

“The CHIMES” – August

Volume 58, No. 8

2023

Continuing the Conversation...



Three trees were in front of the Appleton house living room patio. They were all shaped similarly to the shape of a heart. When I saw them for the first time, I felt like they were Moses' burning bush! Such a strong impression of the presence of God. And in the middle of the tree, there was a big rock. What can you imagine? Of course, it was Jesus Christ. It became a real nature's icon of God. It let me return to the tree repeatedly and center myself in calmness. When I received the news that I had moved, I thought that "I surely will miss the trini-tree!" which one of my dearest friends named poetically.



When I arrived here, I found an apple tree welcomed me! Do you know the children's story *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein? It is a story about a boy and a tree. "Once there was a tree ... and she loved a little boy." So begins a story of unforgettable perception, beautifully written and illustrated by Shel Silverstein. Every day the boy would come to the tree to eat her apples, swing from her branches, or slide down her trunk ... and the tree was happy, and he was happy. But as the boy grew older, he began to want more from the tree, and the tree gave and gave and gave. This is a tender story, touched with sadness, aglow with consolation.

Every morning, I sit in the rocking chair on the deck, watching the apple tree loaded with small tiny apples with a cup of coffee. And the idea of Love. Love wants to give and to give endlessly. Love doesn't think of oneself; Love thinks of others. And Love wants to

give everything. When Love cannot give any more, Love hurts.

My new friend, the apple tree, will bear many apples soon and give joy to all who receive the fruits. Bless all the heart that gives and gives with extravagant generosity for the beautiful new world of God, who is LOVE.

Grace and Love,
Pastor Hae-Jeong



August and September Sermon Series: For Shalom

Aug 6 / John 1:12-13
Theme: Spiritual Health

Aug 13 / 1 Corinthians 6:19 -20
Theme: Physical Health

Aug 20 / 2 Corinthians 10:3-5
Theme: Mental Health

Aug 27 / Ps 23:1- 4
Theme: Emotional Health

Sep 3 / John 15:5
Theme: Relational Health

Sep 10/ Matthew 6:31-33
Theme: Financial Health

Sep 17/ Proverbs 2:6-7
Theme: Vocational Health



Records and History Committee Update...



Records and History: Our **Community in Concert** is **October 21 from 2-4 p.m.** If you are interested in performing (instrumental or vocal or both) please feel free to contact Margie Lakowske at 608-269-5532 or 608-633-3588.



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 13**. 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.

Nurture Update...



August...there is still some summer left to be out and about and enjoy the lovely warm weather! But whatever season we are in, God has given us **TIME** to “nurture” our congregation, neighbors and community friends.

Consider...visits, phone calls, encouraging notes, invitations to worship, bible studies, soup supper, coffee fellowship with the men or ladies, concerts, volunteering—the list goes on!

“Stay connected to God—
Stay connected to each other.”

Please consider hosting coffee fellowship on Sundays following the worship service. A sign-up is available in the Gathering Place.

Looking for someone to ring our **church bell** when worship begins. **Thanks** to all who already volunteer!

The next Nurture committee meeting is **Thursday, August 3 at 6 p.m. at Cyndi's.**



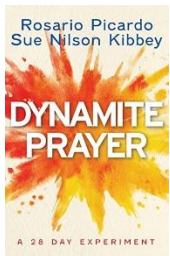
Altar Plants

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



A prayer workshop with a powerful, small, simple book “Dynamite Prayer” will start the second week in August. It will change the perspective of your life in a short 4 week workshop.

Quick fix or lifestyle change?...

I have tried just about every diet known to humanity through my adult life. Low carb. Counting calories. Intermittent fasting. Weight Watchers. I've lost weight on them all. I've gained weight on them all.

One commonality I have found between losing weight and not, no matter the weight loss system, is my approach to the diet. Do I see it as an overall diet and activity lifestyle change? Or is it simply something I need to suffer through to achieve a goal weight? The former is more about health and less about numbers on a scale but requires a plan and discipline. The latter frequently allows me to get to the number but is often unsustainable in the long-term, resulting in rebound weight gain.

I would argue that we, in the church, too often approach stewardship as a crash diet. We take four weeks in the fall to talk about the importance of giving generously, we look at the church budget, and then ask people to make a pledge to support the ministries. In my mind, this approach tends to resemble (ineffective) fundraising rather than Christian Stewardship. It has little chance of either impacting people's lives or truly funding lifegiving ministries.

True Christian stewardship is about discipleship. It is about lifestyle. Its goal is helping people learn how to relate to their finances and possessions in terms of their faith and their relationship with God. Success is determined on the metrics of financial healthiness, not on the number on the scale (i.e., the income line on the church budget).

This type of stewardship cannot be contained to just three or four weeks in the fall. It is about helping equip people to earn enough to meet their needs, to learn how to get and stay out of debt, to use tools like a spending plan (i.e., a budget) to wisely save and spend thoughtfully, and to experience the full benefits to giving extravagantly. I believe churches need to be as committed to helping people learn how to be faithful financial stewards as we are helping people learn how to pray.

I have learned – whether it comes to dieting or learning how to be a faithful steward – I will never fully arrive. But I am slowly learning that the true treasure of each is in the experience and the growth each journey offers.

Are you interested in helping people in your congregation take this journey? Consider helping your pastor or stewardship team put together a yearlong stewardship plan which may include offering a financial

wellness class like Financial Peace University or Saving Grace, holding an appreciation celebration thanking people for all they give to make a difference in the church and community, and simply making time to regularly talk about the challenges and joys of faithful financial stewardship.

Rev. Jason Mahnke, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation



Women in Faith Update...



The Executive Committee of UWIF will meet Tuesday, Sept. 5 at 9:00 at church to prepare a budget for 2024. This budget will be presented at Circle meetings on Sept. 12. Lois Circle will meet early afternoon and Wesleyan Circle meets at 6:30. Both Circles meet at church. All women of the church are encouraged and welcome to come 'check us out'. We have open arms and empty chairs to fill.

Wesleyan Circle will have their last summer potluck on August 8 at 6:00 at the home of Cathy Nichols. This is an even better way to 'check us out'. Fellowship, food and laughter. So much food!!! Wesleyan Circle will begin a new Bible Study Guide "Growing Older and Wiser" on Sept. 12. Ellen Hemstock will lead us through program #1 and Toni Burrows and Margaret Jensen. will serve as hostesses. Wesleyan members are asked to give study guide money to Cyndi Wise or Cheryl Isensee, our new Circle treasurer, if you haven't already done so.

'God enacts transformation. Prayer is how we participate in the transforming work He's doing'. (ODB 7/16) Pray without ceasing.

Cathy Nichols, Programs and Communications



Starting August 6, we will be using the offering plates at each worship service. Also you may have noticed the attendance books in the pews. Please take a minute to sign in each Sunday.

Church Rummage Sale



Our church will be sponsoring a rummage sale in conjunction with the City Wide Rummage Sale on **August 4 and 5**. We are seeking volunteers to help set up on Friday and Saturday at 7 am. If you are willing and able, please contact me.

We are also seeking workers from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Friday and from 8 a.m. - noon on Saturday. Each day we are also seeking volunteers to help put the items away (closing at 1 on Friday and noon on Saturday). Anyone is welcome to help set up or take down and for selling too.

It's a good time to meet your fellow parishioners. As they say, many hands make light work or one man's junk is another man's treasure! Come find your treasure!

Please call Margie at 608-633-3588 or 608-269-5532 to sign up to help! Thank you!



We will be starting **Sunday school** on **September 10** for kids 3 years old up to 6th grade. Kids will start in the Sanctuary at 9 a.m. then go downstairs following the children's message. We are looking for teachers and teacher helpers. If you are interested, please let us know.

Registration forms will be available in the Gathering Place later in August or you can pick on up in the office.

God Bless,
Lynn Humphrey
Sunday school Coordinator



Please join us for a fun night of fun, worship, food and community on **Wednesday, August 23 and 30**. The evening begins with outside play from 4:30-5:30, where we will have bubbles, sidewalk chalk, bean bag toss, washer toss, jump ropes and

other surprises. There will be a meal served at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall with music, story time and crafts to follow at 6 p.m. It will be a fun evening for all! Don't have kids? Come anyway! Bring your lawn chair and enjoy an evening of fellowship.

We are looking for volunteers to set up, take down and help serve dinner.

If you have questions, please see Pastor Hae-Jeong or Lynn Humphrey.



Wesleyan Circle will have a potluck at Cathy's house at 6:00 p.m. on August 8.

September *Chimes* newsletter deadline is Thursday, August 24.

The Study of The Acts continues on Mondays at 1 p.m. with Paul in the library starting August 7.

SUMMIT Spirits will meet Tuesday, August 1 at 6:30 p.m. in the library.

Records & History will meet at 9 a.m. in the library on Wednesday, August 9.

Nurture will meet Thursday, August 3 at 6 p.m. at Cyndi's house.

Lois circle will be not be meeting again until September.

The Sparta Ministerial Association is off for the summer. They will resume meeting in September.



Backpack Service Project



We are looking for some volunteers to work a couple Saturdays during the Farmers Market to hand out bottles of water, Our Daily Breads and other information. The hours will be 9-10:30,

10:30-11:30 and 11:30-1. Let pastor or the office know if you're interested.

With school starting soon, we thought it would be great if we could provide some school supplies for needy children in our area.

We would appreciate donations of school supplies and/or backpacks. We will put the supplies in backpacks and contact the school district to distribute.

If you would like to donate school supplies, here is a list of the most commonly requested items:

- School-sized Fiskars scissors
- Box of 24 Crayola crayons
- Package of 10 Crayola Markers (wide)
- Package of 12 Crayola colored pencils
- Clipboard
- Glue Sticks
- Box of Tissues
- Pencils (Ticonderoga brand)
- 1 set of Crayola watercolor paint (8 colors)
- Heavy duty plastic folder
- Hand held pencil sharpener
- Box of Snack crackers
- Paper napkins (200+ package)
- Quart size Ziploc baggies
- Gallon size Ziploc baggies

Optional Wish List Items for Art (not required)

- Pipe cleaners
- Hot glue sticks
- Popsicle sticks
- Paper Plates
- Sharpies
- Masking tape

During our Family Fun Night, while the kids do a craft, we want to provide a meaningful activity for the

adults attending. We thought the Backpack Service Project would be a great activity during that time. Come and join us! Please return School Supplies to Church by August 20. If you have any questions, please contact Toni Burrows 608-343-3029.

In Christ's Love,
The Servant Leadership Board



We are looking for some volunteers for our Living Water Project where we will hand out bottles of water, Our Daily Breads and other information to our neighbors. Come experience the joy of sharing water and the gospel with our community. The hours will be 9-10:30, 10:30-12:00. More information to come soon. Let pastor or the office know if you're interested.

thank you

Thank you for all the prayers for my sister Terry. She was in e-notes and Sunday prayer concerns. She passed on July 7 at the age of 81 after living her life the way she wanted to. She's at peace. Now we need prayers for the decision makers honoring her wishes.
Cathy Nichols

Thank you for all the thoughts, prayers and cards for my husband before and after surgery. He is almost fully recuperated.
Richard & Peggy Wright

A big **thank you** to Nathan Janzen and Tyler Boegler for a most enjoyable recital. You are both such talented musicians. Thank you, Toni Burrows for your technical expertise as well. Also, thank you to Russ and Tina Janzen for providing such yummy refreshments. What a great way to end a weekend! We are truly blessed.
Margie Lakowske

Thank you to United Women in Faith for the alter flowers shared with mom & I the last 2 months. Thank you to members of my Sparta church family for sharing sympathy cards & condolences when my mom passed away. Your love & support mean a lot. Karen Joos



August

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 Jerry Hesselberg
- 11 Ruth Jerome
- 12 Charlene Nowak
- 14 Aubrianah McCarter
- 14 Ashley Weibel
- 15 Areanna Lakowske
- 15 Madeline Tadisch
- 17 Pat Eggers
- 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



Bakery pick-up

- 6 Pat & Gail Clark
- 13 Donna Burnham
- 20 Judy Fuhrmann
- 27 Ron & Denise Ebert

Tech Team

- 6 Ben & Hailee
- 13 Ron & Kristine
- 20 Toni & Amy
- 27 Cheryl & Cindy

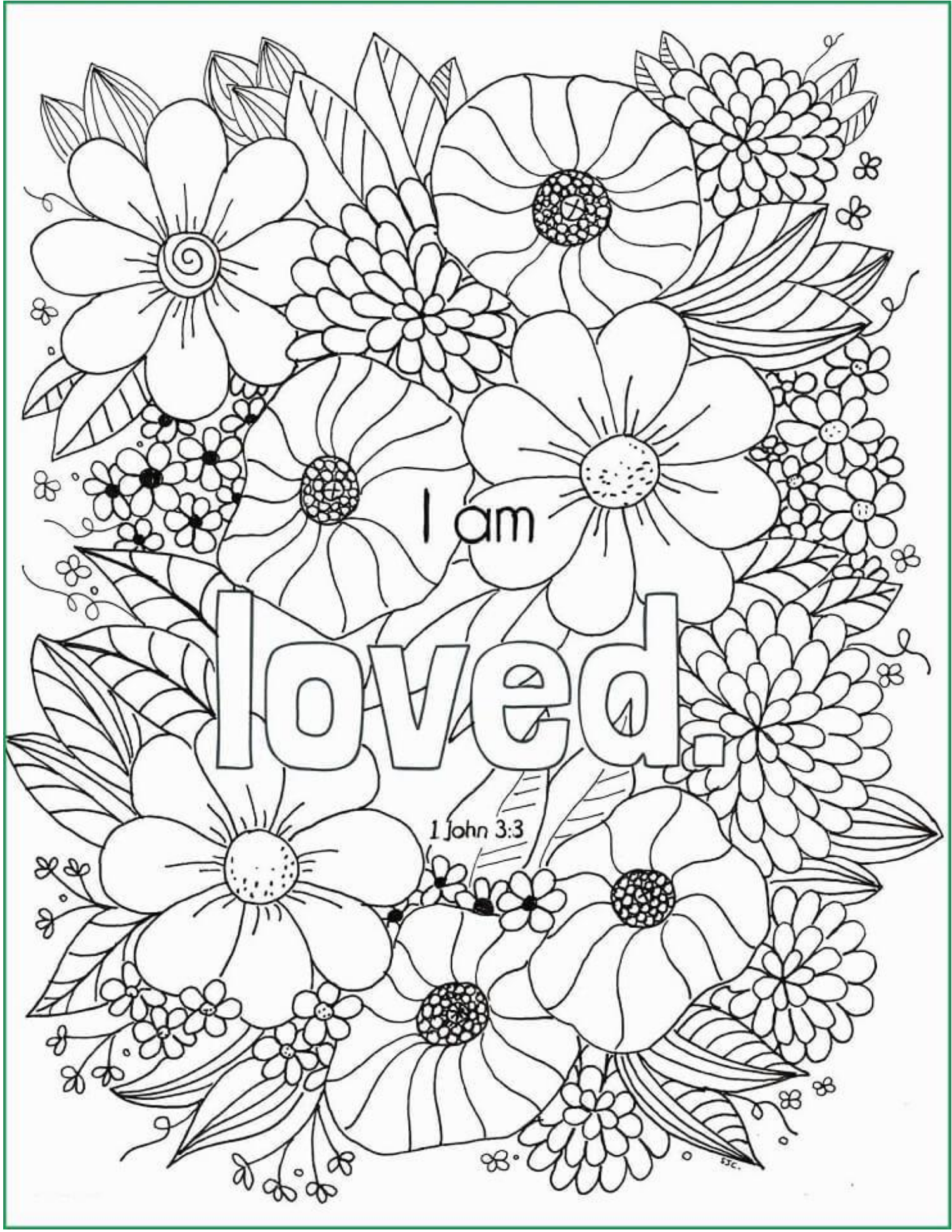
Liturgist

- 6 Toni Burrows
- 13 Judy Fuhrmann
- 20 Marty Walley
- 27 Amy Kiefer

Ushers

- 6 Bob & Cathy
- 13 Kurt & Amy
- 20 Peggy, Donna & Ron
- 27 John & Karen





I am

loved.

1 John 3:3

53c.

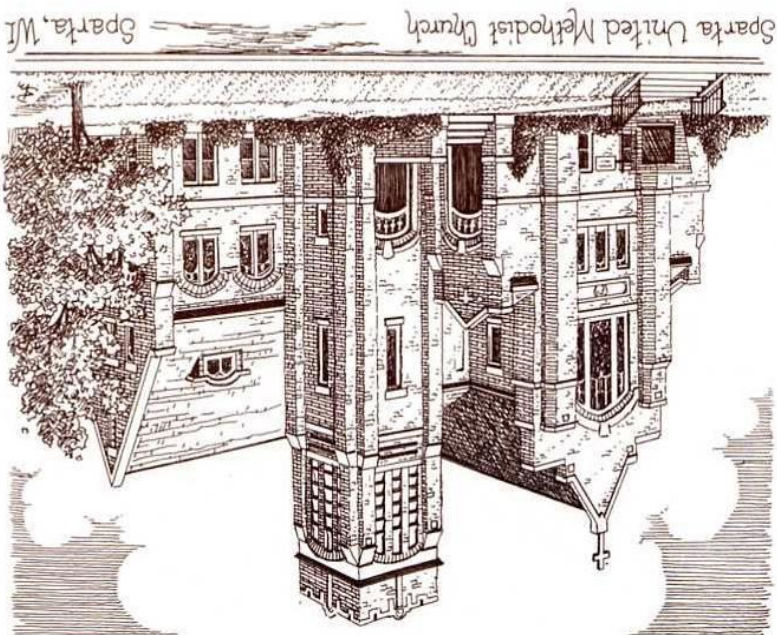
The Chimes

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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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