

“The CHIMES” – June

Volume 57, No. 6

2022

Continuing the Conversation...

“I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.” (Ephesians 1:15-19)



Greetings friends, grace and peace to you. As we turn our calendars to June I want to give you a snapshot of what the Servant Leadership Board and I have been up to. In April four of us were able to participate in a workshop for all churches that have moved to the accountable leadership structure (what we call our Servant Leadership Board).

The workshop, entitled *Being the Church in a Post-Pandemic World*, was led by Kay Kotan. Kay is a renowned author, speaker, and church coach. The workshop led us through her book, *Being the Church in a Post-Pandemic World*. Those attending the workshop thought it was so helpful in our work of ministry planning that we will be going through the eight intentional, strategic steps provided in the book with the rest of the Servant Leadership Board as we take extended time over the summer to work on updating our ministry plan. The eight steps are: flexibility, relational, vision, spiritually grounded, commitment, innovative, resilience, and courage. We agreed we will need all of these things to be a vital and growing church going forward and are thankful for the resource. If you are interested, the book is available on Amazon and other book sellers.

Through the workshop we were challenged to ask and answer some challenging questions. Kay invites us outside our comfort zones, declaring that as the church begins to emerge from the pandemic, our role is changing. It was already changing pre-pandemic, but the change is sure to escalate drastically post-pandemic.

Being The Church in a Post-Pandemic World is designed to serve as a guide to what conversations might be helpful for you and your church's leadership. This book is to be used as a tool, not an instrument of judgement or criticism. This resource was created out of a heart full of love for the local church and the hope it will be helpful in finding our next faithful steps to being the vital church in the post-pandemic world. If any of you reading this would like to be further involved in the conversation please let me know.

The workshop happened to coincide with the sermon series I had already planned on “Redeeming the Routines of Life.” I hope the series was meaningful for you and caused you to pause and consider priorities and where God may be inviting you to a closer walk with him and what that might mean for us as a community of faith here in Sparta. I know as I researched for the series it gave me much to ponder and work on in my own life.

At the end of the final sermon in the series everyone in attendance was given a “Leisure Survey” to complete. The results will be tabulated and used by the Servant Leadership Board in our planning for future ministries. Hopefully we will even see some of the fruits of the survey this summer.

If you weren't in attendance in worship to complete the survey, fear not! A copy of the survey is included with *The Chimes*. Just fill it out and return it to the church office before June 15.

God's power is at work here. We just need to be diligent in our listening, our praying, and our actions as we reach out with love to each other and the community to make new and maturing disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Serving and leading in Christ's love,
Pastor L

Golden Cross Sunday



Golden Cross began in 1908 with the commitment of Methodists in Dallas, Texas to provide health care to persons who could not afford it. They began to receive offerings for the expenses for poor patients at Methodist Hospital in their city.

Today Golden Cross is a ministry that reaches out in love to various health and welfare agencies making a difference in people's lives. Golden Cross offerings support ministry throughout the state and 100% of the offerings stay in Wisconsin. Among the ministries receiving these offerings in Wisconsin are:

- Harbor House Crisis Center in Superior that serves homeless families
- Northcott Neighborhood House serving a variety of needs in Milwaukee
- UMC Children's Services which provides housing, childcare, and various programs to provide families a hand up in one of the highest poverty areas in Milwaukee

Golden Cross offerings also help support several nursing homes throughout the state, including Morrow Home right here in Sparta. Your generous gifts enhance people's lives and may introduce them to God's love for the first time.

You are encouraged to reflect and pray about this ministry and to participate with your generous gifts on **Sunday, June 12**. As United Methodists, we do make the world a better place.

Paul Foulke



Good

To be a follower of Jesus means to be willing to sacrifice ourselves for the good of all. It means to be willing to deny ourselves for the benefit of all of humanity.

I recently read about a man named Thomas Cannon who did this in a truly remarkable way. He was a postal worker in Richmond, Virginia, who lived much of his life on the edge of poverty so that he could give to those in need. Describing himself as "a poor man's philanthropist," he gave away more than \$150,000 to people who were experiencing hard times, or who had been unusually kind or brave. He gave these gifts over

the last 33 years of his life, mostly in the form of \$1,000 checks.

He traced his inspiration to his time in the Navy. While he was away at signal school, there was a shipboard explosion at the Port of Chicago and many of his shipmates were killed. He concluded that he was spared for a reason — to help others, to be a role model, to inspire people to see what he called "the oneness of it all."

Cannon gave to people of all ages, races, nationalities, and incomes. He gave to a low-income woman who started a youth center in her apartment complex . . . to a retired postal worker who was a regular volunteer at an elementary school . . . to a woman and a man who wanted to return to Vietnam to visit their hometown . . . to an advocate for the victims of crime . . . and to a teenager who had been abandoned as an infant but grew up to be named Virginia's Youth of the Year.

This generosity didn't come without sacrifice. Cannon supported his wife, his two sons, and himself and his charitable efforts on a salary that never exceeded \$20,000 a year. When he retired from the postal service in 1983, he and his wife lived near the poverty line on his pension. "We lived simply," he said before his death in 2005, "so we could give money away."

He wasn't unhappy about these sacrifices. In fact, he had a great sense of humor, one that he kept even after being diagnosed with terminal cancer. As his health was failing, he told the Richmond newspaper, "A Baptist deacon who owed me \$200 died recently. First thing I'm going to do when I get to the other side is run him down."

Thomas Cannon didn't want a foundation to be set up to continue his work after his death. He feared that a foundation would require a bureaucracy, and tons of paperwork. He didn't even want his name attached to anything. He just left one simple request: "Help somebody."

Rev. Jason Mahnke, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation



Nurture Update...



Celebrations in May connected us with those we love, beginning with our dear Mothers. The BASH children presented lovely flowers to the ladies of our congregation on Mother's Day. In addition, a heartfelt poem, written by John Abbott, a long-time friend and member of our church, was shared during the Worship service to remind us of a Mother's love. Thank you John.

The faithful group of BASH children were celebrated on their last day of classes, May 15. We especially thank their teachers, Lynn Humphrey, Margie Lakowske and Donna Burnham for loving and guiding them this past year.

The graduates were honored on May 22—from high school: Emma Blackdeer, Grace Johnson, Damijon Talsky and from college: Jessica Janzen, Krystal Lieder, and Kelly Ann Talsky. May God bless them as they step into the future pursuing their dreams.

May 29 reminded us of our loved ones who have served our country, and the cost of freedom. We are eternally grateful for their service.

June 5 Pentecost Sunday—the “birthday of the church”. Please wear something red to represent the flame of the Holy Spirit, and if possible, contribute a red geranium for plantings around the church.

June 19—Father's Day—coffee and donuts will be offered in the Gathering Place to honor our dear Dads. Their gentle strength and love are ever with us!

Coffee Fellowship MAY begin again on **September 4** if there are volunteers who will host and furnish baked goods. Only the first Sundays of the month will be offered, unless many folks come forward to take turns each Sunday.

As we are beginning to gather again after 2020-2021, please be mindful of the friends we haven't seen for various reasons. Calls, cards and maybe some visits will show that God cares, and we do too!

Thank you Sara Kemp, for once again planting and tending planters full of flowers around the church. We hope you know how much we appreciate you and your “flair for flowers”!

“Stay connected to God—Stay connected to others.”



CHANGING THE WORLD
ONE PAIR AT A TIME

Thank you to all who have donated to Soles4Souls!

We have collected 491 pair of shoes through May!

United Methodist Women



Sparta United Methodist Women are blessed beyond measure to be part of the generous congregation at Sparta UMC. Donations of grocery items, money, culinary skills and time made for a very successful Spring Luncheon held on May 5 in a beautifully decorated Fellowship Hall. Deep appreciation goes to Cindy Isensee for picking up Croissants at Sam's and to Scott Naeseth and Rich Zidich for

delivering to schools, businesses and homes. As always our success will go to support Missions in community, state and globally through our Conference. We keep you all in our prayers for good health and a wonderful and safe summer.

God's love and blessings to all,
Cathy Nichols

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 **June 5**. 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 Pastor Loretta at the church

(269-6949) or on her cell phone at (608-386-1862).

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.



Church Facebook Page

Have you checked out the church's Facebook page? 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:

www.facebook.com/UMCsparta/. Once you are there just "like" the site and you will receive updates when new information is posted.



Sparta United Methodist Church,

Thank you so much for the extremely generous donation in the amount of \$1,329.62 made to Brighter Tomorrows. This donation will be used to help victims of domestic violence and sexual assault here in Monroe County.

Thank you again!

Jan & Lynn

THANK YOU—Summit Spirits would like to thank everyone who attended our play, sold the tickets or helped with concessions. We appreciate your continued support of this ministry.

THANK YOU to Bev Laufenberg and Julian Hutchinson for the donation of books to the Church Library and Little Free Library. It is so nice to put these books in many hands.

Margie Lakowske,

Church Librarian and Little Free Library Steward

THANK YOU to John and Diane Noonan and Max Buswell for the beautiful mulch which makes the church landscape look so fresh and tidy. We really appreciate your hard work (in such hot weather.) It looks FABULOUS!

Margie Lakowske and the whole church

THANK YOU Nurture Committee for providing cookies, cupcakes, juice and coffee for the Sunday School last day of class party. The kids and we teachers really appreciated it. Also, thank you for the pansy plants. The smiling faces on the pansy plants will remind us of the great class of kids we had this year! Larry, Lynn, Donna and Margie.

Thank you Scott Naeseth for working to clean up the overgrown landscaping around the parsonage. Although I have tried putting some work into it myself, it was getting away from me and now looks more clean and inviting. Thank you also for taking on the mowing at the church and parsonage while we look for a more permanent solution.

—Pastor Loretta

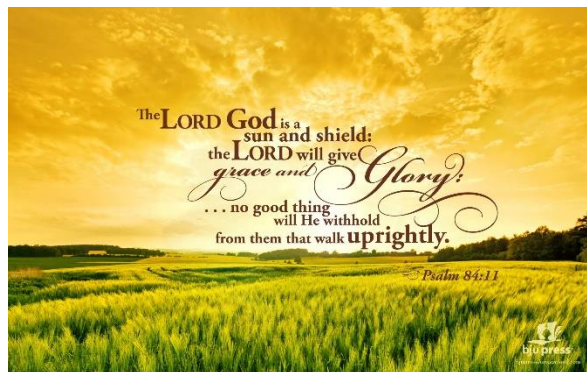
Records and History Committee



DRUM ROLL PLEASE!! It is with great pleasure that I announce the Records and History Committee has decided to host **Our Community In Concert** on October 22, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. as long as COVID numbers remain low. If you are interested in performing please contact Margie Lakowske 608-269-5532 or 608-633-3588 or any other Records and Committee member and we will give you the details.

If you have a few minutes, take a look in the Gathering Place and notice that the two curio cabinets have been moved and have some items you may be interested in seeing. We thought we would showcase a few of the items that had been displayed in the History Room.

We are—Keeping the Eternal Flame Glowing



From the Parish Nurse...

I have an elderly lady that I see and pray with regularly. She needs so much reassurance and reminders on just how much Jesus loves us. I have given this reading to her. She tells me she reads this daily and gets comfort from it. I thought I would share it with all of you—Always good to be reminded of how much He loves us.

Jesus said “I Love You” with his life by showing up for all of us and giving us hope for our messy lives. He left His throne to come to earth and save us from ourselves. It’s through His life and presence in our hearts that we can learn to love ourselves and others.

Sadness runs deep in our world today especially for those who don’t know what real love is. Through the life of Jesus, we learn to see that love is more than just words. Love is taking action.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres” (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

This kind of love doesn’t just happen. It’s the kind of love that we must act upon. Love is not just a feeling, it is a choice. Jesus wasn’t forced to love us. He chose to love us with open arms nailed to the cross. Jesus is love.

Jesus is our Savior who came to earth to show us how much He loved us. He walked and talked with sinners like us. He shared His time with people, teaching and coaching them on how they should live.

He wasn’t just a good man; He is the light of the world and He has made a way for all of us to live eternally with Him in Heaven. He died on the cross for our sins and was raised from the grave.

Jesus is our only way to Heaven and he has prepared a special place for us. He wants us to experience His unconditional love. He desires for all of us to humbly come to Him and surrender our lives.

There are so many ways that Jesus has said “I love you” with His life. Jesus shows us His love by inviting us to His eternal home and welcoming us. Jesus forgives us with open arms when we repent. He waits patiently



for us to show up with a surrendered heart and willingness to change. He never gives up on us.

Jesus told us about the Prodigal Son, (Luke 15:11-32) a story about real love. We all have been prodigals who have gone astray, but He reminds us that we are loved unconditionally. Jesus longs for us to invite Him into our hearts and celebrate everlasting life with Him. He has a place prepared for you and me. He welcomes us home no matter what we have done wrong. Jesus watches us day and night. When one of us gets lost, He goes and finds us and brings us back in. He fights for us like the shepherd fights off wolves from the sheep.

David’s psalm about the Good Shepherd (Psalm 23) is an excellent example of how Jesus loves us. God didn’t create us to be alone, as a matter of fact He created us to be in fellowship with others. As the good Shepherd he makes sure that no one wanders out of His presence. He keeps us in the fold. He takes the hook of His rod and pulls his wandering sheep back.

A good shepherd spends time with his sheep. He cares for them through the long, dark nights and keeps them sheltered from storm. Jesus is right there with us in the darkest places. Patiently he waits for us to look up and reach out our hands to Him. This is true love.

Jesus spent time with sinners and those who were sick. He ate and drank with those that no one else would dare come close too. When the world rejects us, we know that we have a Good Shepherd who loves us! His love brings healing to the broken-hearted and sick. Jesus showed His love through His life by visiting the poor, widows, and orphans. Jesus lived His life for a purpose, and that was to serve all. He brought hope to all who would receive Him and He calls us to do the same!

Jesus spent time with His disciples teaching and encouraging them. They ate meals together while they fellowshiped and they went together to minister to crowds of people. Jesus promised His disciples that they would not be alone when He left. He knew that they would miss Him and He promised them the comfort of the Holy Spirit. We receive the Holy Spirit when we ask Jesus into our hearts.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one! When we pray to our Father in Jesus’ name, we can be sure that we are in His presence. We enter the throne room of prayer because of the blood of Jesus. Jesus will show us a better way to live and He will give us tools, strategies, discernment and wisdom to do so. He speaks to our heart in many different ways. It can be through music, scriptures, friends, teachings, visions, miracles, and so

Continued...

much more. He changes the way we think and fills us with the fruit of the spirit, which “...is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law (Galatians 5:22-23).

Life is full of sorrow. Jesus came to give us hope. His message is that this place is not our home and we don’t belong here. In our sorrow we all long for a better place and by drawing closer to God, our sorrow will become less intense.

We all have sinned. Shame and guilt keep us downward spiral. When Jesus rose from the dead, He took our sins and gave us new life. We are free to live at peace with ourselves, change the way we do things, and not go back to our old ways.

Jesus makes all things new for those who love Him. The greatest love story ever told is the one of Jesus dying on the cross for our sins. He has made a way for us to enter the throne room and live eternal life with Him in Paradise.

Jesus came to show us that He desires relationship. He longs for us to receive His unconditional love. He took our guilt and shame on the cross and daily provides us grace, mercy, and do-overs! Jesus came to serve us and be sacrificed for our foolishness. He wants us to feel and experience this kind of love. We can love like Jesus when we receive His amazing love.

Today, we can be the hands and feet of Jesus. He fills us with His love and He sends us out into the world to deliver it. We see Jesus in missionaries, evangelists, teachers, pastors, parents, friends, siblings and intercessors. We can make change happen in our world when we love like Jesus. We all have been given spiritual gifts.

There is no greater love than the love of Jesus.
In Christ’s Love, Priscilla



The Fox Valley Walk to Emmaus is delighted to invite you, your family and your church to attend our 15-year Jubilee that will be held on **June 25, 2022** at Sparrow’s Nest, 17304 Havenwood Rd., in Sparta.

The Jubilee will begin at **11 a.m.** with a picnic followed by some activities and worship hour. With our community over 900 strong now, we hope that our members will come and enjoy a reunion with their Walk weekend friends. We also hope that our families and the greater church community will take this opportunity to get to know us and how our mission can be complimentary to your own church goals.

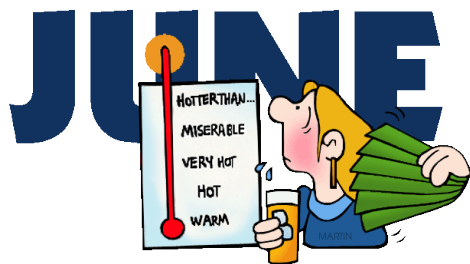
The Walk to Emmaus mission is
Renewing Christian Disciples,
Strengthening Local Churches

For more information, contact Jan Brantingham at cldfwte@gmail.com or by calling 920-279-3139 or Heidi Loomis at pastorhloomis@gmail.com or by calling 406-370-1384. You can also visit their website: Foxvalleyemmaus.com.



Pizza and a movie nights are returning! **June 18** will be our first night back. Pizza will be served in the small kitchen at 6 p.m. with the movie to follow in the Chapel. Then it will continue every third Saturday of each month. Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend! Watch in the announcements for this month’s movie selection.





June Anniversaries

04 Mandy & Kevin Moore
 05 Rich & Danette Zidich
 06 Margie & Kevin Lakowske
 12 Cathy & Bob Nichols
 13 Scott & Deb Thurston
 17 Beverly & Mike Donahue
 17 Ruth & Roger Jerome
 17 Lori & Gary Ascher
 20 Dot & Dave Hering
 23 Michael & Teresa Brown
 23 Judy & Allen Erickson
 25 Lorie & Richard Dale
 25 Dick & Eileen Gajewsky
 25 Priscilla & Jeff Hemmersbach
 25 Rose White & Scott Naeseth
 27 Coy & Alex Rudie
 30 Todd & Angel Loeffelholz
 30 Berndt & Mary Borreson

June Birthdays

06 Amara Echeverria
 09 Alex Vaver
 10 Rich Zidich
 11 Erin Tadisch
 12 Aubrey Ebert
 12 Edwina Olson
 13 June Jackson
 14 Jeff Burrows
 14 Katie Jerman
 17 Clarice Stuessel
 17 Patty Wiedemann
 19 Scott Herrman
 22 Danette Zidich
 26 Russell Culpitt
 26 Larry Humphrey
 30 Deanna Hutchinson



June Schedules

Bakery pick-up

5 Amy & Kurt Kiefer
 12 Dave & Sara Kemp
 19 Priscilla & Jeff Hemmersbach
 26 Paul Foulke

Tech Team

5 Ben & Hailee
 12 Cheryl & Cindy
 19 Ron & Kristine
 26 Toni & Amy

Liturgist

5 Amy Kiefer
 12 Toni Burrows
 19 Priscilla
 26 Beth Nowak

Ushers

5 Bob & Cathy
 12 Kurt & Amy
 19 Peggy Wright & Donna Burnham
 26 John & Karen Lodico



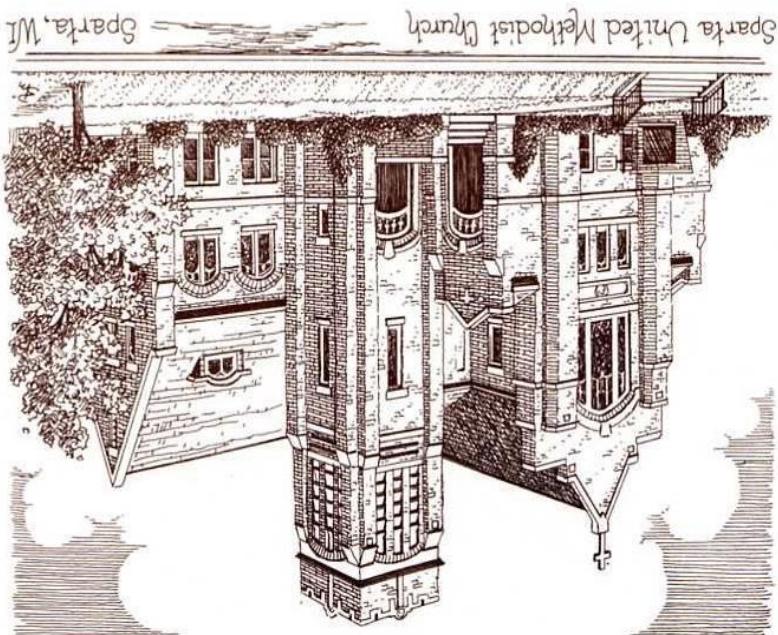
The Chimes

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SUMC Worship Schedule

In-house Service

9:00 a.m. Sunday mornings

Online Service

YouTube: Sparta UMC month day year