

January 16, 2019



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.

Earn. Save. Give. Small Group Opportunities

Please indicate your preference by signing up in the Church Sanctuary (wall hanging).

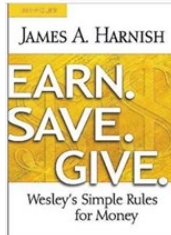
Mondays, Jan. 21 — Feb. 11

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

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

Tuesdays, Feb. 12 — March 5

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



Strategic Planning Meeting

The Sparta Schools district is beginning a strategic planning process. You are invited to a Community Forum on Monday, January 28 at 6:00pm. In the media center

of Sparta High School for input from any member of the community. No RSVP is necessary. If you have any questions, please contact the Sparta Schools Administration Office.

Community Unity Service



You are invited to attend the Sparta Community Unity service to be held at Peace Lutheran Church on January 20th at 6:00pm. Our own Pastor Phil will be speaking. The address is 1225

12 Mile NW, Sparta, MI.



Midwest District Lay Speaker Certification Meeting

The Midwest District Lay Servant Committee will be holding their annual Certification Meeting for Lay Speakers on Saturday, March 9 at 10am at St. Paul's UMC in Grand Rapids. Applicants must pre-schedule their time with the committee by emailing Jody Pratt prattgji09@gmail.com. MIUMC requirements for Certified Lay Speaker are HERE. The deadline to schedule your meeting time is February 28. Location is 3334 Breton Rd. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49512.

Corners of Your Field

Corner of Your Field is a partnership opportunity between the church and Mel Trotter Thrift Stores.

Corner of Your Field encourages attenders to be international about selecting gently-used household items for donations to Mel Trotter Thrift Store. This enables MTM Thrift to provide gift cards to the church based on a portion of the value of donations received to be used by those in their care.



Donations to Mel Trotter Thrift Stores may be made either at the Jenison Store, Sparta Store, or any one of many donation boxes located throughout West Michigan. Including one's name, phone #, email address, and church name will permit return of a receipt and a 24% Store Coupon.

Reminders



- Please take time to check the sign up sheets in the parlor. There are many opportunities available. At this time we need Fellowship Time hosts and Greeters for January 27th.
- Please feel free to download our Leadership Directory titled Committee Structure List 2019. This is included for your convenience.



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®

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Administrative Council

The Administrative Council met on January 8, 2019 in the Church Dining Room. Those in attendance were: Pastor Phil Friedrich, Margaret Collins, Mary VanGesel, Jim Bosserd, Diane Young, Denny Knappen, Heather Westra, Jessica Lares and Pat Sharpe. Completion of the lighting project in the Nursery/Children area was discussed. Further business included a financial report from Jim Bosserd and the appointment of Pat Sharpe as Council Chair for 2019. Further details to follow.

Time to Renew Your Heart

My article this week is largely comprised of the words of John Wesley. They come from a devotional study titled "Renew My Heart".

The news is full of countless challenges, degrading rhetoric, exaggerated statements. Few, if any, creative solutions to real challenges are being provided by wise men and women with one of the most powerful governments in the world at their disposal. While they fail, we continue to pay them, yet those who truly and consistently produce, protect, process payments and are stewards of our park resources are not paid. God help us!!

At times, I question the moral courage and moral character of those we have elected to lead in our government, Democrat and Republican alike! COME ON PEOPLE, DO YOUR JOB AND FIND SOLUTIONS, FORM CREATIVE COMPROMISES AND MAINTAIN A CIVILITY THAT LEADS YOUR PEOPLE.

In the meantime, remember the words of Luke 12:20 will one day be applicable to us all, "This very night your soul is required of you."

So here are all the questions John Wesley stacked around this verse. He pictured them being asked of us as we meet God face to face. They bear a time of reflection by each of us:

How did you employ your soul?

How did you employ the body with which I entrusted you?

Did you employ your health and strength in a vigorous pursuit of that better part which none can take away from you?

Above all, were you a steward of my grace going before, accompanying and following you?

Did you employ your memory in treasuring up what would be for My glory, your salvation and the advantage of others?

Did you store up what you had learned from my word and your experience of My wisdom, truth, power, and mercy?

Was your imagination employed in awakening your pursuit of wisdom and holiness?

Was I the object of your love?

Was all your desire unto Me?

Was I the joy of your heart, the delight of your soul?

I plan to print these questions of Wesley and place them in the devotional reading material I use each day. They are powerful reminders of what it takes to be a disciple of Christ. Perhaps if we all pray more and Facebook post less, new solutions to many of life's challenges will be revealed. Perhaps if we serve more and are self-centered less, generosity will overcome greed. Perhaps if we call on the name of Jesus more, and call each other derogatory names less, hope will truly replace hate.

I am (willing) going to give it a try. I look forward to joining you on this journey to wholeness in Christ.

"If you make my Word your home, you will indeed be my disciples. You will know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:13 New Jerusalem Bible) Each article I write for this column is based in the guidance of a Scripture passage. I pray that these reflections, stories and information will assist you in your own witness and service as a Disciple of Jesus Christ.

Author: BENTON HEISLER (Director of Connectional Ministries)

Schedules

Tuesdays

9:30 am Girl Talk Study Group

Wednesdays

pm Worship Design Team

7-8 pm Adult Choir practice

4th Thursday of the Month

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 January 20

Soundboard Doug Shupe &

Kerry Emerlander

Head Usher Dale Young

Nursery Assistant Caelin &

Camryn Murdock

Nursery Leader Naomi Collins

Greeters..... Thom & Pat

Babcock

Welcome Table Holly Colby

Intercessory Prayer ... Carla VanAsselt

Scripture Reader..... Sharon Helsel

Fellowship Time..... Grief Share (Julie Levendoski,
Mary Ellen Kimble, Bonnie Shupe, Nancy Berger)

Save the Date

Jan. 20 Human Relations Day Offerings

Jan. 20 11:45am Hand2Hand Bags in Wesley Hall

Jan. 20 Community Unity Service at Peace Lutheran Church

Jan. 26 Free Community Breakfast 8:30-11:00am

Prayers Needs

Jack Meulenberg, a friend of Mary Ellen Kimble, is dealing with an infection that is causing a low blood count.



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 - Friday, 9 AM - 3 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 Monday. Contact the church office with updates and additions.