

Sparta United Methodist Church

# The Chimes - December

Volume 60, No. 12 2024

216 North Court, Sparta, WI 54656

| Email: [office@spartamethodist.com](mailto:office@spartamethodist.com) | Phone: (608) 269-6949

Hybrid service: Sundays 9 a.m. | Sunday School: 9:15am | Soup Supper: Tuesdays 5pm

Bible Study Thursdays 2 p.m. | Full program visit: [www.spartaumc.net](http://www.spartaumc.net) or find us

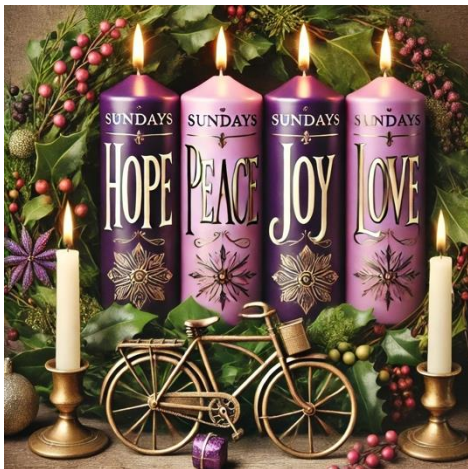


Dear Siblings in Christ,

November 2024 is past. We welcome December with its season of coldness, snow, short bright days, longer nights, but the love of God this remain strong and vibrant forever.

Ecclesiastically, we enter the season of Advent, see our church is filled with anticipation and joy for the coming of Christ. Advent is a time of preparation, reflection, and renewal—a sacred opportunity to draw closer to God and to one another as we journey toward Christmas.

Each Sunday in Advent, we light a candle on the Advent wreath, symbolizing the light of Christ breaking through the darkness. The four candles represent Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, and the central white Christ Candle reminds us of Jesus as the light of the world. The candle of **Hope** reminds us of the promises of God and the hope we have in Christ. The candle of **Peace** calls us to rest in the peace that Christ brings to a weary world. The candle of **Joy** shines as a reminder of the deep and abiding joy that comes from knowing and following Him. The candle of **Love** celebrates the boundless love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. Together, these lights guide us as we prepare our hearts for the birth of the Savior. As the prophet Isaiah declared, "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the



land of deep darkness, a light has dawned" (Isaiah 9:2). Let us carry this light into the world as a beacon of God's promises fulfilled. December is also a time of giving thanks and embracing community. I want to express my deep gratitude for Sparta UMC Staff, Leadership and all members and friends for your generosity throughout the year. Your gifts of time, talent, and resources have sustained our ministries and made a difference in countless lives. As we look toward Christmas and the start of a new year, let us continue to reflect God's light by serving others with compassion and love. May this Advent season fill your hearts and homes with the light of Christ. Let us celebrate the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love of the coming King, and may we together prepare Him room in our hearts. Invite Family and friends for our Advent and Christmas Eve Candlelight service

December 1, 1<sup>st</sup> Advent Sunday Chancel Choir  
December 8, 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent Sunday with our Children and youth Choir  
December 15, 3<sup>rd</sup> Advent Sunday 2pm a Duo Choir – Trinity Lutheran and Sparta UMC – Cantata  
December 22, 4<sup>th</sup> Advent Sunday Praise Band singing Christmas  
December 24, Christmas Eve Service, 5pm. Pray and bring at least one guest for this service.  
Be a light on someone's life this advent.  
December 29, Let's bring to God's altar the fruits of our stored faith in 2024 in thanksgiving to the Creator God.

Blessings on the last 31 days of 2024 to you and all your loved ones and friends,  
Pastor Lourdes Magalhães



## Nurture Update..



♪“O, Little Town of Bethlehem..”

**December 1** – Advent begins – devotionals available

**December 8** – Children’s Christmas Program during 9 a.m. worship service. A Soup n’ Sandwich meal will follow.

**December 8** – Big Creek Christmas

Service 6 p.m.

**December 14** – Christmas Cookie Sale 8-12 p.m.

**December 15** – Charge Conference following worship service with a brunch potluck.

**December 15** – Christmas Cantata “Love Is Born” with Sparta UMC and Trinity choirs 2 p.m.

**December 15** – “Light the Night Luminaries” deadline. Monies to the Food Pantry.

**December 24** – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 5 p.m.

**January 19** – All Church Birthday Banquet

**Christmas Flowers/Poinsettias** – will be **buy your own**. Bring it in and let Michele know. She will put a tag on it and list it in the bulletin.

“**Light the Night Luminaries**” will be available to honor our loved ones. They will light up the Court St. sidewalk, while all are inside celebrating Christ’s birth at the Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 5 p.m. They are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. Please use the forms provided. Nurture Committee will prepare the bags. Monies will help support the Food Pantry.

♪ “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear..”

**Thank you** to all who helped decorate our church of Advent and Christmas – it’s beautiful!

**Thank you**, all for helping with the Thanksgiving meal with our Soup Supper guests and to Pastor for leading us in a thoughtful and meaningful Thanksgiving message. We have so much to be thankful for!

**Thank you** to the “members of the lefse team”! Over 80 lefse were lovingly made for the Christmas Bake Sale. The enthusiasm, energy and great conversation turned work into fun!

*Continued...*

## “Team Lefse”

Scott Naeseth & Rose White

Amy Kiefer

Julie Hanson

Cyndi Wise

Russ Janzen

Ron, Aubrey & Lily Ebert

Margie Lakowske (packaging)



## Records & History



Thank you for a great 2024! We will be taking the months of December and January off no meetings! Please enjoy the holidays.

From Records and History to all of you, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy 2025!



## Christmas Flowers



With Christmas just around the corner, you are welcome to buy your own poinsettia and bring it to the church anytime at your convenience. Flowers may be given “in honor” or “in memory” of a loved one.

Please let Michele know so she can create a tag and put it in the bulletin.



## Note from the Financial Secretary



The **deadline** for all donations and contributions to Sparta United Methodist Church for deposit in 2024 **to be received** is **Monday, December 30, 2024**. That is the final day Heidi Sullivan, the SUMC financial secretary, will be making a deposit to the bank for 2024.



## Pizza and a Movie



night this month is **December 21**. 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 Jensen at 608-343-3029 before noon on December 21

if you will be attending so we know how much pizza to order.

## “Christmas with a Capital C”

Christmas has always been a time of love and tradition in small town Trapper Falls-hometown of Mayor Dan Reed (Ted McGinley). With his brother Greg (Brad Stine), they drape the town in Christmas cheer, concentrating on the nativity scene. The town soon learns the lesson that with the arrival of Christmas, good will was to be given to all.



## Light the Night Luminaries

“Light the Night” luminaries will be offered this year to honor our loved ones. On Dec 24, these luminaries will light up the Court Street sidewalk while all are inside celebrating Christ’s birth at the Christmas Eve service at 4:00 p.m.

They will be \$5 each or 3 for \$10 and these monies will go to the Ecumenical Food Pantry. Please use the forms provided.

*Christ is the light of the world!*



## CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS SCHEDULED



On **Sunday, Dec. 8**, there will be a Children’s Christmas Pageant entitled “The Living Creche.” It will be presented during the 9 a.m. service in the sanctuary. “The Living Creche” tells the Christmas Story in Scripture, Legend and Song. It is written and arranged by Anna Laura Page and Jean Anne Shafferman. The congregation will be asked to join in singing the Christmas hymns that go along with the story.

On **Sunday, Dec. 15** the combined choirs of Trinity Lutheran Church and the Sparta United Methodist Church will present, “Love Is Born,” a Christmas cantata by Lloyd Larson. The performance will be at 2 p.m. in the sanctuary of the Sparta United Methodist Church. The cantata will include instrumentalists from the area. The narration and songs tell the story of the birth of Christ. There will be a free will offering at the performance.

Plan to join us for some very special music to celebrate the season.

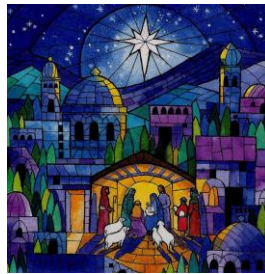
### Mark your calendars:

**Sunday, Dec. 8 at 9 a.m.** Sparta United Methodist Church service “The Living Creche” children’s program.

**Sunday, Dec. 15 at 2 p.m.** in the sanctuary at the Sparta United Methodist Church, “Love Is Born” featuring the combined choirs of Trinity Lutheran church and Sparta United Methodist church and area instrumentalists.



## Big Creek Candlelight Service



A candlelight service of lessons and carols will be held at the **Big Creek Church** at 6 p.m. on Sunday, **December 8**. If you are looking for a quiet break in the midst of a busy holiday season to help you refocus and re-center, this may be just the ticket for you. Everyone is welcome!

## Shop with scrip...support your church



Thank you to everyone that has supported the Scrip program throughout the year. There are **only 2 opportunities left** to order Scrip cards before Christmas. I will be placing an order on **December 1 and December 15**. The December 15 order will be available on December 22 for

distribution. I have added Casey's and Domino's to the list. I have had people ask about Aldi, but that is not one of the vendors that participate in the Scrip program. I always have the scrip cards with me on Sunday mornings. Walmart, Kwik Trip Hansen's and Theisen's I usually have on hand. This is a fundraiser that doesn't cost you anything other than the value of the card. If you normally shop at Hansen's or Walmart, consider purchasing a Scrip card so the church receives money from your purchase.



## 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



## Christmas Bake Sale



The bakers are busy preparing for the **Christmas Bake Sale on Saturday December 14** in the Fellowship Hall. The doors will open at 8 a.m. on Saturday. Cyndi Wise and


her group made lefse in the fellowship hall several days. It sounds like everyone that participated had fun learning how to make this Norwegian favorite. The weekend of November 23-24 was busy. Saturday morning members of the congregation gathered to make their favorite recipe with each other. Annabelle Von Ruden led the charge for the Christmas cutout cookies on Sunday November 24. We appreciate our youth stepping up and being leaders. Cheryl Isensee organized a night of making pumpkin rolls on Monday November 25 in fellowship hall.

We are encouraging everyone to make their favorite holiday recipes at home, if they are not able to come and help at these community baking days. As I said in the previous Chimes, cookies, bars, candy (fudge, peanut brittle, caramels), snacks (Chex mix, dipped pretzels, puppy chow), pies and quick breads (banana, pumpkin, cranberry, zucchini, pistachio) go really well at bake sales.

Please let your family and friends know that they can come to the bake sale 8 a.m.-Noon and then can head downtown to Sparta's Kriskindlmarkt to get their Christmas baking and Christmas shopping done all in one day.

The doors open at 8AM (no early callers).





**Thank you** to all who have donated to Soles4Souls! We have collected 1888 pair through the year so far!

CHANGING THE WORLD  
ONE PAIR AT A TIME



# Thank you

**Thank you** to Paul Foulke for the donation of the books to the Library and Little Free Library. Margie Lakowske

**Thank you** to Judy Fuhrmann for the donation of children's books to the Little Free Library. It is always nice to add children's books to our inventory. Margie

Dear Friends, **thank you** for the use of your building for some of our P.E.O. meetings. We really appreciate it. Pauline Haug, Treasurer, Chapter P, P.E.O.



## 2024 Charge/Church Conference

This year's charge conference will take place Sunday, December 15 starting at 10 a.m. with a brunch potluck. This is an important meeting, as members present will vote on things like church leadership and the 2024 budget; as well as celebrating all we have accomplished in the past year.

What could be better—food, fellowship, and having a say in the work of this church. Hope to see you there!



## Needing a Card for Someone Special?



You can 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 would like to check them out!

# COMING SOON

- SUMMIT Spirits will not meet in December.
- The Ministerial Committee will meet on Wednesday, December 4 at noon.
- Nurture will not meet in December.
- Children's Christmas Pageant, Sunday, December 8 during the 9 a.m. service.
- Lois Circle will Tuesday, December 10 at noon at Nancy Sather's' house.
- Wesleyan Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 10 in the small kitchen for a potluck and in the Gathering Place for the white elephant gift exchange at 6:00 p.m.
- Records & History will not meet in December.
- Christmas Bake Sale will be Saturday, December 14 from 8-Noon.
- Sunday, December 15 at 2 p.m., the combined choirs of Trinity Lutheran and SUMC will perform "Love is Born", a Christmas Cantata, in the Sanctuary.
- Michele will be on vacation December 23 through January 1.
- Pizza and a movie will be Saturday, December 21 at 6 p.m. in the small kitchen for pizza and 6:30 p.m. in the chapel for the movie, "Christmas with a Capital C."
- Servant Leadership Board will meet on Tuesday, December 17, in the parsonage at 6 p.m.
- January *Chimes* newsletter deadline is December 17 by noon.



# DECEMBER



## December Anniversaries

09 Pete & Beth Jerman  
24 Tom & Laurie Graber  
27 Tim & Judy Fuhrmann  
27 Russ & Dana Tock

## December Birthdays

01 Mandy Moore  
02 Jack Buswell  
03 Kmaya Richards  
04 Mary Axelsen  
04 Joyce Graewin  
05 Hayden White  
06 Craig Goodenough  
10 Kay Foulke  
10 Eileen Roller  
14 Deb Thurston  
15 Laurie Bartholomew  
15 Madeline Tadisch  
16 Donald Knoll  
17 Jeffrey Ascher  
17 Dave Kemp III  
19 Mark Christiano  
21 Gary Ascher  
22 Tim Fuhrmann  
23 Bridget Von Ruden  
23 Olivia Cole  
29 Amarra Davis  
30 Matthew Foss



## Ushers

1 Kurt & Amy Kiefer  
8 Kurt & Amy Kiefer  
15 Rich & Danette Zidich & Peggy  
22 Ronnie & Kandy Ebert/Ron & Denise Ebert  
24 Toni Jensen, Darcie, Aidyn & Aylah Hanson & Ace Girard  
29 Russ & Tina Janzen

## Tech Team

1 Ben Simplot & Hailee Scheurich  
8 Toni Jensen & Amy Kiefer  
15 Ron & Kristine Phillips  
22 Cheryl Isensee & Kristine Phillips  
24 Cheryl Isensee & Annabelle Von Ruden  
29 Ben Simplot & Emily Von Ruden

## Liturgist

1 TBD  
8 Beth Nowak  
15 Marty Walley  
22 Annabelle Von Ruden  
24 Beth Nowak  
29 Amy Kiefer



**CHRIST  
IS BORN**





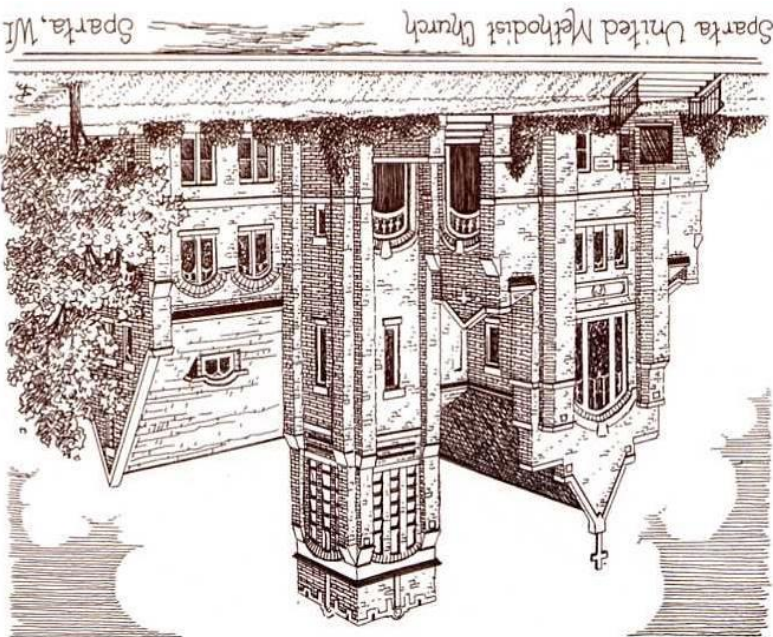
# The Chimes

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



*Prepared Especially For:*



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**Fax:** (608)269-6940

**Email:** [office@spartamethodist.com](mailto:office@spartamethodist.com)

**Website:** [spartaumc.net](http://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