

“The CHIMES” – August

Volume 59, No. 8

2024

A New Beginning at Sparta United Methodist Church



Dear Sparta UMC Family,

As we welcome August 2024, I am reminded of the beauty and hope that come with new beginnings. Our journey together as a church community has been filled with many blessings. Gazing at the beauty of

our Sanctuary walls and furniture, I marvel at how much Sparta UMC has overcome throughout its 168 years here in Sparta. Each challenge, each pain, each suffocated cry in people’s lives has been held by the rock of this building and the rock of members’ faith who, year after year, attended services, programs, and celebrations in this place. This church has inspired so many and still does today. Many are who they are thanks to the faith of those who had the vision to build this place and call it the House of the Lord. Now, more than ever, we stand on the cusp of a transformative season.

The theme for this month, "New Beginnings: Overcoming the Past and Embracing the Future that the Present is Pointing Us," invites us to reflect on our past, celebrate our present, and look forward with hope and faith.

Reflecting on Our Past

Our past, though marked by moments of struggle and hardship, has also been a testament to our resilience and faith. This church has faced financial difficulties, an aging congregation, and a lack of technological upgrades. Yet, through it all, it has remained steadfast in its commitment to one another and to God's mission. Let us not forget the lessons learned and the strength gained from these experiences. They have shaped us into the community we are today—one that is rooted in love, faith, mercy, and perseverance.

Celebrating Our Present

Today, we find ourselves in a unique and exciting position. Our congregation is mighty, with a deep desire to continue to grow spiritually, attract new people, and welcome young families, children, and youth. Our discussion groups, fellowship gatherings, and collective worship are the seeds of a vibrant and dynamic community. Each sermon, each prayer, and each act of kindness contributes to a tapestry of faith that binds us together. As we gather each Sunday, let us remember that our present actions are the foundation for our future. Every smile, every welcome, and every shared meal is a step toward building a stronger community.

Embracing Our Future

The future is bright with promise and potential. As we look ahead, we are called to embrace the new opportunities that God is placing before us. This means being open to change, welcoming new faces, and stepping out in faith to try new things. Our mission to grow spiritually and attract young families requires us to be innovative, flexible, and courageous. We will continue to explore ways to enhance our worship experience, incorporating technology where possible, and finding creative methods to engage our community. Our focus on spiritual growth and outreach will be our guiding light as we navigate this path forward.

A Call to Action

I invite each of you to join me in this journey of new beginnings. Let us overcome any lingering fears or doubts from the past and embrace the future with open hearts and minds. Here are a few ways you can be part of this exciting new chapter:


- **Participate Actively:** Join our groups, volunteer for church activities, and be present in our worship services, if you are not doing it already.
- **Reach Out:** Invite friends, neighbors, and families to join our community. Share the joy and love you find at Sparta UMC. We cannot keep to ourselves the joy we find in Christ; it is to be shared. As the hymn inspires us: “Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name! Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done; his mercy sure, from age to age the same – his holy name: the

Lord, the Mighty One.” UMH # 200, verse 2.

Pray: Keep our church, its members, and our mission in your prayers. Seek God's guidance as we move forward together. Ask for prayers, and believe God can do beyond for His beloved children.

In conclusion, let us remember that every ending is a new beginning. Together, we can overcome the past, celebrate the present, and embrace a future filled with hope and promise. I am excited to walk this path with you, confident that God's grace will lead us to new heights.

With love and blessings,
Reverend Lourdes Magalhães



Thank you to all who have donated to Soles4Souls! We have collected 1178 pair through the year so far!

Thank you

Thank you Laurie Bartholomew for the many hours of weeding you did around the church. We appreciate your hard work at keeping the gardens looking pristine.

Thank you Pete Foss and Scott Naeseth for the mowing of the church and parsonage lawns. They always look great!

Thank you Scott and Rose for watering the potted flowers. They are thriving! You both have the magic touch!

Thank you Peggy and Scott for dishing up the sundaes after church and to SLB for hosting coffee fellowship. You did great and the extra treats accompanying them were scrumptious!

Nurture Update..



Welcome, Pastor Lourdes! Our committee is eagerly awaiting working with you in all our Nurture fellowship and worship activities.

Our committee members are truly saddened over the loss of Larry Humphry. He and his wife Lynn, faithfully taught and nurtured our young people for many years. Our deepest sympathies to our friend Lynn.

Summer brings rest, relaxation and refreshment—and now, with September rearing, we find ourselves thinking of another season of church activities, fellowship, Sunday school, bible studies, choir, etc. Looking forward to it!

The first day of Sunday school is September 8. Invitations will be sent to our young people. If you know of a family that would like to be included, please invite them. Also, please consider helping with Sunday school, we need teachers and helpers. Thank you.

The Nurture Committee focuses on connecting with our congregation (both young and old) in fellowship and worship activities, and we are always looking for new ideas to strengthen our relationships. We would love to hear from you as to what you would like to see “happening”!



Records & History



Records and History Committee will meet on Wednesday, August 14, at 9:00 am in the church library. If anyone is interested in attending our meeting you are more than welcome to join us. The bulk of our meeting will center around ***Our Community In Concert*** which will be held on October 19, 2024 from 2:00-4:00 pm in the Sanctuary. If you have not attended in the past, we recommend you mark your calendar to attend this concert. There are a wide variety of musical genres planned, so you are bound to hear something you enjoy or even discover a new favorite. The concert is FREE and refreshments are served at the conclusion.

We are - Keeping the Eternal Flame Glowing

Altar Plants



United Women in Faith (UWIF) would like to thank all those who signed up for one or more plant(s) on one or multiple dates for 2023. The calendars are up for 2024. Each date has two lines for one plant per line.

Plants are \$5.50 each or two for \$11. Plant money goes to Eileen Gajewsky, UMW treasurer, who pays the invoice from Sparta Floral quarterly.

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 UMW, Cathy Nichols

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 Holiday Cards! The cost is only 50¢ each. All proceeds go to our Missions & Outreach Fund. You can find them in the Gathering Place if you'd like to check them out!



Pizza and a Movie



night this month is **August 17** 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 August 17 if you will be attending so we know how much pizza to order.

August's Movie is: "Lifemark"



David's (Raphael Rugero) comfortable world is turned upside down when his birth mother (Dawn Long) unexpectedly reaches out to him, longing to meet her 18-year-old son she's only held once. With the encouragement of his adoptive parents, (Kirk Cameron, Rebecca Rodgers Nelson) David embarks on a journey of discovery that leads to a staggering truth from his past. From producers of War Room and Fireproof. Based on a true story. Rated PG-13.

**If the weather is 90° or above, this will be cancelled.

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 **August 4**. You can mail your order directly to Cheryl Isensee at: 9262 Festival Avenue, Sparta, WI 54656. If you have questions or need an order form contact the church (269-6949.)

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



If you would like to schedule a Meet and Greet with Pastor Lourdes, sign up for a time on Monday from 6 – 8 PM, or Tues. or Wed. from 10 – 2 PM.

Contact Pastor Lourdes at 973-856-4072 or pastorlourdesspartaumc@gmail.com to schedule.

There's a Song in the Air

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.” ~Romans 12:15

A study led by the Lily Family School of Philanthropy finds that empathy is increasing among young Americans since 2008, almost rising to levels similar to the highs of the 1970s. Late Millennials and emerging Gen Zs are showing increases in empathy, as compared with earlier generations, countering negative stereotypes about today's youth.

This study, which is an updating of a similar study conducted in 2011, underscores that empathy is not predetermined; it is a fluid trait that can grow or shrink, depending on one's experiences.

Here are some key findings from the study:

- Changes in empathy over time in young Americans move in cycles and can go up and down. Both taking (cognitive empathy) and empathic concern (emotional empathy) increased between 2008 and 2018.

- Economic variables don't play a major role in empathy changes in U.S. youth—either to promote or impair empathy.

- Changing interpersonal dynamics might play a larger role in these empathy fluctuations. Empathy was higher during times of loneliness. The studies author noted that when young people see loneliness and other difficulties around them, they may reach out with care and empathy. It's also possible that their own experiences of loneliness may increase their hunger for social connection.

~ Rev. Jason Mahnke, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation



- Nurture will meet on Thursday, August 1 at 6 p.m.
- The Ministerial Committee will not meet again until September 4.
- SUMMIT Spirits will meet on Tuesday, August 6 at 6:30
- Records & History will meet Wednesday, August 14.
- Lois Circle will not meet again until September 10.
- Wesleyan Circle will meet on Tuesday, August 13, for a potluck at Julie Rodger's house at 6:00 p.m.
- Pizza and a movie will be Saturday August 17 at 6 p.m. in the small kitchen for pizza and 6:30 in the chapel for the movie, "Lifemark."
- Servant Leadership Board will meet on Tuesday, August 20 at 6 p.m.
- August *Chimes* newsletter deadline is Friday, August 23 by noon.
- August 22 is the Ice Cream Social



Ice Cream Social Fundraiser on August 22



4:30-6:30pm.

Menu: barbeques, chips, pickles, lemonade, pie and ice cream. Barbeque plate with pie is \$7; pie and ice cream is \$4.



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.



August Anniversaries

- 01 Tom & Ellen Hemstock
- 03 Brenda & Scott Herrman
- 07 Jackie & James Davis
- 15 Kurt & Amy Kiefer
- 16 Sara & Chris Angle
- 17 Shirley & Marvin Fokema
- 26 Dean & Ann Olson
- 27 Pete & Deb Foss
- 28 Dani & Matt Glut

August Birthdays

- 01 Lynn Humphrey
- 01 McKenzie McDonald
- 02 Alexis Moore
- 04 Beverly Gamble
- 04 Eloda Miller
- 05 Mia Button
- 06 Sara Blackdeer
- 08 Cody Flury
- 08 Kenneth Snow
- 09 Jeanine Houtavelde
- 10 Eloise Smith
- 11 Ruth Jerome
- 12 Charlene Nowak
- 14 Aubrianah McCarter
- 14 Ashley Weibel
- 15 Areanna Lakowske
- 15 Madeline Tadisch
- 17 Cindy Isensee
- 18 Gabrielle Kozelka
- 21 Dana Kemp
- 23 Karen Joos
- 24 Ron Ebert Jr.
- 25 Mike Donahue
- 27 Dan Davis
- 27 Kiyah Peth-Schaffer
- 27 Cody White



Ushers

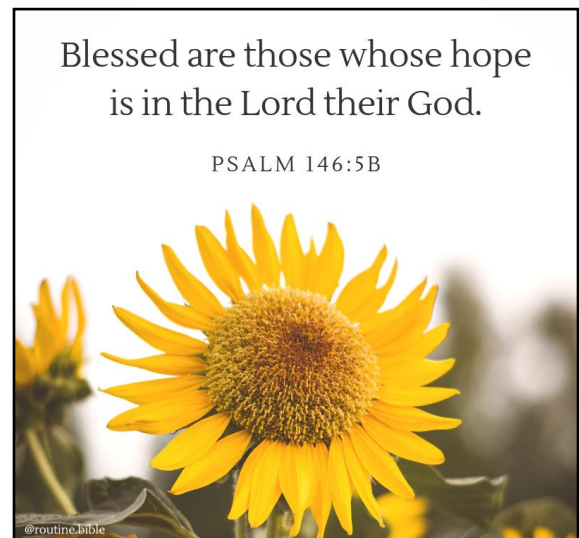
- 4 Kurt & Amy Kiefer
- 11 Joe & Betsy Tadisch
- 18 Rich & Danette Zidich & Peggy
- 25 Kurt & Amy Kiefer

Tech Team

- 4 Ron & Kristine Phillips
- 11 Toni Burrows & Amy Kiefer
- 18 Ben Simplot & Hailee Scheurich
- 25 Cheryl Isensee & Annabelle Von Ruden

Liturgist

- 4 Beth Nowak
- 11 Eileen Gajewsky
- 18 Marty Walley
- 25 Judy Fuhrmann



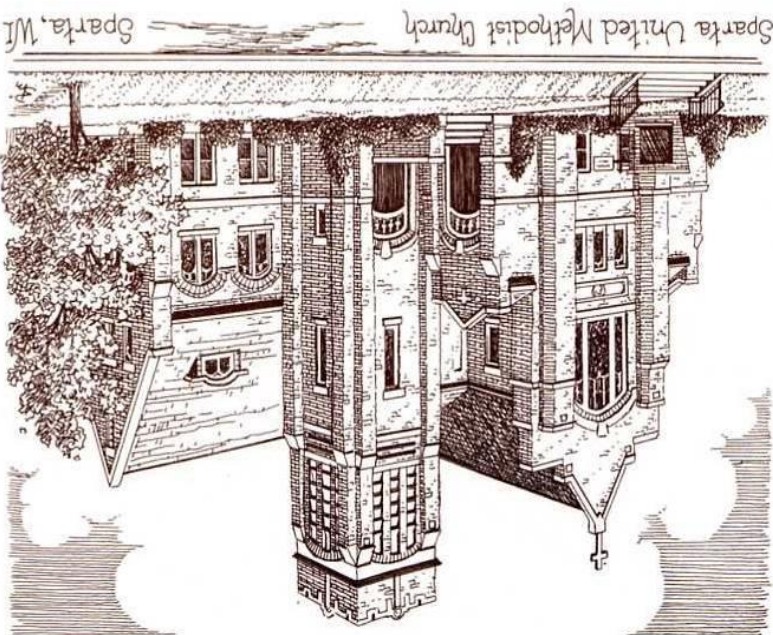
The Chimes

Sparta United Methodist Church
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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Website: 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