

May 20, 2020



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

CHURCH RECEIVES COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS LOAN



In April, Sparta UMC was granted a small business loan to help keep our employees paid during the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the “Stay Safe, Stay Home” orders, our church had to close its doors in late March, leaving our churches employees income uncertain. However, our church people were the first blessing, as their gifts kept all our employees paid from the moment the crisis began. Like other small business, our goal has been to continue paying our employees as long as this crisis lasts. This is where the Small Business Loan will really help us over the next couple of months. Thanks to Jim Bosserd, our Finance Chairperson who handled our application through FirstBank, we received quick approval. This “loan” help will help cover 8 weeks of employee wages (May and June). It is our intention to provide our employees with some stability during these uncertain times. And unlike most loans, this loan will not have to be paid back as long as we use it properly. Our Church Leaders want to be sure that we are able to keep everything stable well beyond that 8 week mark. So thank you to everyone for their continued donations to the Church. These contributions will help us go strongly into the future.

THANK YOU

Thank you everyone for your donations to the virtual Sparta Relay for Life this year. So far our team has raised \$3,112.17 and the event has raised \$25,633! Our goal for Sparta is \$35,000. Some of the team money was raised from the soup and chili take outs were hosted at the Church. A huge thank you goes out to all who participated. There is still time to donate if you thought you missed your chance. You can sponsor Carla VanAsselt or Deb DeGlopper by mailing a check to Deb, or go to their website:



www.relayforlife.org/spartami and follow the instructions. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deb at 616-446-4420.

GRADUATION SUNDAY



“Graduation Sunday” is still being celebrated at the end of May, on the 31st. If you’d like to share a photo of your Grad and a little bit of information with our congregation, please email Arieal at spartaumc@spartaumc.com. This fun opportunity is for any type of graduate!

HAND2HAND UPDATES

Sparta UMC’s very own Hand2Hand was able to bless the Sparta Hand2Hand kids one more time this school year with food and a gift card for pizza from the Garden Patch. Gift cards were funded by the Hand2Hand organization and matching grants through their “Win Win Program” (mentioned in the NewsFlash last week) designed to help both local restaurants and Hand2Hand families across West Michigan during this challenging time. Brenda was able to pack 100 bags of food this past Saturday using only items that were already in our pantry, and we still have food left! Her daughter helped with packing and her husband came later to help them finish up too!



hand2hand.

Unfortunately, this summer there will NOT be a formal Hand2Hand food distribution like last year, but they’ll continue to help families on an individual basis as needed, if they contact our Church. If you’d like to donate food items for distribution, please contact Brenda McCracken at 616-745-9789 or Pastor Phil at 616-799-4281.

ATTENTION ALL PILLOWCASE DRESS SEWERS



Mamrelund Lutheran Church has canceled the Pillowcase Dresses for Little Girls in Africa Sewing Bee scheduled for June. Thanks, Bonnie

AD COUNCIL MEETING CANCELLED

The next Ad Council meeting (via ZOOM) that was scheduled for May 25, is cancelled due to the Memorial Day holiday. The weekly ZOOM meetings will resume on Monday, June 1 at 7 PM. If you’d like to join that meeting, please email the Office Admin for login details.





PRAYER REQUESTS & PEOPLE NEWS

- Happy early birthday to Larry Weed on May 27! He was accidentally missed on the monthly birthday list for May.
 - Please pray for Juanita William's sisters in California. They are both very ill. Thank you.
- Mary Hyde came through surgery well. She thanks everyone for prayers!
- Carol Schulz is in recovery from a successful knee surgery. Thank you for all the prayers!
 - Please keep Janet Bassett in your thoughts and prayers.
- Patti Bloomstrom's brother, Gary, is about to start dialysis. Please pray that it goes ok for him. Thank you.
- Due to the frost, many farmers could lose up to 30% of their crops this year. Please pray for those affected by this.

KENT COUNTY EMERGENCY CASH RELIEF

The COVID-19 crisis is devastating for thousands of Kent County, Michigan workers who have lost their jobs and rely on a regular paycheck to afford necessities like shelter, food, transportation, baby products, and medicine. To help, local donors and community-based nonprofits partnered with the Family Independence Initiative and the Stand Together Foundation to create a short-term fund to provide \$500 in emergency cash relief to neighbors and families who are struggling in Kent County, Michigan. To date, more than 8,000 individuals and families have received cash relief from the Kent County Relief Fund. Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Funds are limited and intended to provide short-term relief. If the fund is depleted, applicants will be added to a waiting list and notified if additional funds become available. To apply please visit their website: <https://kentcountyrelief.com/>



DID YOU KNOW?

You can get a copy of any Council meeting "minutes" by requesting it through the Church Office Admin at spartaumc@spartaumc.com.



You can request an updated, electronic copy of the Church Directory by emailing the Church Office Admin at spartaumc@spartaum.com. There are a few updated printed copies outside the Church doors, in with the copies of the Upper Room.



FOUR EASY METHODS OF GIVING

1. Using your debit or credit card through our website: Gifts may be made through our website by pressing the menu box at the top and pressing "give" in the drop down menu. There are some small fees associated with this service.
2. Mail a check: Checks may be sent to the Church at Sparta United Methodist Church, 54 East Division Street, Sparta, MI 49345
3. Automatic Debit: This is another way that some people of our church make their contributions. This is an automated process that requires a signed form that Arieal can help you set up. Call her at 989-745-3492 if you would like to do this.
4. Automatic Bill Pay: This is an arrangement you can make with your bank or financial institution. With this procedure, your bank sends the church the amount you determine at the intervals you also choose.

DON'T FORGET

Join us every week, virtually, for the following activities via our Facebook page:

- Sunday Worship Service at 10:10 AM
- Fellowship follows Sunday Worship Service
- Ad Council meets on Mondays at 7 PM via ZOOM (email the Church Admin for login details)

TIPS & TRICKS

If you don't want to miss the Churches live stream or Facebook updates follow these instructions:

1. Log into Facebook on your computer, tablet or smart phone device that you want to watch the live stream on.
2. At the top of Facebook, search for Sparta United Methodist Church or use this link: www.facebook.com/SpartaUnitedMethodistChurch
3. Click on the "Like" button. If the page already has "liked" under the picture then you have already liked the page.
4. Be sure you are on the device you'd like to watch the Sunday Service live stream on. Around 10 AM on Sundays, watch for the notification from Facebook that we are "live" and click on the notification (it will bring you right to the live service).
5. If you did not get the notification by 10:05AM on Sundays, you can find the live stream manually by searching for Sparta United Methodist Church on Facebook and it will be towards the top of our page.

You can also phone in and listen to the service:

1. Dial 312-626-6799
2. You will be prompted for a Meeting ID
3. Enter 616-887-8255 #
4. You will be prompted for a participant number
5. Press #
6. You will then be prompted for a meeting password, Press 316#
7. Enjoy listening to our Worship Service!