

# “The CHIMES” – May

Volume 58, No. 5

2023

## Continuing the Conversation...

*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”*

(Philippians 4:6-8)



As I approach retirement, time seems to be ticking by faster every day. I am one who likes to plan ahead so I try to choose Scripture and hymns for worship a month at a time. That way our musicians also have an idea of the directions I am planning to go in our worship services. As I completed this process for May and looked at my calendar for June it hit me how close I am to that momentous date of July 1—only two more calendar pages to turn.

Change of any kind is never easy, but in some ways this transition is an easier one for me. Yes, I still have to pack up my belongings and organize them in a different home. But, I don't have to learn a new church system and how to bring my unique gifts for ministry into that setting. My biggest challenge for awhile will be remembering when I attend worship that I am not the pastor in leadership, I am a worshiper. That will take some getting used to, but I will figure it out.

Your new pastor will have a greater challenge ahead of her, so I wanted to give some space this month to remind you of ways to help her in this exciting time. I know this is a time of transition for you too, but allow me to state the obvious—you have one person to get to know; Pastor Hae-Jeong has over 100.

Welcoming a new pastor in genuinely helpful ways lays the groundwork for a healthy and vital relationship and for the development of stable, long-term ministries

together. Here are some tips that I hope will help you all get off to a strong start.

Open your hearts and decide that you are going to love your new pastor. Expect the best from her. Your positive attitude will go a long way in enabling her to meet your expectations. Also, let her know what your expectations are—pastors don't have a way of knowing what you are thinking unless you tell them; and then listen to her expectations and dreams as well. Pray daily for your new pastor and her family, (I would also love it if you continue to pray for me and my family as we get settled into a new routine). Send cards or notes of welcome and encouragement (this will also help Pastor Hae-Jeong learn names). Flowers are also a nice welcome gift.

One thing I would have appreciated more of was the opportunity to meet small groups of people over coffee or a meal. These conversations in a casual and relaxed setting outside the church building are a wonderful way to get to know people better. Don't expect her to get to know you through worship only.

Avoid comparing Pastor Hae-Jeong with any previous pastor. She has her own unique personality and gifts for ministry. Make time to learn who she is and what her gifts are and then appreciate them. Consider that God has put her here for such a time as this—allow her to be who God created her to be without putting unreasonable expectations on her.

The S/PPRC will have plans in place to greet Pastor Hae-Jeong on moving day, and offer help. But for individuals, especially in the first couple of weeks, you should also make a point to briefly introduce yourself and welcome Pastor Hae-Jeong. You might even want to bring coffee/tea, or invite her out for coffee/tea, and a visit. I remember wandering around the kitchen my first morning here, searching through boxes trying to find my coffee maker and then something to drink coffee out of. I guess my priorities the afternoon before were finding bedding and to get beds ready for sleep.

Introduce your new pastor to the community. Share your tips on your favorite dry cleaners, grocery store, drug store, walking trails, etc., and information on local options for internet and cable television providers. Give gift certificates to favorite restaurants in the community; you may even want to invite her to go to a favorite

restaurant and enjoy a meal and a chance to get to know you a little better. Of course, in all of this, graciously allow your pastor to say no or ask for a raincheck. You won't know what is going on for her on any given day. Don't let your good intentions overwhelm her. It's all about finding the right balance.

Finally, dust off those name tags. Name tags are undoubtedly no one's favorite accessory, but wear them for at least a few weeks to help Pastor Hae-Jeong learn names. Remember, you have only one name to learn, but she has a multitude.

The hardest part of this transition for me is saying goodbye. I have lived life with you for nearly five years now and through some of the strangest and most difficult times in our current history; and we have done well together. I care for you all very much, but I know God cares even more, so I anticipate good things to continue and grow for you as Sparta United Methodist Church well into the future. Through all of this I will continue to pray for you all.

You will find an introduction from Pastor Hae-Jeong immediately following. Enjoy!

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

## Introducing Your New Pastor



Dear brothers and sisters in Sparta Church!

I am so joyful thinking of the Sparta church and meeting you! I imagine you and your church with my tender heart. I will be one of you very soon, and Sparta UMC will be my church, too. It is truly amazing that God lets us be together so

that we may love, learn, and grow together into the purity of the heart of Christ. We will walk awhile in our wilderness journey together. We will experience God's presence for this particular time in our lives and ponder how to bring God's amazing Kingdom into our lives and into the hearts of others who desperately need our wonderful Father. Let's dream God's dream together! About myself, a former congregation wrote a brief introduction. I want to quote it here.

Hae-Jeong, phonetically [ha jong], was ordained in 2018 at the Annual Conference in Modesto, California.

She currently serves two churches in northern California. She was born in On-Yang, South Korea. Pastor Hae-Jeong has an impressive educational background that includes a BA from Korea University in Seoul, where she studied English Literature. She next studied in Germany at Köln University, where she earned a Master's degree in musicology, and at Osnabrück University, where she earned a Ph.D. in musicology. After moving to the US, she studied at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Iowa before transferring to the Pacific School of Religion in California, where she earned a Master of Divinity degree. Pastor Hae-Jeong has worked as a Clinical Pastoral Education Resident at California Pacific Medical center and is qualified as a professional Chaplain. Her son lives in Chicago, Illinois. She is a passionate preacher, skilled teacher, gifted musician, and a mighty prayer warrior.

Looking forward meeting you,  
Grace and love!  
Pastor Hae-Jeong

## Milestone Celebration



An important milestone is coming up at the end of this month for our three confirmands. Since last September they have been meeting weekly with Pastor Loretta, learning about God, our faith, our denomination, and what it means to be a member of a church. There has also been fun along the way as they have gotten to know each other and Pastor better.

Our confirmands are Joshua Ebert, Maddie Tadisch, and Annabelle Von Ruden. Please keep them in prayer as they complete their transformation from confirmation students to full members of this congregation. They are regularly in worship and are exploring ways to be and stay involved in the ministries

of the church. If you haven't met them yet, please reach out to them before or after worship and get to know them. They are all pretty awesome!

The confirmation service is set for **Sunday, May 28**. This is also Pentecost Sunday, the birthday of the church and a very appropriate day to celebrate new members. The confirmands will help lead worship that day. Plan to come and support and celebrate these newest members.



## Chicken or An Eagle

*“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect.”* (Romans 12:2)

Once upon a time, a man found the egg of an eagle. It had been abandoned for some reason by its mother, but as it was still warm, the man took it and put it in the nest of one of his backyard chickens along with the other eggs that were there being brooded upon.

After a period of time, the eaglet was hatched, and along with the other chicks from his nest began to go about the backyard doing what the other chicks did. He scratched the earth for worms and insects. He looked for the corn that the man would throw into the yard. He clucked and cackled as best as he could, and as he grew, he would, like other chickens, thrash his wings and fly a few feet in the air.

Years passed in this way, and the eagle grew very old. One day he saw a magnificent bird far above him in the cloudless sky. It glided majestically among the powerful wind currents, soaring and swooping, scarcely beating its long golden wings.

The old eagle looked at it in awe and asked, “What is that?”

“That is the eagle, the king of birds,” said one of his neighbors. “He belongs to the sky and to the high places. We belong to the earth, we are chickens.”

The old eagle knew this was true, and so it was he lived and died as a chicken, for that is what he believed he was.

Very often, in life, our perspective determines our reality. By experiencing the transforming power of God's love and grace, we can see the world, the ministry of the church and our individual lives in a unique way. Instead of being held down by “what ifs,” fears of failure, or the challenges the task at hand, we can soar as a people sustained and lifted by the same grace that transformed us.

It is my prayer that you will be able to discover how God is calling you to live out the love of Christ in this world. It is my prayer that you will have the courage to live into that call with your entire being, trusting God's grace to sustain you through even the most difficult times. It is through following God's call that we can soar like the eagles we were created to be.

Rev. Jason Mahnke,  
Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

## Save the Date

**August 11 - August 12, 2023**

**Stewardship Conference at Pine Lake**  
**This year's theme:**  
*Stewardship from the Ground Up*

## New This Year!

- Friday evening “Pre-Conference Workshops” designed to give leaders a jump on their Stewardship planning.
- New schedule to accommodate lay leaders with a traditional work schedule, part-time and licensed local pastors with weekday commitments, and Elders who want to partner with more lay people in their Stewardship ministries.
- More participation options, including in-person Friday only, Saturday only, or both days, and virtual via Zoom.

**Full schedule and more details at:**  
<https://www.wumf.org/upcoming-events/>

Registration opens in early May.



## Nurture Update..

He is Risen!

Thank you, all, for your faithful participation and prayers as we journeyed together to glorify our risen Savior during the weekly Lenten devotions; Palm Sunday; Maundy Thursday evening service led by the confirmands and mentors; 24-hour prayer vigil; Stations of the Cross with our community of believers on Good Friday—and finally, Easter Sunday!

Blossoming of the Cross reflected the beauty of spring, and the resurrection of Jesus who fills our lives with love, forgiveness and hope!

**May 14-Mother's Day!** The Sunday school children will present flowers.



“M” is for the million things she gave me,  
“O” means only that she’s growing old,  
“T” is for the tears she shed to save me,  
“H” is for her heart of purest gold;  
“E” is for her eyes, with love-light shining  
“R” means right, and right she’ll always be.  
Put them all together they spell “MOTHER”.  
A word that means the world to me.

-Howard Johnson & Theodore Morse

**May 20-Armed Forces Day.** Let our active military members know they are appreciated. Send them a note or when you see them simply thank them for their service.

**May 21-Honoring our high school graduates.** Please contact the church office at 608-269-6949 with names of high school and college graduates.

**May 28-Pentecost Sunday.** You may bring a red geranium to be planted at church if you wish.

**Confirmation Sunday** Josh Ebert, Maddie Tadisich & Annabelle VonRuden.

**Honor our fallen military.** A list of our fallen military will be available with the announcements. If you have someone to add to the list who has died since last Memorial Day, please call the church office with the name & branch of service by May 22.

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



## 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!

We will also be **celebrating history during Worship on May 7.** We hope to see you there!

Thank you to Barb McGreevy for joining us at our April meeting. We hope you will continue to come to our meetings. Anyone interested in our Church's history please feel free to join us on the second Wednesday of each month at 9:00 a.m. in the Church Library.

October will be here before we know it, so I wanted to let you know ***Our Community In Concert*** date is **October 21.** Mark your calendars now. We are in the preliminary planning stages now, but will give you more information soon.

We are—Keeping the Eternal Flame Glowing



## 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.



Thank you once again the Little Free Library has been blessed with books. Thank you to Lynn Humphrey, Sara Kemp and Tina Reinart for your very generous donations. I must say we have a very good supply built up. All your donations are greatly appreciated.

Margie Lakowske, Little Free Library Steward



thank you

THANK YOU! Words cannot express how grateful I am for all of the cards, visits and phone calls I received for my birthday. I may come from a very small family but thanks to my church family I have lots of family. Thank you again for making this BIG birthday so memorable. Love you all! Margie Lakowske

This thank you was mistakenly left out of the February *Chimes*: **Thank you** friends, for remembering us with cards filled with warm wishes, flowers, calls and gifts for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was a day spent “counting our many blessings”!

Bob & Cyndi Wise



The Sparta Ministerial Association are meeting in the small kitchen on Wednesday, May 3 at noon.

SUMMIT Spirits will be meet on Tuesday, May 2 at 6:30 in the library.

Nurture will meet Thursday, May 4 at 6 p.m. in the library.

On Tuesday, May 9 Lois circle will be in the small kitchen at 1 p.m.

Wesleyan Circle will meet in the Gathering Place on Tuesday, May 9 at 6:30 p.m.

Records & History will meet Wednesday, May 10 at 9 a.m.

May *Chimes* newsletter deadline is Monday, May 22 by noon.

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.

The study on Moses, with book and video by Adam Hamilton continues on Thursdays at 6 p.m.

## 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



## Easter Flowers & Cross Blossoms

Thank you to all who purchased blossoms for the cross and Easter flowers. Below is a list of the dedications.

### Easter Flowers

From Tim & Judy Fuhrmann in honor of church family and friends.

From Elaine Lee in honor of Dick & Eileen Gajewsky. From Nancy Sather in memory of Orton, Ilah, Bob Gabriel, and Harold Sather.

Cindy Isensee in memory of Sue Isensee, Dora Treu, and Vera Knudtson

### Cross Blossoms

Marty Walley

Dick & Eileen Gajewsky in memory of Lawrence & Nina Rhodenhizer and Karen Rhodenhizer.

Bob & Cyndi Wise in memory of Tyler Wise.

Kevin & Margie Lakowske in honor of family and friends.

Beth Nowak in honor of Paul & Kay Foulke and Dick & Eileen Gajewsky.

Maxine Gudbaur in memory of Rod Gudbaur

Cheryl Isensee in memory of Steve & Mitchell Isensee.

## Volunteer Appreciation

What does it take to keep a church running like a well-oiled machine? The simple answer is YOU.

If your main experience with church is Sunday morning worship, you may think it's just the pastor, liturgist, and organist. Oh wait, there is also the ushers (who not only greet and count people but also make sure details like working candles are taken care of), and the tech team that livestreams and records the service (as well as controlling sound). On some Sundays there is also those who bring treats and make coffee for fellowship—if you have been missing the fellowship time lately you may want to consider stepping up. There are those who deliver flowers weekly to adorn our altar, flowers that are given away after the service to brighten someone's week. And the choir, we can't forget the choir. All of these folks are there Sunday mornings, and what is done to provide a great worship experience does not happen by accident. All of these people put in time preparing.



Aside from Sunday mornings there is so much more that happens behind the scenes. The trustees work to care for the church property—making decisions on maintenance of two beautiful, old buildings—with an emphasis on old. They are called into service when things stop working, and do their best to bring order back to mechanical workings of the church. They are also called upon to be furniture movers at times—like when tables need to be set up for events like funerals, dinners, or training events. There are those who work to make sure our lawn and landscaping look welcoming over the summer.

There are cooks and planners who are called into action when a funeral lunch (or other meal to benefit the church) is called for. There are those who coordinate, prepare & serve meals, and clean up afterwards for the free community soup suppers every Tuesday. There are those who have stepped up to be on the leadership team for the church—to help discern a vision and mission for this body of Christ. Those who oversee the health of the church finances and work to help us all be good stewards of what God has given us (including the coordinator of our scrip program). There are Sunday school teachers who have answered the call to help our youngsters get to know God and learn about our Christian faith. Those who serve as mentors for confirmation students. Those who document and preserve the history of the church. Those who work to care for and “nurture” the spiritual lives of the members and friends of the church. Those who organize and coordinate “missions” of the church (this includes those who have taken over the card mission). There are also those who go with the pastor to worship services and events in the community to help make those services fuller. There are those who lead studies and those who attend studies. There are those who faithfully pray for the church, community, and world.

I had thought about naming names, but as you can see, it takes many to keep a church healthy and running like a well-oiled machine, I didn't want to miss any individual as I take this space to say, “**THANK YOU!**” to all of you who are actively, and a lot of times working behind the scenes, to keep this church going.

If you have not found a way to step into a volunteer ministry in this church, I invite you to review the leadership list posted on the bulletin board near the stairs to the fellowship hall and see what areas are of most interest to you. Then reach out to someone on the list, or the pastor, to get involved. When you are actively involved in the ministries of the church your Christian experience is fuller and more satisfying. Don't miss out.



# Wisconsin Conference

## Disaffiliation Update

(from March 29 Conference Weekly ENews)

We wanted to provide you an update on the number of churches that are currently in the Disaffiliation process in our Wisconsin Conference and the next steps in the process.

The 2019 Special General Conference established a limited window of opportunity, expiring December 31, 2023, for local churches to depart The United Methodist Church “over issues related to human sexuality.”

Forty-four local congregations in the Wisconsin Annual Conference continue in the process following a required period of discernment and Church Conference vote, where the professing members present supported the disaffiliation motion by at least a 2/3 majority.

Varying in size, the congregations are in four of the five districts, with no disaffiliation requests from the Northwest District. Approximately half are congregations reporting 55 or fewer members. These 44 local churches remain from the 75 who had initially expressed interest in learning more about what disaffiliation might mean.

A 17-step process is being followed in Wisconsin. The next step (as of March 29), step 13, in the process is for the requests to be reviewed and acted on by the Conference Trustees before April 15 and by the Cabinet by May 1. Each church will be sent their calculated payment amount on May 1 and must fulfill their financial obligation by May 26. After funds are received and all obligations have been met, the churches will be voted upon at the Annual Conference in June.

Should a local church not fulfill all the prerequisites by their disaffiliation date, no later than December 31, 2023, their disaffiliation will be null and void and the church will remain United Methodist.



Pizza and a movie will be canceled for the months of May and June as Toni will be out of town.



### Needing a card for someone special?

You can now find new and recycled cards for all occasions: Birthdays, Anniversaries, Weddings, Thank You, 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!



CHANGING THE WORLD ONE PAIR AT A TIME

Thank you to all who have donated to Soles4Souls!

We have collected 185 pair of shoes through April!



### 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 **May 14**. 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.





### *May Anniversaries*

- 10 Joe & Betsy Tadisch
- 21 Mark & Denise Halverson

### *May Birthdays*

- 02 Gale Rugg
- 04 Richard Dale
- 04 Judy Erickson
- 05 Carolyn Lieder
- 06 Abby Smith
- 06 Denise Halverson
- 06 Scott Thurston
- 09 Joshua Ebert
- 09 Ellen Hemstock
- 09 Dorothy Zillmer
- 10 Brittany Flury
- 14 Muriel Canfield
- 18 Lorna Schamens
- 18 Liz Risseeuw
- 20 Jonathan Loeffelholz
- 21 Aidyn Hanson
- 21 Jason Moore
- 22 Tom Hemstock Jr.
- 24 Joey Esterline
- 30 Eric Cole



### **Bakery pick-up**

- 7 Margie Lakowske
- 14 Amy & Kurt Keifer
- 21 Dave & Sara Kemp
- 28 Priscilla & Jeff Hemmersbach

### **Tech Team**

- 7 Cheryl & Cindy
- 14 Ron & Kristine
- 21 Ben & Hailee
- 28 Ben & Hailee

### **Liturgist**

- 7 Ellen Hemstock
- 14 Eileen Gajewsky
- 21 Amy Kiefer
- 28 Marty Walley

### **Ushers**

- 7 Bob & Cathy
- 14 Kurt & Amy
- 21 Peggy, Donna & Ron
- 28 John & Karen







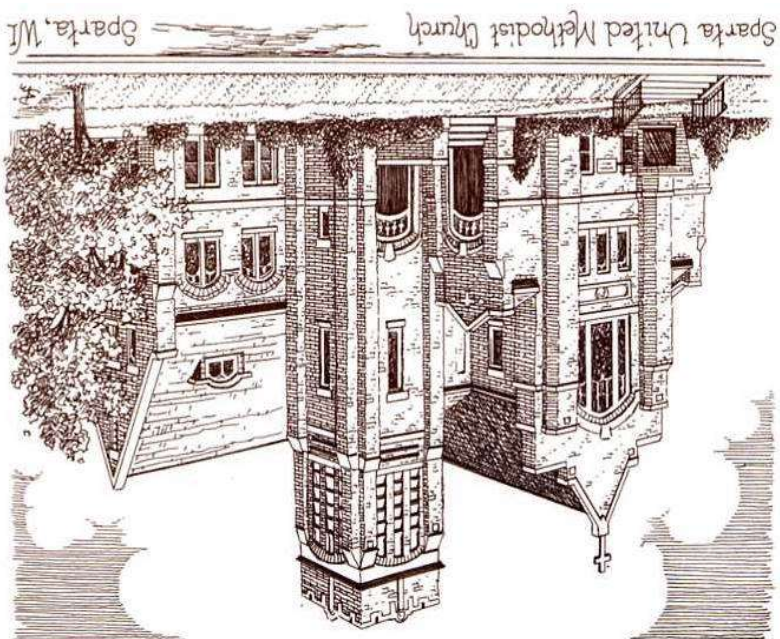
# The Chimes

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



*Prepared Especially For:*



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## **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