

Sparta United Methodist Church

The Chimes - January

Volume 60, No. 1 2025

216 North Court, Sparta, WI 54656

| Email: 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 or find us



Dear Sparta UMC Family,

Happy and blessed New Year! As we step into 2025, let us do so with hearts full of gratitude for God's faithfulness and with eager anticipation for the blessings and opportunities ahead. Each new year brings the chance to refocus our lives, recommit to our faith, and realign our hearts with God's purpose.

Introducing Our Year-Long Bible Reading Program

This year, I am thrilled to announce a church-wide Bible reading initiative that will take us through the entire Bible in one year. This program is designed to deepen our spiritual lives by immersing ourselves in God's Word daily. Together, we will explore the breadth and depth of Scripture, finding inspiration, guidance, and hope.

You will receive a Bible reading plan that breaks the Scriptures into manageable daily portions. Whether you're reading on your own, with your family, or in a small group, this journey will strengthen your connection to God and our church family.

Bi-Weekly Wednesday Bible Discussions

To complement the reading plan, we will gather bi-weekly on Wednesday evenings for Bible discussions. These sessions will provide a welcoming space to share insights, ask questions, and encourage one another as we reflect on the readings. Whether you've been able to keep up with the plan or not, you are welcome to join these discussions and grow in faith with others.

- **When:** Every other Wednesday at 6 PM Starting January 8 (bring food for a light supper together) I will provide water, coffee, and milk for **Where:** at the parsonage.

Church Members Reunion

We are planning a Church Members Reunion and would like to invite all those who have been members of Sparta UMC in the past, including relatives of long-term members. If you know of any relatives of members, such as Mrs. Morrow's family, please help us by providing their contact information. Addresses, phone numbers, or social media profiles can be shared with Pastor Lourdes or Marge L. so we can officially reach out and plan a great program.

Grandkids Day

Mark your calendars for a special Grandkids Day! We invite all grandparents to bring their grandchildren to church for a fun-filled day of celebration and activities to honor the spiritual bond between generations. Details will follow soon.

Monthly Birthday and Anniversary Celebrations

Beginning this January, we will celebrate all birthdays and anniversaries on the 4th Sunday of each month. Join us for this joyful occasion as we recognize and honor these special milestones.

Introducing a Prayer Board

We will be setting up a Prayer Board in the church where you can share prayer requests, praises, and concerns. This will serve as a visual reminder of our commitment to prayer and community support. If you're interested in helping with this project, please let Pastor Lourdes or Margie Lakowske know.

Youth Meeting

All youth and parents are invited to meet Pastor Lourdes on **January 05 at 10:15 AM** in the Conference Room next to the Pastor's Office in the Education Wing. This 45 minutes meeting will be an opportunity to share ideas and plan exciting youth activities for the year. Parents, please prioritize this time and assist with transportation for your beloved children.

- **Note:** Pizza or other light food will be served. Please confirm your attendance by texting +1 (973) 856-4072 or emailing with your full name, and your Parents' name and cell phone number.

Pastoral Care Workshop

A workshop to support our shut-ins, homebound members, and those in need of visitation will be held on **January 15 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM**. If this date doesn't work for you, let us know, and we can find another suitable time. Please sign up if you are interested in joining this vital ministry.

Worship Leadership Meeting

Interested in learning how to support Sunday worship services? Join us at the parsonage on **Wednesday, January , from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM** for a conversation about how you can contribute. Bring a meal to share as we spend this time in fellowship and learning.

Stay tuned for upcoming events for 2025 (More information to Come)

- **February 22, 6:00 PM:** Contemporary Service in the Fellowship Hall celebrating friendship and love. Wear something red and come ready to worship with an open mind and heart.
- **March 8:** Celebrate International Women's Day with a delightful English Tea afternoon. A guest speaker will bring a blessed message. You're invited to sponsor a table and bring your friends.
- **April 13:** Palm Sunday Lets support as our children will parade with Palms in the Sanctuary.
- **April 18:** Good Friday. The church will be open from 12:00 PM to 6:00 P.M. for a Walk to the Cross, followed by a vigil prayer service at 6:00 P.M. reflecting on Jesus' journey and its meaning for our lives today.
- **April 20:** Easter Sunday. Share your thoughts and ideas to make this year's Easter celebration meaningful to all of us.


Looking Ahead

May, marks the end of the ecclesiastical year, and June begins our summer program. Details of the full 2025 church program will be included in the next newsletter and weekly bulletins.

Theme for 2025



“The Year of the Lord Has Come” – Inspired by Isaiah 61:2 and Luke 4:19 (CEB). Let us make 2025 a year dedicated to proclaiming God’s favor and living out His calling in our lives.

May the peace of  Christ guide us as we begin this new year. Thank you for your dedication, your faith, and your commitment to building God’s kingdom here in Sparta.

Blessings in Christ,
Rev. Lourdes Magalhães Sparta United Methodist Church

Are you ready to join me in this ride? Let go!
Together we can!

Together we are stronger!
Together we grow in



Needing a Card

For Someone Special?



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

Our hope is not in the New Year...but in the one who makes all things new.

Thank you

I want you all to know how much I appreciated your carol songs and how good it felt to see all the familiar faces. I am enjoying the Chex mix, which I’m assuming one of you left behind. **Thank you**, and having a wonderful Christmas and New Year!
Laurie Hesselberg

Thank you to the group that came caroling at my Creekside apartment, it was wonderful and brought “joy” this time of season.
Jean Evans

Many thanks for bringing your joy-filled songs to my mother at Morrow Home. We both enjoyed the music and seeing cherished friends. It was especially nice to meet Pastor Lourdes.
With gratitude,
Byron Holz

Thank you for bringing back the old staple, the Christmas Cookie Sale! It was nice to see so many familiar faces when I stopped in to buy our holiday-baked goods. All your hard work is appreciated.
With best wishes,
Byron Holz

Thank you for your thoughtful donation!
Your generosity and support allow us to continue providing services to survivors in our community.
Sincerely,
Brighter Tomorrows

Dear Members of the United Methodist Church,
I would like to **thank** everyone who has sent cards, called, took over some of my duties and prayed for our family during the loss of my Dear Husband Richard Wright. You don’t know how much you all mean to me at this difficult time. A special **Thank You** to Pastor Lourdes for coming out to my house to visit and pray with the family. We also met with her at the Church and planned the Service. She was so helpful and the Service was beautiful at the Funeral Home and at the Cemetery. Also, **big thanks** to Cyndi Wise for the beautiful and comforting music.
Peggy Wright & Family

Nurture Update..



“Jesus is the Reason for the Season,” and our church celebrated the month of December with Advent and Christmas preparations and activities:

Decorating: Eileen, Amy, Annabelle, Marty, Cathy, Scott, Rose, Destiny, Hayden, Harper, Margie, Cheryl, Ron.

Trees: Kevin & Carolyn Lieder; Michele donated “K” St. tree.

Nativity: Scott; Donna Burnham

Lights: Luminaries **Star:** John Lodico & Sons

Baking: all our thanks go to Cheryl – very successful.

Music: Cantata and Caroling – Ellen, Trinity & UMC choirs and members singing at Morrow Home and others.

Flowers: Poinsettias from Scott, Margie & Amy.

Children: Christmas program by Ellen, Lynn & Margie.

Food: Soup makers, Amy, Eileen, Margie & Cheryl and Birthday cake for Jesus.

May the Christmas Spirit last long into the New Year!

Thank you Lynn Humphrey for the great floor mats given in memory of Larry.

Thank you Pastor Lourdes for the beautiful and inspirational calendars for 2025.

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

All Church Birthday Banquet!



When: Sunday January 19, 2025
(following the worship service)

Where: Fellowship Hall

Needed: Members of the congregation to volunteer to decorate a table for each month,

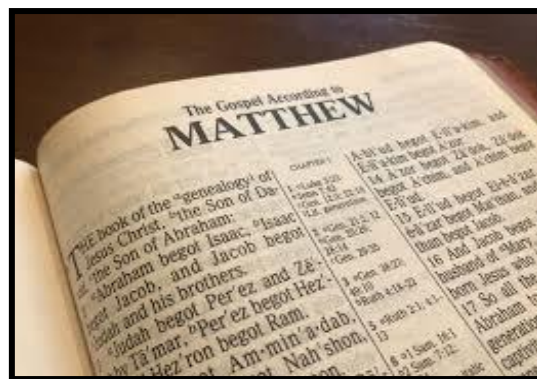
and also to bring cake for each month. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Gathering Place.

Please join us at this event to celebrate our entire church family’s birthdays. Bring a dish to pass (this will be a brunch, so some suggestions would be: Egg Bakes, French Toast Bakes, breakfast meats {bacon, sausage patties or links, meatballs, ham}, fresh fruit or fruit salad, meat & cheese tray, a hot dish, juice, etc.), and a penny for each year of age (example: age 11 bring 11 pennies, age 55 bring 55 pennies).

There will be 12 decorated birthday cakes to sample (you might even want to bring a container to take some cake home with you). You will be asked to sit at the table for the month of your birthday and this is a great way to get to know some of the other members of our congregation, with the extra benefit of getting to know those who share your birth month!

EVERYONE IS WELCOME & ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS FUN EVENT!

Hope to see you ALL there!



A New Bible Study...

Join Pastor Paul in a new study of the Gospel of Matthew, Thursdays at 2 p.m., starting January 16. Please let him know if you’d like to participate.



Shop with scrip...support your church—Cheryl Isensee



Thank you to everyone that has supported the Scrip program throughout the year. This program doesn't cost you anything extra. You purchase a card at face value and the RaiseRight Scrip program gives us a discount when we place our order each month.

If you purchase your groceries at Hansen's IGA, and you purchase a \$100 scrip card the church receives 5% (\$5) and it doesn't cost you any additional money. Or you spend \$200 at Walmart, you purchase \$200 in Scrip cards the church receives 2.5% (\$5), again you don't spend any extra on the card but the church benefits from your purchase. Scrip cards make great gifts as well.

I keep a supply of some of the bestselling cards on hand, and place an order each month to resupply or order cards that I don't keep a supply of on hand. If you need a scrip order form, please contact me Cheryl Isensee 608-343-7815 or the church office.

In 2025, I will be placing a monthly Scrip order on the following dates:

January 5
February 2
March 2
April 6
May 4
June 1
July 13
August 10
September 7
October 5
November 2
November 16
November 30
December 14



Christmas Bake Sale



Wow! My heart is overflowing with gratitude and joy for such a successful Christmas Bake Sale. It took a village to make this fundraiser a huge success. Thank you to Cyndi Wise for organizing the lefse making groups. 80 packages of lefse were made (that is 240 sheets or 20 dozen lefse); we sold out!

Thank you to Annabelle Von Ruden for organizing the cutout cookie baking at church; we didn't count how many dozen were made but these also were sold out.

Thank you to those that came out and helped at the all church baking day, 15 dozen rosettes were made and sold out! All of the krumkake, sandbakkels, pizzels and pies were sold out. Sixteen pumpkin rolls were made and also sold out. There were just a few items left after the Cantata on Sunday.

Thank you to everyone that baked at home, everyone that helped setup on Friday, to everyone that spent Saturday morning working at the bake sale. Annabelle was given a lesson in sales and how to correctly bag items so that the fragile items didn't break; a skill that she can use when she goes out into the workforce. Thank you to those that helped put Fellowship Hall back together after the sale, and those that setup the leftover items in The Gathering Place for Sunday morning.

There is one more person that I cannot thank enough. Scott Naeseth setup the banquet tables and took down some of the round tables to make room for the sale. Scott, you are so appreciated. Our total before the cost of advertising is taken out is \$1734.

We are looking forward to bringing this fundraiser back again next year. The funds raised for this year's Bake Sale will go directly into the general budget.

Cheryl Isensee



COMING SOON

- The Ministerial Committee will meet on Wednesday, January 1 at noon.
- Summit Spirits will meet Tuesday, January 7 at 6:30 p.m.
- Nurture will meet on Monday, January 6 at 6 p.m.
- Lois Circle will Tuesday, January 14 in the small kitchen at 1 p.m.
- Wesleyan Circle will meet on Tuesday, January 14 in the Gathering Place at 6:30 p.m.
- Records & History will not meet in January.
- Pizza and a movie will be Saturday, January 18 at 6 p.m. in the small kitchen for pizza and 6:30 in the chapel for the movie, “Arthur the King.”
- Servant Leadership Board will meet on Tuesday, January 21 at 6 p.m.



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 2024. **The calendars are up for 2025.** 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

Pizza and a Movie



night this month is **January 18** 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 January 18 if

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

“Arthur the King”



Over the course of ten days and 435 miles, an unbreakable bond is forged between pro adventure racer Michael Light (Mark Wahlberg) and a scrappy street dog companion dubbed Arthur. Based on an incredible true story, **ARTHUR THE KING** follows Light, desperate for one last chance to win, as he convinces a sponsor to back him and a team of athletes (Simu Liu, Nathalie Emmanuel, and Ali Suliman) for the Adventure Racing World Championship in the Dominican Republic. As the team is pushed to their outer limits of endurance in the race, Arthur redefines what victory, loyalty and friendship truly mean. Rated PG-13



Church Facebook Page



Have you checked out the church’s Facebook site? 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:

<https://www.facebook.com/UMCsparta/>. Once you are there just “like” the site and you will receive updates when new information is posted.



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.



January Anniversaries

08 Eloda & Jerry Miller
12 Andrea & Eric Cole
27 Bob & Cyndi Wise

January Birthdays

07 Evan Wiedemann
08 Shirley Fokema
09 Barb Zucco
10 Aylah Hanson
11 Roy Peterson
14 Lauren Zucco
15 Dennis Hanson
18 Mary Talsky
19 Dani Glut
20 Sara Angle
21 Emily Axelsen
21 Jackie Vaver
23 Pete Foss
24 Austin Goodenough
25 Mark Halverson
26 Rose White
28 Kurt Kiefer



Ushers

5 Kurt & Amy Kiefer
12 Ron & Denise Ebert/Ronnie & Kandy Ebert
19 Rich & Danette Zidich & Peggy
26 Kurt & Amy

Tech Team

5 Ben Simplot & Hailee Scheurich
12 Ben Simplot & Amy Kiefer
19 Ron & Kristine Phillips
26 Cheryl Isensee & Annabelle Von Ruden

Liturgist

5 Kristine Phillips
12 Beth Nowak
19 Marty Walley
26 Judy Fuhrmann



CHANGING THE WORLD
ONE PAIR AT A TIME

Thank you to all who have donated to Soles4Souls! We have collected 2267 pair through the year of 2024!

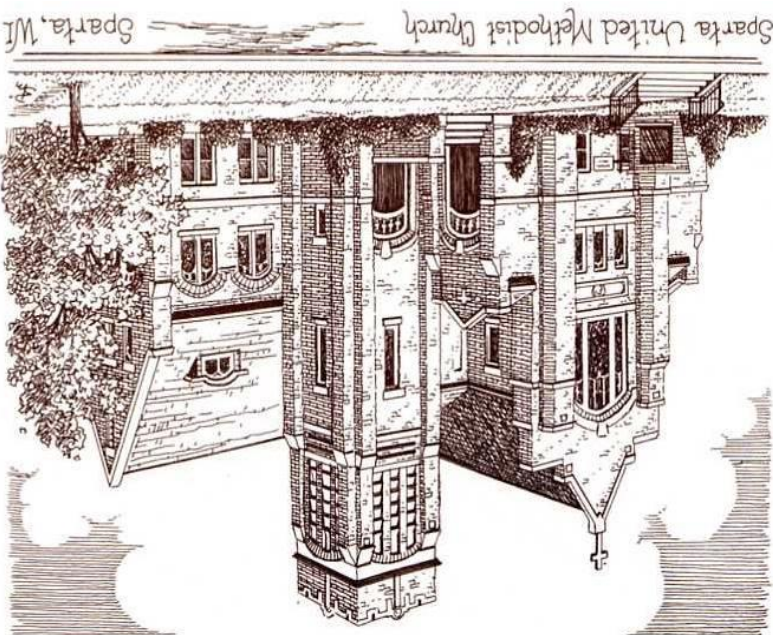
The Chimes

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Prepared Especially For:



Pastor: Reverend Lourdes Magalhães
Pastor's Cell Phone: 973-856-4072

Phone: (608)269-6949

Fax: (608)269-6940

Email: office@spartamethodist.com

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