

“The CHIMES” – April

Volume 54, No. 4

2019

Continuing the Conversation...



*“Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their **fruit** in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all they do they prosper.” (Psalm 1:1-3)*

*“I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. My **fruit** is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver. (Proverbs 8:17-19)*

We are at that time of year when the seed catalogs have piled up. Many of us likely are dreaming and making plans for gardens. We may have seeds purchased and may even be thinking about starting them inside. We are just waiting for that prime time to start seeds so that the young plants don't get too gangly before it is warmed up enough for them to avoid freezing when transplanted outside. We understand and we hope for fruitfulness when it comes to our gardens, whether it's flowers or vegetables.

As we evaluate and update our ministry plan I have invited you to join me in conversation about fruitfulness in the church. Along those lines I have asked you to consider questions like, “who is our neighbor?” and “how do we love our neighbors as ourselves?”

To help us in this ongoing conversation you received with this newsletter a narrative budget that is meant to give you an illustrated view of how our budget is used. This narrative budget is divided showing a percentage of the entire budget designated toward the work that we do as a church in each category of the five practices of fruitful congregations. As a reminder the five practices of fruitful congregations are *Radical Hospitality, Passionate Worship, Intentional Faith Development, Risk-taking Mission and Service, and Extravagant Generosity.*

As with planning a fruitful garden it takes planning to develop a fruitful congregation. I would like to continue this conversation about fruitfulness as the goal of our ministry with the question of God's will for the church's ministry. A way to begin recognizing God's will is found in considering the nature of God—fruitfulness is a part of God's character.

The Bible begins with an image of fruitfulness in God's garden and Scripture throughout leads us to conclude that churches, as the body of Christ on earth, are intended by God to be fruitful. The Bible consistently states God's desires and expectations in terms of fruitfulness. Look up the word fruit in a concordance. The word appears more than 150 times. Fruitful appears nearly 30 times. And it is not just talking about people eating fruit or having children. When you examine the texts you discover so much more.

For example, in Genesis we quickly discover that God is creative and productive (fruitful). As the stars and planets are spun into existence out of the void, God populates the earth with beings of every kind. When humans are created, they are invited to reflect the nature of their Creator with the command to “be fruitful and multiply” (1:22). The Bible shows God to be a being of movement and resourcefulness.

As we further examine fruit and fruitfulness in Scripture we understand the point that good trees bear good fruit and bad trees cannot bear good fruit (Matthew 7:18; Luke 6:43). Comparing the expectation that disciples will bear fruit to the experience of good seed sown in good soil producing a good harvest fits our understanding (Mark 4:20; Luke 8:15). The images of pruning and destroying unproductive trees are not lost on us (Matthew 7:19 Luke 3:9 John 15:2). And we certainly understand the difference between the vine and the branches and the reminder that “the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine.” It is safe to say we are meant to have some understanding of fruitfulness.

As we work to update our ministry plan using the five practices of fruitful congregations I want you to know I have some small booklets by Robert Schnase in my office that can be checked out and read to help keep the conversation going. According to Schnase, the *Five Practices* of vital, fruitful congregations that we are focusing on aren't secret or new, but they are the practices that can lead to excellence and growth in the life of our church.

As we continue to pray for a breakthrough, read, ponder sermons, and discuss what it means for us to be a fruitful congregation imagine what can happen as we open ourselves to where God is already at work in our community and inviting us to join him in ministry. This is a challenging and exciting time for our congregation to make plans and dream about our fruitfulness in and for God's kingdom here in Sparta.

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

Pastor Loretta

Congregational Connections

As with any church there are some parts of our “body” that, for various reasons, cannot be in regular attendance at worship, studies, or other activities. We don’t want to lose touch; so along with all of the regular news you receive in this newsletter we are hoping to regularly feature SUMC folks sharing what’s going on with them or what they most love about being part of this congregation.

This month we are featuring two people: Paul Foulke, who became a member about a year ago and Grace Johnson, who is one of our younger members and grew up in this church. Please consider sharing your story here to help keep us all connected.

Since I came to Sparta United Methodist Church in 2017, I have felt very welcomed. As I became more involved, I appreciated the church’s commitment to missions, both through the response by the congregation and the commitment of United Methodist Women to the missions. I also appreciate the pastoral care and concerns by our pastor and the laity through various ministries. Sparta UMC is very open to all of Sparta and the surrounding areas.

—Paul Foulke, member

The Sparta United Methodist Church has been the best experience as I grew up going here. When I walk into the church I feel so welcomed and holy. This past year I completed two-years of confirmation classes and confirmed my faith.

During those two years I learned so much and am so much more confident about my relationship with the Lord. I have become more active, doing things like liturgist with our church friend, Priscilla. She was my mentor for confirmation. I help out with youth Sunday on the third Sunday of the month. I also sometimes help out with the Tuesday Soup Supper.

Over the summer there is Vacation Bible School and I have helped out with the kids. If you want to have fun and learn about God, it was an amazing way to learn.

There are so many things to do, to be a part of the church. I am so glad that I got to be part and member of the United Methodist Church.

—Grace Johnson, youth member

GIVING: Why Do I Give? Part 2

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one

mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves.”
(Philippians 2:1-3)

The folks at Network for Good remind us that giving is a human transaction; we usually give for reasons of the heart (emotionally) rather than for reasons of the head (rationally). Here are some reasons that donors have given for their contributions:

- Someone I know asked me to give, and I wanted to help them
- Felt emotionally moved by someone’s story
- Want to feel I’m not powerless in the face of need and can help (this is especially true during disasters)
- Want to feel I’m changing someone’s life
- Feel a sense of closeness to my church
- Want to memorialize someone
- Was raised to give to church—it’s tradition in my family
- It makes me feel connected to other people and builds my social network
- Want to have a good image of myself/my family
- Want to leave a legacy that perpetuates my support for the church
- Feel fortunate and want to give something back to others
- My faith teaches me to support the church
- Want to be seen as a leader/role model

Why do you give? The stewardship leaders of your church should be asking this question of you on a regular basis. If they don’t, ask them why not?

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation
www.wumf.org or Facebook/wumf.org
Or call 1-888-903-9863



Our Bulletin Prayer List...

Starting in April I will be overseeing the Prayer List that appears in our Sunday bulletin each week. I am trying my best to keep up with checking in with people listed, but there are so many names of people that I don’t know and don’t know who put them on the list. This being the case, I then don’t know how to get in touch with them to check on their status either.

From this point forward, when you have a prayer request, please provide your name, their name and their phone number on the request. If you don’t have their phone number, put your own number down as the person to contact to check with on their status.

Names will remain on the list for one month and then be removed, unless there is another request to myself or the church office to keep them on for another month and so on.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. Your assistance with keeping this list updated and current will be greatly appreciated by all.

Thank you!

Priscilla Hemmersbach, RN,
Parish Nurse and Lay Leader

Summer Volunteers in Mission Trip



Pastor L is looking for some mission-minded folks who are interested in going on a Volunteers in Mission trip to the United Methodist Children's Services in

Milwaukee, July 29 – August 2, 2019. Pastor has been on this trip twice in the past and found it a very worthwhile experience. If you have questions or are interested in going talk to Pastor as soon as possible so she can answer questions and discuss registration and carpooling if you decide to go.

This will be a return trip by VIM to a very worthy agency on the front line of efforts to deal with folks with major life issues relating to poverty and lack of basic life opportunities. This is always a rewarding trip as the agency has been in existence and grown in service for years and is very dynamic in the community there. There is a variety of jobs to be done depending on your physical ability and skill level. This will be an adult/youth trip.

The United Methodist Children's Services is located in the Washington Park area of Milwaukee. The Washington Park Neighborhood is one rich with history. A community that came to be through the development of both a city park and industrial growth, Washington Park carries a legacy of a diverse community of people from all walks of life, with the city park as a cornerstone of the community.

But Washington Park faces challenges too, and they are ones that reflect many other parts of the city of Milwaukee. With an unemployment rate of over 15%, and almost 50% of the population living below the poverty line, families in this neighborhood struggle with finding a sense of stability and hope.

The **cost** is \$150 (\$30/day) which includes your meals and lodging (in the past we have stayed in a large church and slept on cots or air mattresses that we bring. Daily rate and daily participation will be encouraged as well.

A three day minimum participation is suggested. Deposit of \$30 is due with your registration form as soon as possible. Final payments are due by July 15, 2019. Checks should be made out to WAC/VIM Camp.

The trip leader is Bruce Koch, 1560 Meadowlark Ln., Prairie du Sac, WI 53578, phone: 608-643-3962; cell: 608-370-2083. Trip Leader /Registrar is Jeff Virchow, 1535 Meadowlark Ln., Prairie du Sac, WI 53578, phone: 608-393-3991. Registration forms can be found at: <https://wisconsinumc.org/ministries/outreach-service/volunteers-in-mission/forms-reports> or in the church office.



Thanks to all of you who made my birthday week especially blessed, starting with the birthday cake, the gift of money, and greetings after worship the Sunday before my birthday. But you didn't stop there. I received more cards, had a gift to

missions given in my name by the UMW, heard birthday songs, enjoyed not one but two breakfasts, and received many kind birthday greetings throughout the week. I truly am feeling loved.

Thank you again. Pastor L



Simple Giving Opportunity

Forgot to bring your offering envelope or check to worship? Don't carry cash anymore? Looking for a more convenient way to support the ministry of your church?

You can keep consistent stewardship, even if you can't always be in church or are used to taking care of your finances online, by signing up with: members.myOfferings.com.

The process is simple. It is also safe (it uses the latest encryption technologies to protect your private information). Giving through members.myOffering.com also puts all your offering numbers at your fingertips so you can easily print receipts, track pledges, and print reports for your taxes with one click. If you try members.myOfferings.com and decide it just isn't for you, it is also easy to stop. If you are interested in checking this out Pastor L has simple step-by-step instructions.

If you choose to give electronically, there are "Electronic Giving" cards available in the sanctuary that you can drop in the offering plate as it is passed. That way you are not left out of that important part of worship and your gifts are also prayed over and dedicated to God.



Directory Update:

Tamie Steyer, 7200 Ice Crystal Ave., Sparta, WI 54656



A Note of Thanks:

I am one of many volunteers at the St. Clare Health Mission in Sparta. We were very grateful for the sandwiches, cheese and salami, crackers and dessert bars that someone or some group from the United Methodist Church of Sparta provided for our supper this past Tuesday evening, March 19th. Please thank this group on our behalf.

Thank you, Barbara Strohm

Beginning to look ahead after General Conference 2019

By Heather Hahn | March 4, 2019 | United Methodist News Service

The full ramifications of what happened at the 2019 General Conference are still unknown. However, a few things are coming clearer into view. Since the denomination's top lawmaking body adjourned Feb. 26, the following developments have occurred:

- One group that had previously raised the possibility of leaving The United Methodist Church announced that it has no immediate plans to do so;
- The General Conference Committee on Ethics announced it found no evidence to substantiate a delegate's allegation of bribery;
- The denomination's top court publicized deadlines for briefs ahead of its April meeting that will determine which of the newly approved legislation is in line with the denomination's constitution;
- Bishops and other church leaders began the work of explaining what General Conference did and what lies ahead for the multinational denomination where church members still have divergent interpretations of Scripture and differing views of ministry with LGBTQ people.

A number of church leaders spoke of healing after a more than two-year process and days of rancorous debate that have left many feeling exhausted and hurt.

"Our interest is in the healing of the church — not the church as an institution or a bureaucracy — it's for the healing of the church so that we can be better together, so that we can be there for each other," said Bishop Kenneth Carter Jr., president of the Council of Bishops. "And it is to acknowledge the great harm people feel in the LGBTQ community."

Carter spoke during a March 1 webinar for the Florida Conference, which he leads. He was among the bishops who are leading conversation in their areas both online and in person about General Conference votes.

By a vote of 438 to 384, General Conference passed the Traditional Plan that reinforces the denomination's prohibitions against same-sex unions and "self-avowed practicing" gay clergy.

Delegates also adopted legislation that allows a church, with a two-thirds vote of the congregation and after paying certain expenses, to disaffiliate from the denomination with its property.

The Wesleyan Covenant Association had advocated for the Traditional Plan, a related modified version and an exit plan. Before General Conference, association leaders said they were considering calling a Convening Conference in April to form a new denomination.

The group specifically rejected the bishops' recommended One Church Plan that left questions of marriage up to individual churches and ordination up to conference ordaining bodies.

With the passage of the Traditional Plan, the WCA's leadership has decided to forgo an April gathering and any immediate plans to depart en masse. The group thanked General Conference for reaffirming church teachings on

sexual ethics and said it would remain committed to the missional effectiveness of The United Methodist Church.

"Our work will continue unabated as we address factors that have contributed to dysfunction and ineffectiveness," the group said in a Feb. 28 statement. "We are committed to working with other United Methodists to achieve that end at the next General Conference in 2020, including a gracious exit provision. And should circumstances warrant, we remain prepared to launch a new Methodist movement."

The Western Jurisdiction, which encompasses seven conferences in the western United States, has long acted as if church restrictions related to LGBTQ ministry do not exist. The jurisdiction is home to the Mountain Sky Conference's Bishop Karen Oliveto, the denomination's first openly gay and married bishop.

Oliveto and other Mountain Sky leaders said during a livestream March 1 that the jurisdiction intends to continue to maintain its openness on matters of homosexuality. Still, the bishop acknowledged that General Conference has left its mark on many, and she has already heard about families leaving the denomination.

"The theology I was taught, the spirituality I was grounded in, was voted down at General Conference," she said. "The big tent we have always held in tension, a beautiful tension, a beautiful witness to the world, was shrunk by 54 votes."

However, she added, it's not over. New legislation does not take effect in the U.S. church until Jan. 1, 2020. In Africa, Europe and the Philippines, the legislation doesn't take effect until 12 months after the next General Conference in May 2020.

Before the Traditional Plan can take effect, General Conference has referred it for review by the Judicial Council, the denomination's top court. The Council of Bishops also has asked for the court to rule on the constitutionality of the church-disaffiliation provision delegates passed.

The Judicial Council, during General Conference, ruled a previous version of the disaffiliation legislation unconstitutional. The bishops argue the amended version that passed doesn't solve the constitutional problem the court identified because it does not require an annual conference to ratify the local church's decision. The church court also has previously ruled parts of the Traditional Plan unconstitutional.

The denomination's top court has already agreed to address the Traditional Plan when it meets April 23-25 in Evanston, Illinois.

Regardless of what the court decides, people across the denomination will continue to look at next steps. Carter, in a pastoral letter on behalf of the Council of Bishops, said this will be a time for local church leaders to step up.

"Every church I have known in my life has had spiritual elders, mature spiritual leaders who care for the body, that is the people God has called together in a place," Carter wrote. "I pray in this moment for mature spiritual leadership among the clergy and laity of our global church."

This article is made available as a way to give you a balanced perspective on the outcome of the special general conference that was held in February. You can get more information at www.umnews.org.

Important Public Service Announcement!

CouleeCap has been informed that there are two individuals, identified as Melissa Erdmann and April Wood, who have been going to several apartments and homes in the area stating that they are with CouleeCap. These individuals are then asking to enter the home. It is reported that one of them then asks to use the bathroom and proceeds to go through medicine cabinets, possibly in search of prescription medications. **The police have been notified of this situation.**

Please spread the word that these individuals are **NOT** CouleeCap employees and are **NOT** affiliated with CouleeCap in anyway. If you experience anything related to this or someone knocks on your door claiming to be with CouleeCap, **please shut the door and contact police immediately.**

We appreciate your assistance with this situation.

Dana Casberg, Case Manager II, CouleeCap, Inc.
217 North Black River Street, Sparta, WI 54656
PH: 608-269-1286

Shepherding Team

The Shepherding Team works with the Hispanic ministry to ensure open dialog between both ministries. Cindy Isensee and Priscilla Hemmersbach are currently representing the Sparta UMC and Antonia Gutierrez and Gladys Soto are the representatives from the Hispanic ministry.

Information as to what is occurring within our church community is shared, as well as offering support to the Hispanic community in any way that Antonia and Gladys feel would be of assistance. The team meets every couple of months, unless deemed otherwise by either ministry.

The most recent news is that by the time you are reading this, Antonia's newest grandchild should have entered this blessed universe. Liz Risseuw is providing Antonia with another granddaughter. Congratulations to both Liz and Antonia.

At this time, Antonia reports that due to the winter season, their attendance has been lower than normal, but she is expecting attendance to increase with the better weather.

Submitted by Cindy Isensee

Finance Committee Report

Our Treasurer, Bev Donahue, gave a financial update by sharing that the first two Sundays of March have had very good offerings. Thus, at this time income is higher than expenses, which is good news.

We discussed the need for a major fund raiser this year that will allow the Church to continue full Ministry when offerings have decreased. We talked about the importance of generating income instead of cutting expenses that will harm Ministry.

There were no specific actions voted on at this meeting. Submitted by Paul Foulke, Chairman

March 2019 General Budget Contributions/Expenses

Date	Revenue*	Expenses
3/03/2019	6,028.01	1,982.31
3/10/2019	8,142.27	5,273.83
3/17/2019	2,565.00	2,121.81
3/24/2019	2,351.15	4,013.83
3/31/2019		

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

Health Ministry Team

Priscilla Hemmersbach, RN

In Matthew 25:35-40 Jesus said, *"For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me ..."*

Our Purpose: To demonstrate the love and care of Jesus Christ to an individual in a hospital and/or shut-in setting – in both spiritual and practical forms. To minister to the individual through the reading of God's Word and through prayer.

Members of the Health Ministry Team are:

Paul Foulke, Bev Laufenberg, Eileen Gajewsky, Beth Nowak, Dean Olson, Ann Olson, Cindy Isensee, Priscilla Hemmersbach, RN; and Pastor Loretta Waughtal.

We make visits to our "shut-ins" on a regular basis; taking church bulletins, Daily Bread Devotionals, and our Lenten Devotional booklets.

We are planning on "highlighting" our shut-ins, (those who are willing) by putting their picture, along with some information about them (such as date of birth, anniversary, hobbies and interests...anything they would like to share with the Congregation) in *The Chimes*.

Pastor and I visited Bob Olson recently. He now lives at BridgePath and would gladly welcome visitors.

Ann Borreson was happy to see us and sends her greetings.

If you know of anyone that would benefit from a visit, please let one of us know. Thank you!

Nurture News...

Many Thanks! There have been so many who have volunteered so generously during the month of March! Please know that you are appreciated!

Shrove Pancake Breakfast: Pete Foss, Jeff Hemmersbach, Dave Kemp, Kurt Kiefer, and Todd Loeffelholz served over 50 folks! The Freewill Offering of \$125 went to our General Budget. Thank you also to Julie Rodgers Adams, who donated the sausages for breakfast that day.

Shrove Tuesday Community Pancake Supper: The pancakes were made and donated by Michael Bonello. Servers included the Kiwanis and Trinity Lutheran Church members, Dick & Eileen Gajewsky, Emily Axelsen, Jane Hobson, Jenny Johnson, Amy Kiefer, Margie Lakowske, Cathy Nichols, and Marty Walley. A Freewill Offering of \$320 was given to the Sparta Ministerial Association. Over 80 people were served. Hopefully, this will become an annual event!

Ecumenical Lenten Luncheon: 57 people were served lunch on Wednesday, March 13th by Emily Axelsen, Eileen Gajewsky, Priscilla Hemmersbach, Jane Hobson, Maxine Gudbaur, Margie Lakowske, and Cathy Nichols. Many thanks to all who donated grocery items for this meal!

Wednesday Evening Lenten Soup & Bread Suppers: Delicious soups are being furnished by Pastor Loretta, Cheryl Isensee, Scott Naeseth, Rose White, Cathy Nichols, Peggy Wright, Betsy Tadisch, Margie Lakowske, Lynn Humphrey, Sara Blackdeer and the BASH kids, Beth Nowak, and Paul & Kay Foulke. These evenings of fellowship, a meal, and devotions bring us into a closer relationship with Christ, and with each other.

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday, April 18th:

12 Noon – A 24-hour Prayer Vigil begins and will run through 12 Noon on Friday, April 19th. Sign up for 1 hour prayer slots will be available.

7:00 p.m. – Maundy Thursday service

Good Friday, April 19th:

11:00 a.m. – An Ecumenical “Walk & Prayer” will begin at St. Patrick’s Catholic Church and end at the Schanhofer Funeral Home. An Ecumenical Good Friday service will be held there following the Walk.

12 Noon – The Prayer Vigil will end.

Easter Sunday, April 21st:

9:00 a.m. – Our Easter Worship service begins. An insert has been included in *The Chimes* that you may use to purchase flowering plants to adorn the altar and fresh flowers that will be used to participate in

“Blossoming of the Cross”. The flowering plants that you purchase to enhance our worship service that day may be taken home with you after the service.

We look forward to worshipping with you on each of these occasions as we celebrate the HOPE that Easter brings!

“He is Risen!” Alleluia!

Submitted by Cyndi Wise, Nurture Chairperson

Records & History Committee

Margie Lakowske, Chairperson

Our April meeting will be on the 17th at 9:00 a.m. **Please note the date change we are meeting on the 3rd Wednesday for April only.** Please also remember that we will take our Committee picture.

We must preserve all our various Committees’ history. All other church Committees, please take pictures and provide Records and History with a copy. Circles, please take pictures too! Pastor is also looking for pictures taken at various church functions for brochures and Facebook. Please provide copies to her, as well. Digital copies are also welcome and can be emailed. Thank you!

We also want to remind everyone that the dates for our Pictorial Directory photo sessions are April 30, and May 1, 2, 3 and 4, 2019. The Pictorial Directory Committee is comprised of: Eileen Gajewsky, Cheryl Isensee, Cindy Isensee, Sara Kemp, Amy Kiefer, Lorna Schamens, Cyndi Wise and Margie Lakowske. If anyone else would like to assist with the Directory please contact Margie.

Starting on March 31st we will start scheduling photography appointments following our Worship Service on Sundays. Cindy Isensee will have her laptop and it will only take a short time to schedule your appointment. Remember, if you schedule early you have the best chance of getting the time and date you really want!

We are – Keeping the Eternal Flame Glowing

Our Deepest Sympathy To:

The Family & Friends of Glenda Arnold, for the loss of Glenda.

The Family & Friends of Roger Swigart, for the loss of Roger.

Mission/Outreach Report

The Noisy Can Offering raised \$68 in February for the WASH program. We will continue collecting in April and May.

Missions will be putting together an article to promote the Summer Food Pantry needs. Will add toiletries to the list of needed items.

Lynn will contact the Monroe County Back Pack Program to see if they need any assistance.

We will be presenting a mission project to the congregation to put together hygiene bags for men, women, and kids. Pastor Loretta will take them with her to Annual Conference.

Will be doing Soles 4 Souls in April and May.

Paul heard of another place that collects shoes, so he will check to see if we can help them also.

Submitted by Lynn Humphrey, Recorder



Missions and Outreach

The Missions and Outreach Committee met last month to discuss several upcoming projects. They continue to work with the kids from BASH and the Children's Choir to raise money for UMCOR's Clean Water, Sanitation and Hygiene project. The kids do a separate "noisy can collection" offering on children's Sunday. The goal is to raise \$1,000.

In April we will begin to promote a second Soles 4 Souls shoe collection. In May we will set up a donation box for all types of shoes: men's, women's, children's, boots, sandals, high heels, etc. We will be able to take any and all types of shoes in any condition for the purpose of recycling, re-using and re-purposing. More information will be forthcoming in future Chimes and bulletins.

One mission our committee continues to support throughout the year is our local Food Pantry. Donations tend to drop in the summer months but the need doesn't. We will hold special collections in June and July to help those in the community that may need it the most. One item the pantry can always use are toiletries, such as shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste and deodorant. Donations can be placed at any time in the cart located in the education hallway.

Our Annual Conference will be coming up in June. Pastor Loretta will be attending and the committee plans on sending along kits for the Ingathering Truck. We will be collecting items for a Men's Kit, a Women's Kit and a Kids' Kit. Some of the things we will be collecting are: antiperspirants, toothpaste, toothbrushes, wash clothes, soap, nail clippers, ponytail holders and bandage strips. Complete lists will be passed out and posted soon.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Jerman, Chair

BASH News:

Bash kids sang in church on March 17th. Thank You Ellen for your direction, the kids did a super job!!

Some of the kids have been coming at 5:30 and enjoying the Soup and Bread Suppers. On April 3rd at 5:30 p.m. we are asking the BASH kids to help serve soup for the Lenten Supper.

On April 14th the Children's Choir will be singing in church. The BASH kids have been asked to take part in the 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service on April 18th and also for the Easter service on Sunday, April 21st at 9:00 a.m.

It looks like April and May are going to be busy months for us! On May 1st we will be having a pizza and movie night. We are planning on ending our BASH classes for the academic year on May 15th.

God's Blessing, Lynn Humphrey
Sunday School Superintendent



Lifetouch

Pictorial Directory Photo Session Times:

Tuesday, April 30:	From 2:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday, May 1:	From 1:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Thursday, May 2:	From 1:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Friday, May 3:	From 1:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Saturday, May 4:	From 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Scheduling dates following church services:

March 31, April 7, 14 and 28, 2019

Have questions or need more information?

Contact: Cindy Isensee at 608-487-5859 or
Margie Lakowske at 608-269-5532



The Prayer Dare...

Join in the prayer dare, at 6:08 a.m. and 6:08 p.m., or any time the Spirit moves you:

God of love and power, we know that you are with us and you are for us. Break through into our lives and into your church that our relationship may flourish with you and each other. Fill us with the grace, mercy, and power of Jesus. Help us discern where your Spirit is leading. Open doors that lead us into a new season of faithfulness and fruitfulness; of growth and service for your Kingdom; exceeding our dreams and expectations. Give us faith and courage to step through the doors that you open as we faithfully follow you, in Jesus name and for your glory. Amen.

Administrative Church Council

It was noted that in the February minutes under Pastor, it stated that the Pastor would be attending the Walk through the Bible on May 18th. It should have stated that she had received information on an event at the Sparrow's Nest on May 18th, Walk through the Bible.

Dave Kemp and the Trustees will be closely monitoring the leaking and moisture in the sanctuary. No other issues to be addressed at this time.

Paul Foulke reported that financially we had a good month. \$762 has been raised for the Food Pantry from the Lenten Offerings. \$151 has been raised from the Noisy Cans on BASH Sundays for the UMCOR WASH program.

Pastor Loretta is looking for another person to serve on the S/PPRC.

The Salad Luncheon will be held April 25th, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. On March 26th there will be a luncheon planning meeting at the church at 9:00 a.m. UMW is still in need of a President. It currently has 41 members.

BASH is continuing with the Deep Blue program and the kids seem to enjoy it. April 14th will be the last Sunday the Children's Choir will sing for this school year. The BASH kids will be serving the Lenten Soup and Bread meal on April 3rd.

Margie Lakowske reported that she is waiting on records from the Conference to see what information they have on the parsonage. Conference would like us to provide them with brochures, pamphlets or signs for any of our events.

The question was asked if anyone on the Council knew where the safe deposit box key is located.

Announcements will be made about the upcoming pictorial directory photo sessions.

As Lay Leader, Priscilla reported that she has been attending meetings and meeting with Pastor Loretta.

The Nurture Committee thanked all who volunteered for all the March events. April 14th is Palm Sunday, April 18th is Maundy Thursday, with the Prayer Vigil starting at noon and ending at noon on Good Friday. There will be a sign-up sheet for people to sign up for the 24 Hour Prayer Vigil in the Gathering Place on Sunday.

Good Friday's Ecumenical Service Walk and Prayer will start at 11am at St. Pat's Church and will end at noon at Schanhofer Funeral Home. There will be an ecumenical Good Friday service there following the Walk. It was brought up that the newspaper should be contacted to promote the event.

April 21st will be Easter Sunday with the Blooming of the Cross.

Paul Foulke reported that the Mission Committee will be collecting hygiene kits for men, women, and kids. Pastor Loretta will be taking the kits when she goes to Annual Conference. Bev reported that there was \$59 dollars in a Global Missions fund. The Mission/Outreach committee will look to see where that money had been designated and report back.

Pastor Loretta will be in Green Lake for the Days Apart with the Bishop from Monday, March 25th through Thursday, March 28th. Paul Foulke will be covering the Wednesday night Lenten Service for her. She has been working on informational brochures that will be put in the church pews and around Sparta to give visitors information about our church and programs. There also will be an article in this month's Chimes on E-Giving.

Priscilla has been collecting information to highlight the shut-ins. She is also working on a plan to update the prayer list that is in the bulletin each Sunday.

The Hispanic Ministry has been added to the Shepherding Team, which met on March 10th to update one another on events.



Support The Springs UMC After Fire...



There was a fire at The Springs UMC in Plover on Monday morning, March 18th. The cause is still unknown, but thankfully no one was inside the building at the time of the fire. Please keep the congregation and community in your prayers. If you would like to donate to The Springs UMC to support the church as they recover from the fire, make a check payable to your local church with "Fund 7999: Miscellaneous – Plover Fire" in the check memo. Church Treasurers will then forward the donations to the Conference Finance Office along with your church's monthly apportionments.