

January 9, 2019



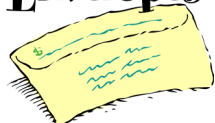
A weekly newsletter of The Sparta United Methodist Church



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

2019 Offering Envelopes are Available in the Church Parlor

Offering Envelopes



If you do not see a box with your name on it but would like 2019 giving envelopes for your offerings, please contact Financial Secretary Mary VanGessel.

Earn. Save. Give.

Small Group Opportunities

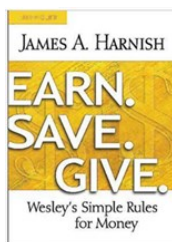
Mondays, Jan. 21 — Feb. 11

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.



Disciple Fast Track

“Remember Who You Are”, the title of the Disciple Fast Track Class, has completed the first 12 weeks of study. Several of the Old Testament prophets were examined, in historical order, as they delivered the Word of God to the people. They repeatedly warned the people to return to God and His commandments, or face dire consequences. They spoke to kings and nations as they prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, the Jewish exile to Babylon and finally, God’s promise of joy and loving care as they are allowed to return to their homeland after 70+ years of exile.

The class will resume on January 13 to begin studying the “Letters of Paul”.



Praying for Unity

Every January, the Christian church worldwide marks the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This ecumenical “octave,” or eight-day observance, lasts from January 18 (the Feast of St. Peter) to January 25 (the Feast of St. Paul).

The week is based on Jesus’ prayer to his heavenly Father in John 17:21 that his followers “may all be one ... so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (ESV). Jesus knew that if Christians were fiercely divided, people outside the faith wouldn’t want to learn more about him.

The theme for the 2019 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is from Deuteronomy 16:20 (NRSV): “Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue.”

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.



A Time For Sharing: Stitching Challenge



Even when the holidays end, those who need to know they are loved and cared for, continues. The Midwest District Superintendent is challenging each church to donate [prayer shawls](#), [lap blankets](#), [chemo hats](#) or [port pillows](#) for those who are undergoing treatment for cancer, long term illness, and for those who may be in a hospice facility. This challenge begins now and will continue through Good Friday. The detailed flyer with details including patterns and drop off sites is [HERE](#). If you have questions, please contact Liz in the Midwest District Office at 616.459.4503 or lbode@michiganumc.org.

Prayers Needs

Mary Martha Circle: Members please remember to start your "Prayers and self denial list" on January 14th. Each day pray for those who have fewer blessings than we do and send God's love from you.



Thank You

A big thank you for the Christmas gift from the church. We sincerely appreciate all the love and support from our church family.

-Heather Westra



Good News

Good News! Wes Scott was released from hospital after hip surgery and is doing well.

-Mary Scott



Special Offering January 20, 2019

Your gifts to Human Relations Day nurture a variety of ministries:

- Child care
- Children's after-school and summer initiatives
- Domestic hunger and poverty
- Economic development
- Education, including tutoring
- Emergency services
- Employment
- Gang intervention
- HIV/AIDS and other health issues
- Homelessness and housing
- Older adults
- Parenting
- Prison outreach
- Restorative justice
- Substance abuse and rehabilitation
- Youth, especially at-risk teens

Winter Jam 2019

Winter Jam 2019, Christian music's largest annual tour, makes its return to **Van Andel Arena on Friday, January 18th, 2019**. Show time is 7:00 PM. Doors open/Pre-Jam Party at 6:00 PM. Tickets \$15 at the door (will be reimbursed by the church).



For more information please visit the site at:

<http://2019.jamtour.com/cities/grand-rapids-mi>.

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 6

Soundboard Brandon Ingersoll & Isaiah Marks
Head Usher Alan Hartman
Nursery Assistant Elizabeth Hartman
Nursery Leader Amy Hume
Greeters..... Dale & Cindy Young
Welcome Table Earl Babcock
Intercessory Prayer ... Cindy Young
Scripture Reader..... Sharon Helsel
Fellowship Time..... Dan & Erica VanLaan

Save the Date

Jan. 9 5:30 pm Dorcas Circle
Jan. 10 12-7 pm Community Blood Drive
Jan. 20 Human Relations Day Offerings
Jan. 20 11:45am Hand2Hand Bags in Dining Room
Jan. 20 Community Unity Service at Peace Lutheran Church

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)

CHURCH OFFICE p 616.887.8255 • Pastor Phil Friedrich c 616.799.4281 • FAX 616.887.8256 • WEBSITE www.spartaumc.com

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 Tuesday. Contact the church office with updates and additions.