



Discover our church website and all of the stories linked to our newsletter at www.spartaumc.com.



NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

National Day of Prayer was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of Congress, and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman. In 1988, the law was unanimously amended by both the House and the Senate and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on Thursday, May 5, 1988, designating the first Thursday of May as a day of national prayer. Every president since 1952 has signed a National Day of Prayer proclamation.

Prayer brings people together. Prayer builds bridges between opposing persons and even political parties. Prayer reminds us that we are created in God's image and He desires for us to represent Him everywhere we go. Prayer brings UNITY. The theme for **May 3, 2018, National Day of Prayer** is Pray for America - UNITY, based upon Ephesians 4:3 which challenges us to mobilize unified public prayer for America, "Making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

Humble yourselves and unify in prevailing prayer for the next great move of God in America. Become a visible union, standing together in prayer. Practice extraordinary prayer that will catapult the message of the gospel nationally and internationally.



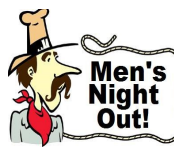
Saturday, May 5, at 9 AM

All ages are welcome to come and help beautify the church and Ministry Building yard. Bring tools you need. You don't have to stay the whole time—any time you can spare is appreciated. Contact Jeanne or Hal if you have any questions.

On **Golden Cross Sunday May 6, 2018**, a special offering is collected toward the health and welfare ministries in the annual conference. Those in need of receiving assistance from this fund could be victims of natural or man-made disasters. They could be experiencing health problems, harsh and impossible economic circumstances or any of the many challenges that come with aging.

We take up these Golden Cross offerings as The United Methodist Church because we believe where there are persons in need, we as the church have a responsibility to respond with actions in the spirit of doing good, seeking justice, rescuing the oppressed, defending the orphan, and pleading on behalf of those who have no voice.

While the ways that annual conferences use these funds may vary, the purpose is clear: Golden Cross Sunday is an opportunity for the church to take action and love our most vulnerable neighbors. One in six people in the United States faces hunger and even more people face food insecurity that directly affects their health and well-being. Our generous gifts toward Golden Cross Sunday help people and families begin to address real problems.



The annual **Men's Night Out** is Thursday, May 10, at Jim Bosserd's home (3631 13 Mile Rd, NW) beginning at 5:30 PM. Hot dogs, hamburgers and table service will be provided. Clay pigeon shooting will be available. Please bring a lawn chair and a dish to pass. You're welcome to just come for fellowship, too.

Denny Knappen—on Denny's Hike of the Appalachian Trail Feb. 21 for four or five months. Safe travels.

Pray for those who do not have Jesus
Sharon & Gordon Helsel's daughter Mary Svithovich, cancer diagnosis
Robert Helsel imprisoned for 19 months
Clarence Cass—declining health



Highlights of Church Council Meeting, May 1, 2018

Devotion from Luke 2:5, "Wait for it". Recognize the presence of God. Ask God to sharpen your spiritual senses. Be alert.

All-Church Visionary Retreat Update: The group prioritized their vision; the Vision Team will discuss on May 24. The information will be included on the One-Page Plan.

(Continued on next page)



This Upcoming Week's
BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARY

5/7/88
Joe & Tammie Purcell

- May 6 Gary Moody
- May 7 Amanda Kline
Dorothy Shepard
- May 10 Larry Collins
Terry Hartman
- May 12 Pastor Phil Friedrich

The individual staff job descriptions are almost complete. The committee job descriptions have not yet been started.

Candidates approved: Naomi Collins Greeter Coordinator. JoEllen Pinckney second Lay Leader; Bonnie Wilkinson Lay Leader in Training. Mary Ellen Kimble Traditional/Blended Worship Design Team.

A church credit card is needed for online purchases and other technical support. Options will be obtained.

H. Westra presented ideas for floor samples, equipment, painting, information stations and places to sign up to serve.

April's food truck sponsored by Sparta UMC had much help and excellent food. Fewer people are in need of food from the truck because of the economy.

Annual Conference begins May 31 in Traverse City.

Ministry Opportunities: Spring Clean-up May 5, 9 AM. Blood Drive May 10, 12–7 PM. Community Breakfast May 26, 8 AM.

Upcoming Worship & Events Schedule: Golden Cross Special Offering May 6. Men's Night Out May 10, 5:30 PM. Men's Mealtime Rally May 12, 8 AM. Graduate Sunday May 20. Peace with Justice Sunday (special offering) May 27.

Little Dresses for Africa Sewing Project. On April 24, 21 women gathered for four hours in ministry for God. The dress count is now at 157. They plan to unite again with community sewers on June 19 to wrap up the project and send the dresses to Africa. Watch for ways to help sew and ship the dresses.



Please Bring Your Family Fare & Econofoods Receipts to Church

Donating your Family Fare / Econofoods receipts to Sparta UMC supports the missions of the church. Bring your receipts to church, leaving the *entire* grocery receipt in the blue basket distributed at the conclusion of the worship service, or in the white mail box in Wesley Hall, or in the church office. In the last four weeks, over \$10,000 in Direct Your Dollars receipts have come in! So we're over the two-thirds mark at \$107,750.

The Direct Your Dollars amount is noted at the bottom of your cash register receipt. When Sparta UMC has collected \$150,000 in Direct Your Dollar receipts, Missions will receive \$1,000. (FYI: some purchases do not apply, like gasoline and gift cards from Family Fare)

Receipts that qualify can come from any of the 160 SpartanNash-owned retail stores or fuel centers in nine states.

Schedules

Choir Practices

Sundays

9:30 AM..... Children's (Parents: please pick up your child at 10 AM from practice)

9:50 AM..... Adult preservice rehearsal

Wednesdays 7 PM. Adult

Tuesdays

9:30 AM..... Girl Talk Study Group

6:30 PM..... GriefShare (Feb. 6 to May 1)

4th Thursday of the Month

6 PM..... Vision Team

Sundays

8:45 AM..... Adult Sunday School

9 AM..... Middle School Sunday School

9 AM..... Pre-K – 5th Grade Craft/Prayer Time

10:10 AM..... Morning Worship Celebration

10:30 AM..... Pre-K – 5th Grade Sunday School

Please Note: All Sunday morning children's activities and Adult Sunday School normally taking place prior to worship service will not convene from June 3 through August 26.

10:10 AM Worship Attendant Volunteers May 6

Soundboard..... Chad & Shelly Murdock

Head Usher..... Alan Hartman

Acolytes..... Abby & Anthony

Nursery Leader..... Brenda McCracken

Nursery Assistant Mindy Tilli

Welcome Table Bonnie Wilkinson

Intercessory Prayer ... Dave Huizenga

Scripture Reader Mary Eggleston

Fellowship Time Dale & Cindy Young

Save the Date

May 3 6:30 PM ... Daughters of God Banquet

May 5 9 AM Spring Clean-up at church

May 6 Golden Cross Sunday Special Offering

May 9 Mary/Martha Circle at the Shack

..... Dorcas Circle Dinner Out

May 10 12–7 PM .. Community Blood Drive

5:30 PM .. Men's Night Out @ Jim Bosserd's

May 12 8 AM..... Men's Mealtime Rally

May 13 Mother's Day

May 19–20 Change the World Weekend

May 20 Graduate Sunday

SPARTA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH • 54 EAST DIVISION STREET • SPARTA MI 49345

The Mission of Sparta United Methodist Church: *Helping each other follow Jesus' way* (John 14:6)

The Vision: *That through Him all might be saved* (John 3:17)

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OFFICE HOURS Monday – Thursday, 9 AM – 1 PM • WORSHIP TIME Sunday 10:10 AM

We are a connected ministry. Check out:

[Michigan Area United Methodist Church](#) • [United Methodist, Grand Rapids District](#) • [United Methodist News Service Daily Digest](#)

Articles for next week's *News Flash* are due on Tuesday. Contact the church office with updates and additions.