

December 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.



Girl Talk Study Group is an active group of ladies meeting just about every Tuesday of the month at 9:30 AM to study and learn the Bible, pray, talk, and conduct service projects. Here are some highlights of their recent activities.

On November 6, Girl Talk joined others at Mamrelund Lutheran Church to sew pillow case dresses for children. The dresses will be sent to Africa. Their next sewing project for Little Dresses for Africa will be on February 19, 2019, in Wesley Hall at Sparta United Methodist Church. All ladies are invited. The dresses are simply made with pillow cases. If you would like to donate cases, funds for shipping the dresses, or extra-wide double-fold bias tape, please contact Cindy at 887.9380. Stay as long as desired for fellowship, to sew (bring own sewing machine), stencil, fabric cut, measure, sort, and/or iron (bring an iron and ironing board).

On November 20, Girl Talk Study Group helped distribute Thanksgiving food at Mamrelund's outreach center. The following week, they helped wrap gifts of pajamas, books, toys, mittens and hats for the Santa Claus Girls to distribute to nearly 14,000 city children.

Girl Talk Study Group was back at Mamrelund's distribution center on December 18 providing food, clothing, Christmas gifts, wrapping paper, tape, and blankets to those in need.

After the holidays, join them January 8 at 9:30 AM at the Offices & Ministry Building as they begin the all-church four-week study, *The Journey*.

Earn. Save. Give.

Small Group Opportunities

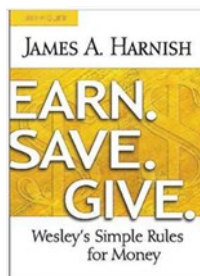
Mondays, Jan. 21 — Feb. 11

8 AM: Starbucks (3287 Alpine Ave NW, Walker) with Erica VanLaan.

6:30 PM: Offices & Ministry Building with Denny & De Knappen.

Tuesdays, Feb. 2 — March 5

9:30 AM: Offices & Ministry Building with Girl Talk Study Group.



- Jan. 1 Sharon Miller
- Jan. 2 Barbara Bettes
- Jan. 3 Carissa Spetoskey
- Jan. 4 Jeanette Tobey
- Jan. 8 Adrian Miller
- Jan. 12 Dale Young
- Jan. 13 Madelyn Hume
- Jan. 15 Rachel Shangle
David Kieft
- Jan. 17 Jeffrey Johnsen
Jim VanAsselt
- Jan. 20 Connie Chance
- Jan. 23 Kathy Reed
Mindy Tilli



- 1/16/16
Dick & Mary VanGessel
- 1/25/64
Keith & Sue VanderWall
- 1/26/07
Thom & Pat (Sharpe) Babcock

Discipleship Ministries

The inside skinny on 'Silent Night'

DALLAS — "Silent Night, Holy Night" debuted in Austria in 1818 and was first accompanied on guitar because, according to tradition, the church's organ wasn't working. The story that mice had eaten the bellows is dubious, says C. Michael Hawn, professor emeritus of church music at Southern Methodist University. Hawn gives these and other background details on the beloved carol in a Discipleship Ministries' History of Hymns column.

[Read story](#)



Winter warmth

O God, you give the winter's cold,
as well as summer's joyous rays.
You warmly in your love enfold,
and keep us through life's wintry days.

—Samuel Longfellow

Lessons in Wise Faith

"The Magi teach us true faith," said Martin Luther. Given the obstacles they encountered, we would understand if they had given up altogether!

First, the travelers were "off the mark," coming to Jerusalem to seek a newborn king in a "royal palace." Then, directed to Bethlehem, the wise men found a sight "so utterly out of keeping with a king"—a poor young woman and child, in a "poor hut"—that one might expect them to head straight home. "But," declares Luther, "with a great, strong and full faith they . . . follow the word of the prophet and the witness of the star in all purity of heart," bowing to worship and honor the Savior.

—Based on Luther's sermon for



Schedules

- Tuesdays
 - 9:30 AM Girl Talk Study Group
- 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 Chime Choir Practice / Craft 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 December 30

- Soundboard Doug Shupe & Kerry Emelander
- Head Usher Dale Young
- Nursery Assistant Barb Taylor
- Nursery Leader Naomi Collins
- Welcome Table Holly Colby
- Intercessory Prayer Paul Schulz
- Fellowship Time... John & Connie Chance

Save the Date

- Dec. 31 Church Offices Open
If you plan to take an itemized charitable deduction on your 2018 tax return, your donation must go to a qualified charity by December 31. The church website provides online giving. Donations charged to a credit card by December 31 are deductible for 2018, even if you pay the bill in 2019. A gift by check also counts for 2018 as long as it is postmarked no later than Dec. 31. The church office is open on December 31 to receive gifts.
- Jan 1 Church Office Closed
- Jan 8 9:30 AM Girl Talk Study Group begins
The Journey
5:45 PM Finance & Stewardship Committee
6:30 PM Church Council
- Jan. 9 5:30 PM Dorcas Circle
- Jan. 10 12–7 PM Community Blood Drive
- Jan. 12 8 AM Men's Mealtime Rally

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.