

# “The CHIMES” – April

Volume 58, No. 4

2023

## Continuing the Conversation...

*And let us consider each other carefully for the purpose of sparking love and good deeds. Don't stop meeting together with other believers, which some people have gotten into the habit of doing. Instead, encourage each other, especially as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:24-25)*



**The American Heritage Dictionary:** *Worship* 1a. The reverent love and devotion accorded a deity, an idol, or a sacred object. b. The ceremonies, prayers, or other religious forms by which this love is expressed.

**Confirmand:** *Worship* is giving our love to God, praising him and spreading his word/glory with a congregation and coming together as one.

**Jesus:** God is spirit, and *it is necessary to worship God* in spirit and truth.

Worship is in the forefront of my thoughts lately. Maybe because I am working with a confirmation class where we talk about our worship service and what the different parts of worship are meant for as we prepare as a class to participate in leading a couple of worship services this spring. Maybe because the Lenten season has always caused me to really focus on the sacrifice Jesus has made for us and what it means to worship him as the Son of God, our Savior, and our Lord. Maybe it's because as I was cleaning out old files in my home office, I came across an article that claimed Jesus did not call us to be worshippers but called us to be followers. Or maybe it's a combination of all of the above.

At any rate, I'm thinking a lot about worship these days and I want to briefly address that article that claimed Jesus called people to be followers not worshippers. And then I want to review why I believe regular worship is so important.

As I reread the article it was clear the author was calling people to action as Christ's church. I agree with that. Jesus did call his disciples to action—and

hopefully you have heard that message clearly and frequently from me. Where I have a problem with this article is in the way it wants to separate worship from action because the author focused so narrowly on Jesus' invitation, "Follow me."

What the author seems to miss is that Jesus worshiped regularly and his disciples followed him there. Jesus also said, "God is spirit, and it is necessary to worship God in spirit and truth." I firmly believe it is necessary to come together as God's people and worship God and then base our actions on what we hear God speak to our spirits.

And yes, God speaks. Among the times we are most likely to hear God speaking is when we are together in worship. Jesus also said, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I'm there with them" (Matthew 18:20). I expect to hear God speak in worship; each time I lead worship I pray beforehand that God will speak clearly—to me and to you. God speaks; are we listening? Are you expecting to hear from God? I invite and challenge you to prepare yourselves spiritually to hear the Holy Spirit speak in worship—maybe sometimes in spite of the preaching and music.

Worship is also an important part of our Wesleyan heritage. Here are some points from that perspective. Regular worship with a community of faith is important to being a follower of Christ and living a holy life. Worship is the most complete way in which a congregation rehearses its faith and is recharged by God. In his three General Rules, John Wesley named worship as an "ordinance of God" that faithful Christians should attend to.

Music is an important part in many worship services. St. Augustine, in his commentary on Psalm 73 explained that, when you sing to God, not only does it praise God, but it also changes your heart. Singing is not just something that we do to fill time during a worship service. The songs we sing, particularly hymns, are rich in Scriptures and theology (the study of God). Hymns and songs of praise can express and help us understand biblical passages, lift up common beliefs and practices, and be a conversation with God.

For John and Charles Wesley, music was a means of knowing, understanding, and communicating their faith. Within each of Charles Wesley's hymns are layers

of scriptural references and theological concepts such as grace, the Trinity, and salvation. Music is important for teaching our children and those new to the church about our Christian beliefs.

John Wesley thought music was so important he wrote, “Directions for Singing,” which are still found in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (page vii). He wrote, “Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to the hymns and other songs we sing but also to every other aspect of our worship. Worship is not about performance or our entertainment, but about having an eye to God. My desire is to help us as a congregation give our best to God in worship, as a sacrifice of praise.

Worship is also about what God is doing through and among the community of faith. While we all should strive to make worship a part of our daily lives—through daily prayer, Scripture reading, and spending time alone with God—worshiping as part of the body of Christ is a necessary part of Christian discipleship. Worshiping as a community makes us accountable to one another, supporting one another, and growing together as we strive for personal holiness. Christian disciples—that’s us—are better together.

It is important for children to be in worship; it is where they learn the stories of our faith and how to be the church. Young Christians who are considering confirming their faith and making a commitment to a life of discipleship need to get into the habit of worshiping each week with their congregation. John Wesley named many aspects of community worship—participating in sacraments, praying with the congregation, listening to sermons, and the reading of Scripture—as means of grace, ordinary ways in which God conveys grace to humankind. Participating in weekly worship opens young Christians to God’s grace, allowing them to mature in faith.

Young Christians may have different tastes when it comes to music and worship space. This is OK, and we should celebrate such diversity of creative preferences—not always insist our personal preferences take front and center. We need to understand that regardless of the songs we sing or the space where we gather, our worship should involve gathering as the body of Christ, praising God, the reading and proclaiming of Scripture, the affirmation of our faith, prayers for the congregation and the world, thanksgiving, and a sending forth into the world to live as faithful disciples of Christ.

Yes, worship is important and cannot be separated from the rest of our lives, including the actions that we take to make the world a better place as we make new

and maturing disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Worship should form our actions as we gather as Christ’s body and hear our call to follow Jesus into the world in faith and truth.

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



### **Spring Town Hall Meeting**

The Servant Leadership Board is hosting an informational “Town Hall” meeting in the Gathering Place after worship on **Sunday, April 30**. The main purpose of this gathering is to open the lines of communication between the leadership board and the rest of the congregation.

Members of the Servant Leadership Board will share some of what we have been learning as well as their ministry focus and vision for this church going forward. It will also be your opportunity to ask questions of the board. Maybe best of all, the Servant Leadership Board members will be providing coffee and other refreshments that morning as we share our hopes and dreams for the future.

We hope to see you there for good conversation as we “break bread together.”



### **Maundy Thursday Worship Opportunities**

On Thursday, **April 6**, our traditional **prayer vigil** will begin at noon and go through Friday at noon. A sign-up sheet is located at the K Street entrance for you to sign up for a block of time to pray. You can designate whether you will be praying in the church sanctuary or from home. Prayer guides will be available.

The evening of **April 6, at 6:30 p.m. a special Maundy Thursday service will take place in the fellowship hall**. You will experience the last week of Jesus’ life through dramatic Scripture readings, hymns, and prayers. The confirmation students and others will be participating in this service. It will be a very meaningful way to move us into the events of Good Friday.



## Ecumenical Good Friday Services

The **Good Friday** “Stations of the Cross Prayer Walk” sponsored by the Sparta Ministerial Association is back this year on Friday, April 7. We will meet at the Monroe County Justice Center on Court Street at 11 a.m. and will make stops throughout town as we go through the 14 Stations. We will end the prayer walk at Lanham-Schanhofer Funeral Home parking lot about noon.

At noon there will be a service of The Seven Last Words of Christ inside Lanham-Schanhofer Funeral Home. Both of these opportunities will be meaningful ways to commemorate the events of Good Friday and are open to the community. Come to one or both and reflect on the sacrificial love of God for you.



## Stewardship of Creation

Often, when the word “stewardship” is uttered in the church, we think of money, giving, and budgets. With the celebration of Earth Day, April is one of many occasions when we can remind ourselves that Christian stewardship is broader than just money. Here are just a few teachings on creation that have been passed on through the ages

“The initial step for a soul to come to knowledge of God is contemplation of nature.” – Irenaeus (120-202)

“Nature is schoolmistress, the soul the pupil; and whatever one has taught or the other has learned has come from God – the Teacher of the teacher.” – Tertullian (160-230)

“Christ wears ‘two shoes’ in the world: Scripture and nature. Both are necessary to understand the Lord, and at no stage can creation be seen as a separation of things from God.” – John Scotus Eriugena (810-877)

“If I spend enough time with the tiniest of creature – even a caterpillar – I would never have to prepare a sermon. So full of God is every creature.” – Meister Eckhart (1260-1327)

“God writes the Gospel not in the Bible alone, but also on trees, and in the flowers and clouds and stars.” – Martin Luther (1483-1546)

“Let everyone regard himself as the steward of God in all things which he possesses. Then he will neither conduct himself dissolutely, nor corrupt by abuse those things which God requires to be preserved.” – John Calvin (1509-1564)

“I believe in my heart that faith in Jesus Christ can and will lead us beyond an exclusive concern for the

well-being of other human beings to the broader concern for the well-being of the birds in our backyards, the fish in our rivers, and every living creature on the face of the earth.” – John Wesley (1701- 1791)

“The harvested fields bathed in the autumn mists speak of God and his goodness far more vividly than any human lips.” – Albert Schweitzer (1875- 1965)

“To drive to extinction something He has created is wrong. He has a purpose for everything . . . We Christians have a responsibility to take the lead in caring for the earth.” – Billy Graham (1918-2018)

“God intends...our care of creation to reflect our love for the Creator.” – John R.W. Stott (1921-2011)

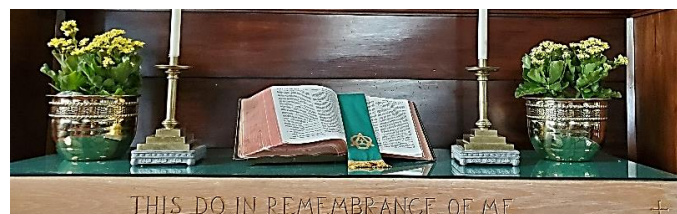
“The first law of our being is that we are set in a delicate network of interdependence with our fellow human beings and with the rest of God’s creation.” – Desmond Tutu (1931-2021)

“We cannot be all that God wants us to be without caring about the earth.” – Rick Warren (1954)

Rev. Jason Mahnke,  
Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation



## Altar Plants



UWIF would like to thank all those who signed up for one or more plants on one or multiple dates for 2023. Each date has two lines for one plant per line. Plants are \$5.50 each or two for \$11.00. Plant money goes to Eileen Gajewsky, UWIF treasurer, who pays the invoice from Sparta Floral quarterly. At this time please continue to make your checks out to UMW.

Call the church office if you would like one or more dates(s) and Michele will add to the Altar Plant calendar in hallway.

Thank you to the volunteers who deliver plants to church and to designated recipients after a service. Plants and volunteers brighten our days.

Thank you for your continued support of UWIF,  
Cathy Nichols



## Nurture Update...

“I serve a risen Savior,  
He’s in the world today;  
I know that He is living,  
Whatever others say;  
I see His hand of mercy,  
I hear His voice of cheer,  
And just the time I need Him  
He’s always near,  
He lives! He lives!

-Ackley



**April 2** – Palm Sunday

**April 6** – Maundy Thursday

Prayer Vigil – noon Thursday – noon Friday.  
Sign-up for 24 hours (1 hour slots) at home or church  
(K Street entrance).

**6:30** Maundy Thursday service – see Pastor Loretta’s  
article for more information.

**April 7** – Good Friday – “Stations of the Cross Walk”  
at 11 a.m., starting on Court St. in front of justice center.  
Service following at Lanham-Schanhofer Funeral  
Home.

**April 9** – Easter! “Blossoming of the Cross” with our  
hearts filled with love as we behold our risen King!  
Easter flowers and Blossoming of the Cross flowers are  
available to order – Please see form included.

A Blessed Eater to all!

“I Believe”

The Stone wasn’t rolled away from the tomb so that  
Jesus could leave. He was already gone. It was rolled  
away so that doubters like me could look in and cry;

I believe! I believe!

-Le Roy Thomas

\*Submitted by Bev Laufenberg in the 2018 Lenten  
Devotional



## Church Facebook Page

Have you checked out the church’s  
Facebook site? It’s a good place to keep  
up with what is going on in the church and easily access  
the online worship services. You can find that site at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/UMCsparta/>. Once you are  
there just “like” the site and you will receive updates  
when new information is posted.

thank you

**Thank you** once again I would like to thank Lynn  
Humphrey, Sara Kemp and Pastor Loretta for their  
Little Free Library Book donations. Your generosity is  
greatly appreciated.

**Thank you** Scott Naeseth for all of the hard work  
you did in the Youth Room. The walls and ceiling look  
amazing!

Sparta United Methodist Church,

**Thank you** for your donation. We met our goal and  
are looking forward to our first complete bed delivery.  
Gwen Nelson  
Sleep In Heavenly Peace

**Thank you** for the lovely altar plant I received for  
my birthday. I brightened my day.  
Sara

**Thank you** for the cards, calls and text messages  
following my surgery and recovery. It was greatly  
appreciated.  
John Noonan

**Thank you** to everyone for the cards and  
anniversary wishes as we celebrated our 46<sup>th</sup> wedding  
anniversary.  
John & Diane Noonan

**Thank you** for the lovely altar flower. It’s such a  
beautiful color. Sure looks like spring!  
In Christian love,  
Maxine Gudbaur



CHANGING THE WORLD  
ONE PAIR AT A TIME

**Thank you** to all who have  
donated to Soles4Souls!  
We have collected 95 pair of  
shoes through March!



**Pizza and a movie** night this month is **April 15** Pizza will be served in the small kitchen at 6 p.m. with the movie to follow in the Chapel. Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend! Please contact Toni

Burrows at 608-343-3029 **before noon** on April 15 if you will be attending so we know how much pizza to order.



### April's movie is

### “Secondhand Lions”

This comedic and touching family film follows the adventures of a shy young boy who is sent to spend the summer with his eccentric uncles. Rated PG



### Shop with scrip...support your 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 **April 2**. If you have questions or need an order form contact Michele at the church office 608-269-6949

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 and History

The Records and History Committee is working monthly in our History Room by sorting and filing various items. If you are free on April 12, from 9 a.m.-10 a.m. (or later) and would like to see what we have and help prepare for History Month in May, please feel free to join us!



The Sparta Ministerial Association are meeting in the small kitchen on Wednesday, April 5 at noon.

Nurture will not meet this month due to Maundy Thursday.

SUMMIT Spirits will be meet on Tuesday, April 4 at 6:30 in the library.

Maunday Thursday service will be in Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m., April 6.

Stations of the Cross Walk will take place on Friday, April 7 with a service following at 11 a.m. at Lanham-Schanhofer Funeral Home.

On Tuesday, April 11 Lois circle will be in the small kitchen at 1 p.m.

Wesleyan Circle will meet in the Gathering Place on Tuesday, April 11 at 6:30 p.m.

Records & History will meet Wednesday, April 12 at 9 a.m.

May *Chimes* newsletter deadline is Thursday, April 20 by noon.

Leadership training seminar for Servant Leadership Board. Saturday, April 22 from 9 a.m.-3 a.m. in the chapel.

Spring Luncheon, Thursday, April 27 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Spring Town Hall meeting will be held after Worship on April 30.

Soaring Skills meet every Tuesday evening and every Saturday from 9-3 p.m.

The Study of The Acts continues on Mondays at 1 p.m. with Pastor Loretta in the library.



### Church Website



We have a new web site domain so it is easier to find our site.

It is: *spartaumc.net*. Check it out if you haven't lately.



### 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 now Easter. All proceeds go to our Missions & Outreach Fund. You can find them in the Gathering Place if you'd like to check them out!



### Are you an Early Riser?

Are you one of the first people to arrive on Sunday? We are looking for someone to open the church, turn on the sound system and start the slideshow.

These are not difficult tasks and, of course, training would be provided.

We would like to a couple of volunteers so the responsibility can be shared.

Please let Toni Burrows or Pastor Loretta know if you are interested.



### Show me the Money!

We are looking for someone who would be willing collect the offering after worship and put it in the safe. (For security purposes, that person should not be the pastor).

We would like to a couple of volunteers so the responsibility can be shared.

Please let Toni Burrows or Pastor Loretta know if you are interested.



### United Women in Faith Update...



The Spring Luncheon is scheduled for **April 27**. Seven members met on March 8 to plan the event which helps our local Unit meet its Pledge to Mission for 2023. The menu remains the same, as it was well received last year. Never a success without the generosity of the congregation and community a "Donations Request" clipboard will be set out early April. It, too, remains close to the

same but with small increases in quantity. Last year 130 were served either through dine-in, delivery or carry-outs. This year we are planning to serve 150. If you like to bake and sign up for making a cake the recipe will be provided. A schedule for kitchen and dining room April 25, 26 and 27 will be made available. Great fellowship always occurs "down under." Minimal skills required. We might even learn some new tricks from you!

If you have any questions please contact Cathy Nichols 608-487-9608 or bcn@charter.net.

You are a blessing to SUMC and the community, Cathy N.

*Annual*  
**SPRING LUNCHEON**  
*Thursday, April 27, 2023*  
*Menu: Chicken salad croissants, cranberry salad, veggie spear, dessert, coffee and punch.*  
**SERVING FROM 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.**  
*In the Fellowship Hall*  
**TICKETS: \$11.00**  
*Reservations, Carry-outs and delivery available*  
**Note: Carry-outs and deliveries do NOT include drinks. There is a \$1.00 delivery fee.**  
*Dining room reservations will be accepted until Noon, April 26. Carry-out and delivery reservations accepted until 9 a.m. April 27.*  
*UMW cookbooks will be available for purchase - \$5*  
  
*Sponsored by United Methodist Women*



**April Anniversaries**

- 04 Richard & Peggy Wright
- 16 Ron & Denise Ebert
- 21 Brandon & Brittany Burnham
- 28 Gabrielle & Brady Kozelka
- 28 Dave & Patty Wiedemann
- 29 Sara & Dave Kemp

**April Birthdays**

- 01 Elliot Blackdeer
- 01 John Noonan
- 03 Bev Laufenberg
- 05 Amy Johnson
- 06 Ben Simplot
- 08 Julie Adams-Rodgers
- 08 Deb Foss
- 08 Darcie Hanson
- 08 Scott Naeseth
- 10 April Hubbard
- 12 Maxine Holz
- 12 Margie Lakowske
- 12 Sally Shann
- 17 Cecile Stow
- 19 Ruth Ebert
- 19 Dave Hering
- 19 Kris Jostad
- 21 Tennyson Kozelka
- 22 Danielle Dale
- 29 Ron Burnham
- 30 Margaret Jensen



**Bakery pick-up**

- 2 Pat & Gail Clark
- 9 Donna Burnham
- 16 Judy Fuhrmann
- 23 Ron & Denise Ebert
- 30 Cyndi Wise

**Tech Team**

- 2 Ben & Hailee
- 9 Ron & Kristine
- 16 Toni & Amy
- 23 Cheryl & Cindy
- 30 Ron & Kristine

**Liturgist**

- 2 Eileen Gajewsky
- 9 Clarence Brooks
- 16 Judy Fuhrmann
- 23 Marty Walley
- 30 Amy Kiefer

**Ushers**

- 2 Bob & Cathy
- 9 Kurt & Amy
- 16 Peggy & Beth Jerman
- 23 John & Karen (and confirmands)
- 30 Russ & Tina



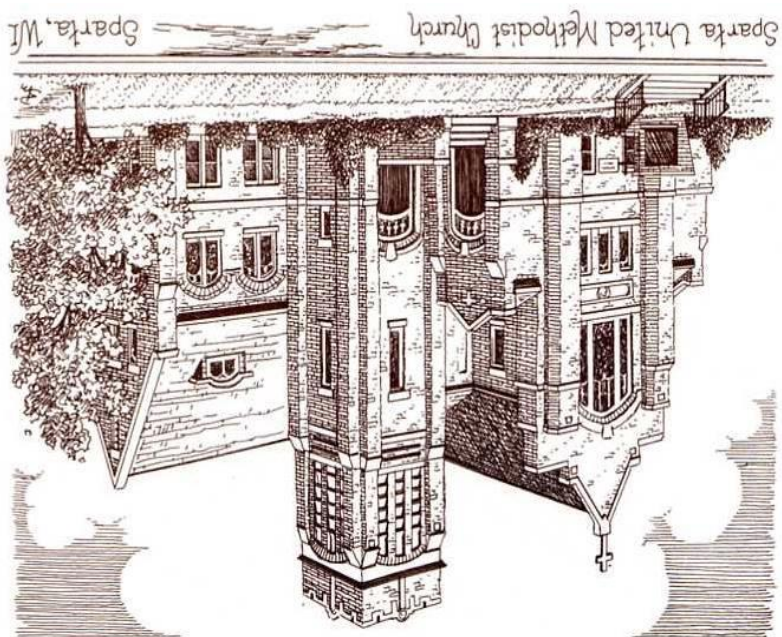
# The Chimes

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



***Prepared Especially For:***



**Pastor:** Rev. Loretta Waughal  
**Pastor's Cell Phone:** (608) 386-1862

**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