you're a 20-year-old seeking direction, a 50-year-old bearing the burdens of work and family, or an 80-year-old wondering what's next—you still have a role in **God's story**.

As theologian **Howard Thurman** once wrote:

*"Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is men who have come alive."*

Let this July be a moment of renewal. Join us in worship. Come to the park on July 2. Reach out to a brother in Christ. Let's stop pretending we don't

need each other—and remember that the strongest men are those who walk in grace.

**Lay down the heavy weights. Pick up faith. And find your rest in Christ.**

With respect and brotherly hope,

**Rev. Lourdes Magalhães**

## Bibliography & Quotes

- Hamilton, Adam. *Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times*. Convergent, 2018.
- Thurman, Howard. *Meditations of the Heart*. Beacon Press, 1999.
- Wesley, John. *Journal and Sermons*, 18th Century.
- Scripture: Matthew 11:28 (CEB), Psalm 55:22]

## SPARTA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



## THE LUGGAGE OF FEAR

JULY 6, 2025



## Kids & Youth Corner

Hey there, Summer is supposed to be all fun—right? Sun, games, friends, late mornings. But if we're being real, summer can also come with **its own baggage**. That's what we've been talking about in church—how we all carry things in our hearts that no one else may see.

You're Not Alone! And I want you to know this: **your baggage matters.**



Many times You carry a baggage full of frustrations, fears, pain, decisions. Sometimes you have to besides coupling with your full baggage, have to couple also with the adult's heavy baggage as you watch parents splitting up, maybe trying to figure out how to live in two different houses. Others,

carry a baggage of missing a parent who's far away working abroad or in another state or city, others serving the country—maybe deployed. Some just come to church because your grandparents bring you while parent's are working unable to come with you. That can feel awkward, or even lonely. You might wonder, *"Why doesn't my family come with me? Am I weird for showing up without them?"*

Let me tell you something that I hope you never forget:

You are not weird. You are brave. You are loved. You are seen.

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."*  
— Matthew 11:28 (CEB)

Jesus sees you. He knows exactly what you're carrying—even the things you don't talk about. He says to you, *"Come to me."* Not, *"Fix yourself first."* Not, *"Wait until your family's perfect."* Just: *"Come."*

And here at Sparta UMC?

This is your place too. Your life situation doesn't disqualify you. In fact, your courage to show up, to sing, to learn, to be here—it makes this church stronger. We love you!

Pastor and author **Adam Hamilton** once wrote: *"The Church is at its best when it welcomes the broken and walks with the wounded."*



That includes you. Whatever you're facing—sadness, confusion, anger, questions about God—you don't have to carry it alone. This summer, Jesus wants to give you rest. Real rest. Peace inside. Strength for the next step. So keep coming. Keep asking. Keep being you. Whether you're 13 or 18, you are part of this church. Whether your parents come or not. Whether you're struggling or smiling. Whether you feel faith or are just figuring it out.

We're so glad you're here.  
And remember, **you're never walking alone.**

In Christ's love,  
**Pastor Lourdes**



Color or colored or magazine paper and do a collage in the image then send it to some one of our homebound church friends and make their day a joyful day. Need help with addresses, Contact the Office.

Name:



Write a pray to the person you are giving this image for as a bless to them. If you need help ask an adult to help you or come on Sunday 9am to the Church bring all the material and we can do it together.

## Community Help

### Emergency & 24/7 Crisis Helplines

- **Dial 911** for any life-threatening emergency.
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** – call, text, or chat anytime for immediate help; national service available in Wisconsin [lacrossesuicideprevention.org+15dpi.wi.gov+15campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com+15co.monroe.wi.us](https://lacrossesuicideprevention.org+15dpi.wi.gov+15campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com+15co.monroe.wi.us).
- **Monroe County 24-Hour Crisis Line** – call 888-552-6642 for mental health, addiction, or suicide-related emergencies [co.monroe.wi.us+1co.monroe.wi.us+1](https://co.monroe.wi.us+1co.monroe.wi.us+1).

### Local Mental Health & Crisis Services

- **Monroe County Dept. of Human Services – Children & Family Services**  
Provides child and youth crisis intervention, child abuse reporting, and mental health support [findhelp.org+10co.monroe.wi.us+10co.monroe.wi.us+10campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com](https://findhelp.org+10co.monroe.wi.us+10co.monroe.wi.us+10campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com).
- **Monroe County Mental Health Coalition / Mental Health Fair**  
Hosts events (e.g., May 16, 2024) promoting awareness, outreach, and community resources [monroe.extension.wisc.edu+1co.monroe.wi.us+1](https://monroe.extension.wisc.edu+1co.monroe.wi.us+1).
- **Sparta School District Counseling Services**  
All schools—elementary, middle, and high—offer in-school counseling; contact your child's school counselor for help [dpi.wi.gov+5spartan.org+5findhelp.org+5](https://dpi.wi.gov+5spartan.org+5findhelp.org+5).

### Peer & Youth-Focused Programs

- **The Trevor Project**  
Offers LGBTQ+ youth (up to 25) 24/7 crisis intervention via phone, text, and

[chaten.wikipedia.org+2campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com+2en.wikipedia.org+2](https://chaten.wikipedia.org+2campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com+2en.wikipedia.org+2).

- **Hope Squad**  
Peer-to-peer suicide prevention program used in schools to reduce stigma and connect struggling youth to [helpen.wikipedia.org](https://helpen.wikipedia.org).

### Community & Prevention Initiatives

- **Monroe County Suicide Prevention Taskforce**  
Engages in awareness, education, and prevention; meets monthly and supports local [strategiesco.monroe.wi.us+10co.monroe.wi.us+10monroe.extension.wisc.edu+10](https://strategiesco.monroe.wi.us+10co.monroe.wi.us+10monroe.extension.wisc.edu+10).
- **Prevent Suicide Wisconsin (MHA-WI)**  
Statewide coalition supporting local suicide efforts and training like Zero Suicide for communities [co.monroe.wi.us+10mhawisconsin.org+10en.wikipedia.org+10](https://co.monroe.wi.us+10mhawisconsin.org+10en.wikipedia.org+10).

### Additional Resources & Strategies

- **Monroe County Mental Health Resource Guide (PDF)**  
Includes youth counseling, substance use services, and crisis support options [namiwisconsin.org+2workforceconnections.org+2campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com+2](https://namiwisconsin.org+2workforceconnections.org+2campussuite-storage.s3.amazonaws.com+2).
- **Supportive Connections**
  - **Crisis Text Line** – Text HOME to 741-741 for free, confidential support.
  - **Trans Lifeline** – For trans youth/supporters: 1-877-565-8860 [en.wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org).
  - **You Matter, StopBullying.gov, Love is Respect, etc.** – national tools and resources for teens [en.wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org).

**Spiritual Crisis call Sparta UMC**  
**(608) 269-6949 - M-F 9am - 2pm**

## Summer Baggage & Supper Grace: A Letter to Our Soup & Supper Friends

*Theme Verse: "Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." – Matthew 11:28 (CEB)*

Dear Soup & Supper Friends,



Every Tuesday evening, as you walk through the doors of our church and come to our fellowship Hall, something sacred happens. It's more than soup. It's more than bread. It's more than conversation. It's a shared journey—a place where burdens are acknowledged, not ignored; where stories are held with tenderness, not judgment; and where hope, like a good warm meal, is served freely.

This summer, our church has been talking about *"Summer Baggage: Unpacking the Weights That Hold Us Back."* We've all got baggage. Some of it we've carried for years—grief, guilt, poverty, fear, addiction, loneliness. Others carry rejection from places that should've been safe—like family, or even churches. Maybe you've felt that sting. Maybe you've been made to feel like you didn't belong. But not here.

Here, you are *seen*. You are *valued*. And you are *loved*.

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary..." That means you. The one who barely made it through the day. The one tired of pretending. The one who wonders if anyone cares. The one who keeps getting knocked down but still shows up. That kind of strength is sacred.

Every time you sit down with us on Tuesdays night, you teach us something about courage. You remind us what real community looks like—not fancy or perfect, but honest and full of grace.

So this summer, let's make a deal. Let's not hide our baggage. Let's bring it to the table—yes, even the invisible kind. Let's make space for each other's messiness and stories. Let's find rest in Jesus who doesn't ask us to clean ourselves up before coming, but welcomes us as we are—hungry, weary, and hoping.

You are part of this family. Not because you earned it. Not because you paid for it. But because grace made room for you.

And if this is a hard week, know this: You're not alone. You're carried in prayer. You are believed in. And we're saving you a seat at the table.

With love and hope,  
**Pastor Lourdes & Your Sparta UMC Family**

P.S. If you ever want someone to talk to, cry with, or pray with—you've got people here. Let's walk this summer together, and leave some of that old baggage behind. I believe God can help each one of us as he has helped me - Pastor Lourdes

### SPECIAL MUSIC



During the summer months we will have Special Music on Sunday services

**Here is the line up for July**

July 6, Cyndi Wise  
July 13, Nicole Dutter  
July 20, Ellen Hemstock  
July 27, Laurie Bartholomew, Toni Jensen,  
Piano -Ellen Hemstock



## Shop with scrip...support our church

[Thank you to everyone who continues to support the church through the shop with scrip program.

The next scrip order will be going in on July 13. You can mail your order directly to Cheryl Isensee at: 9262 Festival Avenue, Sparta, WI 54656. If you have questions or need an order form contact the church (269-6949.)

If you find yourself in need of a card before the next order goes in give Cheryl a call and ask if she has the card you need. She sometimes has a few extra scrip cards for local businesses on hand.]



## Records & History

We didn't meet in May. I hope you will be able to attend our June 11th meeting. It will be at 8:30 am in the Church Conference Room. Our main topic will be the Concert in October. Anyone that is interested in helping with the Concert or serving on this Committee is welcome to attend. *We Are - Keeping the Eternal Flame Glowing*



[Mary Morrow's Attic is looking for volunteers. Mary Morrow's Attic is a ministry of the Morrow Home. The Attic opened in 2009 as a place for people to donate unwanted clothes, household items, toys, puzzles, books, etc. Sixteen years later the Attic has donated \$848,039 to the Morrow Home to enrich the lives of the residents.

The Attic pays their rent and utilities and gives back to the community through the Community Thanksgiving & Christmas Dinners, and helps those down on their luck.

Without the wonderful volunteers at the Attic, this ministry wouldn't be as successful as it is. They could use more volunteers. If this is something you're interested in doing, give them a call at 608-269-1047. The Attic hours are Tuesday-Thursday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Fridays 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

You may want to volunteer as much as four days a week or as little as one day a month. They have a job for you if you like to sort, clean, price, put items on the shelf or check customers out.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Cheryl Isensee  
Executive Assistant  
Morrow Home Community]



## Volunteer Opportunity...

["Family Promise of Monroe Co." (and nationwide)

Please consider volunteering with transportation, meals, day-center volunteers, etc.

A few years ago, our church became involved in helping support Family Promise in many ways, then the COVID pandemic came. The program is going strong again, and has purchased the former Torkelson Funeral Home on Oak Street to house homeless families temporarily.

Community volunteers are needed. If you have any questions and/or can help in some way, you can

call Cyndi Wise at 608-269-4529.

Thank you for considering this.]

**Sparta United  
Methodist Church  
offers opportunity  
for volunteers to  
serve in yur beloved  
Church. Please  
contact our office  
if you have time and  
want to bless us.**



When Pastor Lourdes and David asked me if the ladies of the Church would be willing to cater the food for their wedding, I immediately said "yes", because I knew their generous nature. Ladies were calling me before I even asked, to offer their help!

Pastor Lourdes and David planned the menu and decorations, so we just had kitchen duties. The Fellowship Hall was transformed with bows, flowers, linens, lights and extra special touches everywhere – there were "oohs and aahs" from everyone!

The wedding was absolutely wonderful! THANK YOU to all who helped in any way. Your love and generous spirit filled the Church on this special day! God bless you Pastor Lourdes and David, always!

Most Sincerely, Cyndi Wise



**Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!**  
**Thank you all who helped and  
attended our wedding!**

***Lourdes and Davis***

## Needing a Card For Someone Special?



You can now find new and recycled cards for all occasions: Birthdays, Anniversaries, Weddings, Thank Yous, Get Well, Sympathies, and Holiday Cards! The cost is only 50¢ each. All proceeds go to our Missions & Outreach Fund. You can find them in the Gathering Place if you'd like to check them out!

## Friday Morning Breakfasts..

### Women's Breakfast



An open invitation to join the Methodist Women's breakfast on Friday mornings at 8 a.m. at

Jalisco's Mexican Restaurant (formerly Super Don's Restaurant)

**all women are welcome just join us**

### Men's breakfast



is held at Sparta Family Restaurant, Fridays at 8 a.m. Come and enjoy good food and fellowship.

**All men are welcome just stop by.**



July 1st: 6 pm Servant Leadership Board meeting

July 2nd: Concert in the Park Fundraiser

July 4th: OFFICE CLOSED.

July 13 -15: Pastor is at Pine Lake

July 26 6pm Pizza and a Movie

*\* All committees except SLB will not meet in July*

**July Pizza and a Movie \*\* Note – DATE CHANGE\*\***

*Pizza and a Movie will be cancelled if temperatures are forecast to be below 25 degrees or above 85 degrees.*

Who: Everyone is invited!

What: Pizza and a Movie

Where: Sparta UMC small kitchen and chapel

When: **Saturday, July 26** at 6pm for Pizza / 630pm for movie

RSVP: Please contact Toni Jensen at 608-343-3029 before 12N on July 26 if you will be attending so we know how much pizza to order.

### "Blue Miracle"

Based on a real-life story, *Blue Miracle* is a tale of redeeming one's past by being an example for future generations. A street mechanic, Omar Venegas runs an orphanage named Casa Hogar in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico City. With his little income and private donations, Casa Hogar manages to harbor street boys who ran away from foster homes or didn't have anyone to look up to. Omar was a street kid himself and this orphanage was his medium to save many others from violent life on the street. Rated PG.





## JULY

### Happy and Blessed Anniversary to

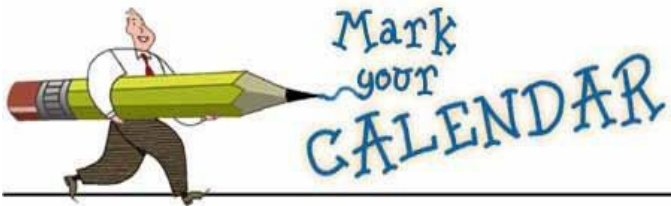


- 6 Alex & Jackie Vaver
- 16 Abby & Mac Smith
- 23 Paul & Kay Foulke
- 25 Barb & Hank McGreevy
- 29 Ron & Kandy Ebert
- 31 Julie Adams- Rodgers & Chuck Adams

### Happy Birthday to



- 9 Alex Vaver
  - 10 Rich Zidich
  - 11 Erin Tadisch
  - 12 Aubrey Ebert
  - 12 Edwina Olson
  - 13 June Jackson
  - 14 Katie Jerman
  - 17 Clarice Stuessel
  - 17 Patty Wiedemann
  - 22 Danette Zidich
  - 30 Deanna Hutchinson
- 19 Scott Herrman  
26 Russell Culpitt



### Ushers

- 6 Kurt & Amy Kiefer
- 13 The Tadisch
- 20 Rich & Danette Zidich & Peggy
- 27 Kurt & Amy Kiefer

### Tech Team

- 6 Annabelle Von Ruden & Emily Von Ruden
- 13 Toni Jensen & Amy Kiefer
- 20 Ron Phillips & Beth Jerman
- 27 Beth Jerman & TBD

### Liturgist

- 6 Paul Foulke
- 13 Beth Nowak
- 20 Cheryl Isensee
- 27 Beth Nowak

### 🎵 Calling All Voices! 🎵

### Be a Summer Song Leader at Sparta UMC!

Do you love to sing? Are you ready to help lift the voices of our congregation in worship?

We're looking for enthusiastic **Song Leaders** to guide our music during summer worship services. A strong, confident voice helps not only our in-person worshippers but also those tuning in on YouTube—your voice could make all the difference!

No need to be a soloist—just a willing heart and joyful spirit.

**Interested?** Contact the church office to sign up or learn more.

**Let's make a joyful noise together this summer**



# The Chimes

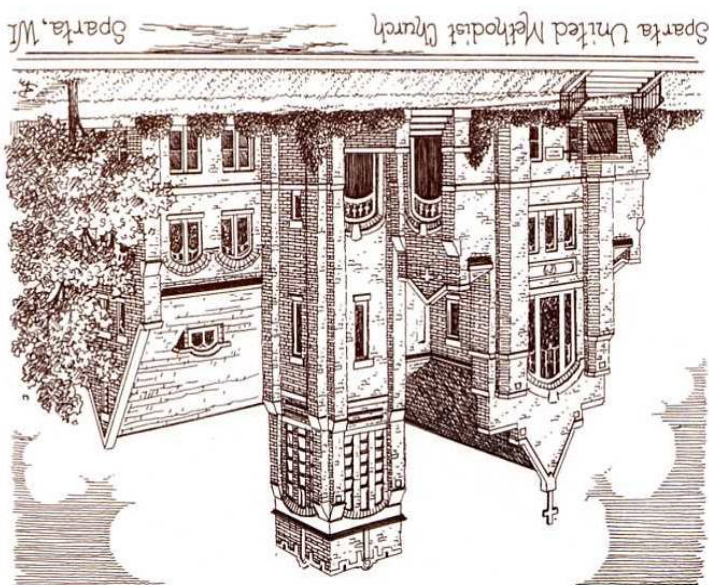
Sparta United Methodist Church  
210 North Court Street  
Sparta, WI 54656

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Happy



*Prepared Especially For*



**Pastor:** Reverend Lourdes Magalhães  
**Pastors Cell Phone:** 973-856-4072

**Phone:** (608)269-6949

**Fax:** (608)269-6940

**Email:** [office@spartamethodist.com](mailto:office@spartamethodist.com)

**Website:** [spartaumc.net](http://spartaumc.net)

## **SUMC Worship Schedule**

### **In-house Service**

9:00 a.m. Sunday mornings

### **Livestream Service**

9:00 a.m. on Facebook

## **Online Service**

YouTube: Sparta UMC month day year