

September 26, 2018



A weekly newsletter of The Sparta United Methodist Church



Discover our church website and all of the stories linked to our newsletter at [www.spartaumc.com](http://www.spartaumc.com).

## October is Clergy Appreciation Month

*Why is it appropriate to set aside a special time each year to give recognition and affirmation to clergy and their families?*

How are their needs and circumstances different from those of carpenters, grocers, dentists, etc.? One distinction lies in the nature of the service these leaders provide. God has entrusted to them one of the most precious of assignments—the spiritual well-being of His flock. When a pastor becomes ineffective, the very souls of his or her parishioners are endangered. When eternity is in the balance, we should all be concerned.

Another problem lies in the expectations placed on pastors. Numerous surveys have found that a very high percentage of pastors feel pressure to be the ideal role model of a Christian family—which is impossible, of course. As a result, four out of five pastors feel their families are negatively impacted by unrealistic expectations—whether self-imposed or congregation-imposed—and that ministry is an outright hazard to the health of their families. Indeed, the “pedestal” is not all it’s cracked up to be.

As pastors and their families try to please the God who called them to ministry while also trying to meet the expectations of their congregations, one result is dangerous stress. In fact, 75% of those surveyed reported experiencing a significant stress-related crisis at least once in their ministry. Then, of course, there is the “fishbowl” aspect of ministry, whereby the entire lives of pastoral families seem to be on public display. Every private family situation quickly seems to become a congregational or community issue. This anxiety can only be heightened when financial pressures also come to bear, which is common since pastors typically make substantially less each year than their own board members and deacons. Nearly 70% of pastoral spouses work outside the home, most often due to financial need.

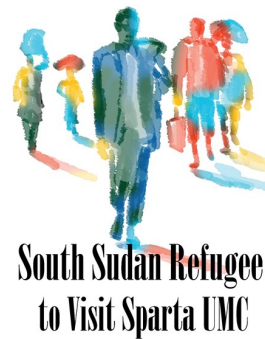
No one would choose to live life under these conditions unless they felt obliged to a higher, divine directive. Unfortunately, all too often, these are exactly the conditions under which pastoral families serve.

The good news is that we can make a difference! Clergy Appreciation Month is an attempt to counter the negative erosion in the lives of our spiritual leaders with positive affirmation. Check out next week’s News Flash for ideas of appreciation, and celebrate Pastor Phil and his family on October 14.

The Family of Gordon McCready—  
Gordon passed away Sept. 15  
The Family of Easton Kutzli—3-week  
old Easton passed away last week.  
Tudy Middleton requests prayers for  
her brother Don.

Diane Jensen requests prayers for a friend who lost her daughter

The Family of Ginny Gregory—Ginny, age 67, passed away from health complications from Dementia. Funeral is Sept. 30 at 1 PM (see Hessel Cheslek website for location)  
Kerry Emelander’s friend’s husband succumbing to cancer, and Kerry’s daughter’s friend’s parents were killed in Spencer Township



On Friday, Sept. 28, at 7 PM at Sparta UMC hear the amazing, story of Rebecca Deng Roeda. Rebecca was one of the first unaccompanied refugee children from South Sudan. She lost most of her family to civil war and at age six entered the largest refugee camp in Kenya where she lived for eight years prior to coming to the US in 2000. Hear Rebecca's story and how she's found peace and purpose. Contact Amy Burmeister with questions.



**Please join us Wednesday, Oct. 3  
6:30 PM at Sparta UMC**

An estate plan is a significant resource for a faithful Christian steward. It enables individuals to be assured that their personal desires will be followed.

An estate plan is a tool to distribute people’s assets according to their faithful intent. It may solve some personal financial situations, augment retirement income, and certainly offer peace of mind throughout one’s life.

Sparta UMC wants to equip Christians to be even better stewards of God’s gifts in life and educate on the key components of a Christian estate plan.

Light hors d’oeuvres provided.

**RSVP by Sept. 30 to the church office — 887.8255**



*This Upcoming Week's*

## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARY

- Oct. 1 Jill Modderman  
Julie Barnum
  - Oct. 3 Hilary Miller
  - Oct. 5 Dane Gross
- 10/4/91  
Wesley & Mary Scott



### Trunk or Treat?

Choose "Treat" as Sparta UMC teams up with Sparta Baptist Church on Halloween, Oct. 31. The food and fun takes place indoors at Sparta Baptist Church. Adult participants are asked to decorate a room door\* at Sparta Baptist and distribute candy from 5 to 8 PM.

Please register your participation with Margaret Blaauw (887.0773) no later than Oct. 21. \*There is a door-decorating contest. Decorating your room door can be done 12:30 to 5 PM on Oct. 28, 9 AM to 2 PM Oct. 29, 9 AM to 1 PM Oct. 30, or all day on Oct. 31. Participants are also welcome to be in costume.

Needed: **Donated candy** to be handed out.

Please leave your donation in the church office.

**All-Church Fundraising Dinner  
hosted by the Sparta UM Women  
October 14 Following Worship Service**



**Please Continue to Bring Your Family Fare  
& Econofoods Receipts to Church**

Please continue to bring your Family Fare & Econofoods receipts to church to support the missions of Sparta UMC. Leave the entire grocery receipts 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. Six thousand in Direct Your Dollars receipts have come in since last month, so our total to date is \$136,281 toward the \$150,000 goal! Then Sparta UMC Missions will receive \$1,000. The Direct Your Dollars amount is noted at the bottom of your cash register receipt. (FYI: some purchases do not apply, like gasoline, prescriptions, and gift cards from Family Fare)

### Schedules

#### Tuesdays

- 9:30 AM ..... Girl Talk Study Group
- 6 PM ..... GriefShare (Sept. 11–Dec. 4)

#### Wednesdays

- 6 PM ..... Worship Design Team
- 7–8 PM ..... Adult Choir practice

#### 4th Thursday of the Month

- 6 PM ..... Vision Team

#### Sunday mornings

- 8:45–11:45 ..... Nursery (ages 0–4 years)
- 8:30–9:45 ..... DISCIPLE Bible Study
- 9:00 ..... Adult Bible Study
- 9:00 ..... Middle & Senior High Sunday School
- 9:00 ..... Craft & Prayer Time (Pre-K – 5th)
- 9:30 ..... Children's Choir Practice (Pre-K – 5th)  
Parents: pick up your child at 10 AM from practice
- 9:50 ..... Adult Choir pre-service rehearsal
- 10:10 ..... Morning Worship Celebration
- 10:30 ..... Pre-K – 5th Grade Sunday School

### 10:10 AM Worship Attendant Volunteers September 30

- Soundboard ..... Brandon Ingersoll & Shelly Murdock
- Head Usher ..... Alan Hartman
- Nursery Leader ..... Naomi Collins
- Nursery Assistant ..... Holly Colby
- Welcome Table ..... Bonnie Wilkinson
- Intercessory Prayer .... Bonnie Wilkinson
- Scripture Reader ..... Tena Stuhan
- Fellowship Time ..... De Knappen, Kelly Larsen  
& Carissa Spetosky

### Save the Date

- Sept. 28 7 PM ..... Lost Girls of Sudan Presentation
- Sept. 29 6:30 PM .. Family Fun Night Square Dance
- Oct. 2 5:45 PM ... Finance & Stewardship Committee  
6:30 PM ... Church Council
- Oct. 3 6:30 PM ... Planned Giving Seminar  
Register by Sept. 30
- Oct. 4 6 PM ..... Pastors' Feud @ Meijer Gardens  
Come cheer on Pastor Phil!
- Oct. 7 ..... World Communion Sunday (offering)
- Oct. 9 4:30 PM ..... Food Truck, food distribution
- Oct. 10 9:30 AM ..... Mary/Martha Circle  
..... Dorcas Circle
- Oct. 10–13 ..... Adult Choir Retreat
- Oct. 14 ..... All-Church Fundraising Dinner  
hosted by the UM Women

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.