Spring HAS sprung! Thank you, Jesus!

As the daffodils appear and perennials rise, we too rise and reevaluate our service to the church. As we approach the season of the Holy Spirit’s coming, we are reminded that we are to wait, listen, and “go.”

Where will you go? And how will you grow? Do you have an area where you are serving in the life of the church? Do you feel a desire to do more? Do you need to reevaluate what you are doing?

Your pastor needs to know. Because I need some assistance. I need a handful of folks who have some free time to assist with home and hospital visitation. That is, to do the work that Jesus asks us to do. For when we do that, we do it for him. And when we look into the eyes of those who are lonely, sick, and suffering, we look into his eyes. We see Jesus.

You might remember that we seek to grow our congregation in health and vitality, we need to free the pastor to be in the community. Last week, I offered a blessing at the Life With Joy fundraising event. This week, I am attending a Senior Fair in Vernon. I will meet with many who may need a church home. I am excited about this kind of work.

Our new partnership with Atlantic Health System asks us to find three or four people who are willing to be informed when people are hospitalized and in need of a visit. They will conduct training events and prepare you for the work. And of course, I will work with you.

Note writers and card senders are also needed.

Might you be someone who will grow spiritually and be changed through this kind of service? I pray that we will all remember that we are a part of the priesthood of all believers. I pray that we will all remember that each and every one of us are called to ministry.

With you all in the work,

janice

Level I Training on June 12

Milford Health and Wellness, Milford, PA from 12-2 p.m.

OR

Romano Conference Center, Newton Medical Center from 4:30-6:30 p.m.
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*May 2018*
Upcoming Events

- Sunday, May 13th @ 10:30 am - Mother's Day Sunday School Presentation
- Sunday, May 20th @ 2-3:30 pm - Youth Group
- Sunday, May 27th @ 2-3:30 pm - MindFit USA Youth & Sunday School Outing
- Sunday School: 6th, 20th, 27th

Spread the gift of a smile 😊

May God give you...
For every storm, a rainbow,
For every tear, a smile,
For every care, a promise,
And a blessing in each trial.
For every problem life sends,
A faithful friend to share,
For every sigh, a sweet song,
And an answer for each prayer.

Sparta UMC
71 S Sparta Ave. Sparta, NJ 07871
We will be hiring paid youth staff (high school students) to help in the afternoons. Application and list of responsibilities can be found on our web-site, http://www.spartaumc.org. Deadline for applications is June 1st.

NEW! Full Day (9:00-5:00)
Or Half Day (9:00-12:15)
August 6-10, 2018
Please register NOW
To Register: www.spartaumc.org/vbs
***Limited Number of spaces...no registration at the door***
Full time students: bring your lunch and a snack, Mon-Thurs (morning snack will be provided)
Special Program for all students on Friday includes lunch

Prices:
Full Day (per week): $50 first child or $75 per family
Half Day (per week): $25 per child or $40/2 children, $50 for 3 or more (fee includes shirt)

Ages: 4 (pre/K) – 5th grade
“Travelers Program” for 6th – 8th grade
see special “Travelers” flyer

SPARTA
UNITED METHODIST
71 Sparta Ave, Sparta, NJ 07871
973-729-7773
Stewardship Campaign

Stewardship Campaign Update

A belated word of Thanks to everyone for the successful Stewardship Campaign last fall. The responses were great and helped the Finance Committee finalize our 2018 Budget earlier than we have in the last few years. The chart includes data for 5 years (and the number of pledges received): showing the amounts pledged and the amount of pledges actually received.

![Chart showing Stewardship Campaign Results]

Grocery Cards

Pat Harvey sells gift cards every Sunday after the 10:30 service (during Coffee Hour). The cards are in 3 denominations for ShopRite, Stop & Shop and Weis.

Church Mouse Thrift Shop

The Mouse is ready for your spring shopping, from Mother’s Day items to Memorial Day preparations. We have spring clothing for the whole family, jewelry, housewares, vases, linens, throw pillows, knick-knacks, toys, books, so much more!

Come visit; you’ll be glad you did. Remember, all our monies go to Missions!

Store hours:
Wed. 10-2; Thurs. 1-4; Fri. 1-4; Sat. 10-2
Opportunities to Serve

There are Endless ways to be of service:
Join the Chancel Choir or Bell Choir, Be a liturgist, Make dinner for a family, Help with Feed the Body/Feed the Soul, Help with Family Promise, Help in the Thrift Shop, Help at Manna House, and/or Skylands Outreach Depot, Take Worship to Knoll View

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for Counting Teams

The Finance Team is in need of some people, who will work in teams of 3-4, to prepare the bank deposit each week. It would be great to have 3 teams that would take turns doing this work. This job can be done following service on Sunday, later in the day Sunday, or Monday mornings.

The process takes approximately an hour and consists of counting the cash & coin and tallying the checks that are received each week; noting funds received for special uses; and preparing and making the bank deposit.

Can you spare an hour or so a week? Do you have friends that could join you? We currently have two people who do the counting & deposit faithfully every week of the year, and have done so for many years. Isn’t it time to give them a break? Please prayerfully consider joining our team. If you are interested contact Muriel Godbersen by email at finance@spartaumc.org or by phone at 973-512-3415.

We need your help!

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COFFEE HOUR SCHEDULE Bring snacks for fellowship!

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Sparta United Methodist Church Organ Fund FAQs

Why is an organ necessary?
The organ is one of many musical tools that SUMC has: organ, keyboard, bells, youth bells, piano, choir, youth choir, visiting instrumentalists, praise band, and soloists. It enhances worship services, celebrations, funerals, Christmas special music, as well as special events. Of the many instruments and modes of worship experienced in SUMC’s musically blended service, the organ is ideally suited for leading congregational song, accompanying the choir and hand bells, and playing timeless classics in addition to modern compositions.

The organ sounded fine at the last service. What's wrong with it?
The organ has exceeded its expected life span and is exhibiting signs of deterioration, notably dry rot in the speakers and pops and buzzing from the electronic components. The committee has decided it would be best to replace the organ before further issues or failure occurs.

Why not just repair the organ we have, or purchase a used one?
Finding parts and people to service it would be difficult, and other issues may arise as it deteriorates further, similar to an old car. A used organ would be considered in the right circumstances but the cost in installing and maintaining an older instrument could easily approach the “package deal” of a new one.

What is being recommended?
After surveying several instruments and requesting quotes from select vendors, the Organ Committee has recommended and the Council authorized a campaign to raise $72,140 to purchase a 3-Manual Allen digital organ. Allen is a leader in modern digital organ technology and we have determined this instrument will be the best value, with much greater quality and versatility than our current instrument. Its life span is 50 years with proper care.

Will the current pipes be used in the new organ configuration?
The pipes will remain in place and not be removed. The pipes can be incorporated later at an additional significant cost. The quality of digital equipment doesn’t need pipes to provide excellent music and will be cheaper to maintain as the “pipes” will not go out of tune with seasonal changes in humidity.

How will the money be raised?
All of us will be invited to make a gift. From now until the end of May pledges will be received and will be payable in full no later than October 1. The Organ Committee members have already made commitments and are seeking lead gifts. By the end of April, there will be a poster and chart in the narthex indicating our progress. We are confident that with the help of many generous gifts we can have our new organ installed and dedicated sometime in the fall.

What if I have questions or would like to discuss my gift?
Please call or talk to Organ Committee Chair, Alden Welch, at 973-726-0248 or speak to any member of the Organ Committee. Other committee members: Bud Larson, Rich Kelley, Jack Carpenter, Pat Johnson, Rob Lynn, Edna Moriarty, Maureen Nielsen, Margaret Sodt, and Nancy Starnes.
Get Connected

STUDY AND FELLOWSHIP AT SPARTA

Beyond the Basics (Exploring the Mysteries) Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday mornings at 7:00 a.m.: Men’s Study & Reflection at the Sparta Diner!
Reading Together Bible Study: Wednesday afternoons at 1:00 p.m.
UMW Book Club: Monday Evenings at 7:00 p.m.

MONDAY NIGHT BOOK GROUP


Jesus scholar John Dominic Crossan shows us how the parables present throughout the New Testament not only reveal what Jesus wanted to teach but also provide the key for explaining how the Gospels’ writers sought to explain the Prophet of Nazareth to the world. In this meaningful exploration of the metaphorical stories told by Jesus and the Gospel writers, Crossan combines the biblical expertise of his The Greatest Prayer with a historical and social analysis that harkens closely to his Jesus:

Confirmation

Confirmation

Class Dates: May 6
Worship Attendance is very IMPORTANT
June 3 – CONFIRMATION CEREMONY

8
On May 27th, we will be commemorating Peace With Justice Sunday with guest preacher, Bill Mefford. Bill Mefford serves on the General Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church as the Director of Civil and Human Rights. He helps to build movements among United Methodists to defend the rights of immigrants as well as to end mass incarceration and bring about criminal justice reform. He also directs the work of the Board on issues that include ending gun violence, religious freedom, and abolition of the death penalty. Bill has served the United Methodist Church in various positions, including youth pastor, pastor, Wesley Foundation Director, and an urban missionary in several cities including Chicago, Cleveland and Waco, Texas.

Bill graduated from McMurry University in Abilene, Texas in 1990. He graduated with a Masters of Divinity from Asbury Theological Seminary in 1998 and a Doctor of Missiology, also from Asbury, in 2008. The title of Bill’s dissertation is “To Set Free the Affluent: Liberating the North American Church in Captivity through Solidarity with Refugees”. Bill is also the co-author of “The Christian Companion to Not on Our Watch”. (2008) His latest book is “The Fig Tree Revolution”, a copy of which can be found in our church library and on the Church & Society table in the Narthex.

SUMC Members Put Their Faith in Action: Several of our members participated in the MARCH for OUR LIVES national anti-gun violence march in Washington DC, as well as in in Newton. In addition, Linda Coobs and Sunday School teachers made the Church and Society bulletin board in the hallway on the theme of the UMC position on gun violence and included the 17 Acts of Kindness written by our Sunday School children in memory of the 17 lives lost at the Stoneman Douglas High School mass shooting.

Photo, Sparta UMC member and Sunday School teacher, Linda Frisbie Coombs, attending March for Our Lives in Washington, D. C. last month with her husband and two children.
United Methodist Women

BookWorms

The BookWorm group is now meeting on the **FOURTH Monday of the month**, except in May and December. The group met on Monday, April 23rd and had a good conversation about *On Pluto*.

**At the May 21st meeting** they will discuss *Adventure of Ascent* by Luci Shaw
Please keep checking in at the sign-up sheet to see who has it.

FATHERS—Remember and Honor

Once again this year at Father’s Day, the Sparta United Methodist Women are inviting you to honor the fathers in your lives. In the church bulletin on June 17th we will have a special page listing the fathers you would like to recognize.

We are asking that for each name you donate $2.00. This money will go to the World Thank Offering of United Methodist Women and be used for mission programs helping women, children, families. Please make out any checks to Sparta United Methodist Women.

We have two categories: “In Memory Of” and “In Honor Of”. Please fill out the form and put it in an envelope in the United Methodist Women’s box. There is a supply of empty envelopes in that box for your convenience.

For Father’s Day (please put in United Methodist Women’s box by June 3rd!)

Submitted by: ________________________________________________

In Memory of: ________________________________________________

In Honor of: _________________________________________________

List names ONLY—extra words will not be used.

AN OPEN INVITATION FROM UMW

MAD (Mothers and Daughters) About Mission’s **Madhatter Tea Party**

May 6, 5-6:30
Tea and Finger Sandwiches
Mission BINGO
For All Mothers and Daughters and any UMW friends
*(You are welcome to come alone)*
Invite a friend and her Mom
Gloves and hats are optional

*Sparta United Methodist Church*
Please be sure to RSVP to pat.schutz@yahoo.com or 973-729-3857
Music

The Children's Chime Choir will meet on Sunday's for rehearsal from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. until May 13. Children, ages 5 to 10, will be introduced to music fundamentals. They will perform at the 10:30 a.m. service on Mother's Day, May 13. To meet the requirements of Safe Sanctuary parents will need to take turns participating.

Contact Yvonne Roux (973-209-2288, or vrouxrings@gmail.com) to register or for further information.

Church Council

SUMC Council Meeting Update

Following are highlights from the March 15, 2018 Council meeting:

- The Council supported a recommendation from the Organ committee to start soliciting donations.
- Following a presentation from Rev. Randy Parks regarding the Atlantic Health System's Faith Community Health Partners program, the Council approved a motion to join the program.
- Rich Kelley, Finance Chair, advised that funds are on hand to complete the entrance project.
- Laura Kempson reported that permits have been received and materials ordered for the entrance project; work will begin after Easter and is expected to take 3-4 weeks. Roof repairs are needed for the office/education wing and estimates are being solicited.

The next Council meeting will be May 9 at 7 pm.

Submitted by Muriel Godbersen, Recording Secretary

Food Pantry

Sparta Ecumenical Council Food Pantry
Children's Summer Lunch Program

While in school, many children receive lunchtime meal assistance. Over the summer, this assistance stops!

The Sparta Ecumenical Council Food Pantry sponsors a Children's Summer Lunch Program to provide lunch throughout the summer to approximately 100 Sussex County children per week.

As members of the Sparta Ecumenical Council, Sparta UMC participates in this important ministry.

Items needed:
- Meal-in-a-can
- Pasta and pasta sauce
- Milk (shelf-stable)
- Breakfast cereal or oatmeal
- Canned fruit or applesauce
- Crackers, chips, snack food
- Jell-O, pudding
- Tuna
- Soup
- Mac & cheese
- Juice boxes
- Ramen noodles

We are collecting throughout the summer. Please leave your donations in the shopping cart in the Narthex. Any donations are welcomed, including grocery shopping cards.

If you have any questions, please call Allison Sidoli at (973) 691-6943.
Worship Every Week
Communion Service at 8:30 a.m.
Special Music and children’s message at 10:30 a.m.

Contemplative/Meditation Service
FIRST WEDNESDAY at 12:15 p.m. and 7:15 p.m.

Reading Together - Bible Study
Wednesday’s at 1:00 p.m.

YOUTH GROUP SUNDAY, May 20th
2:00 - 3:30 P.M.

Thrift Shop
973-729-9121
Wednesday 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Thursday 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Friday 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

The DEADLINE for the June Newsletter is MAY 15.