



Circuit Rider for March 2018

Sparks United Methodist Church
1231 Pyramid Way, Sparks, NV 89431
775-358-0925 Office@SparksUMC.org



Pastor's Ponderings

This past fall, I was given a delightful gift from two dear colleagues in ministry: the devotional resource *Gift and Task*, by Walter Brueggemann. I have long respected his work as a seminary professor and advocate for justice and this devotional affords me a daily dose of insight, inspiration and – quite often – disquieting encouragement to live out the love of Jesus. One recent entry spoke of the Jewish leaders of Jesus' time as "custodians of the status quo," a categorization which set them at odds with the expansive vision of Jesus for who was in and who was out and how God goes about loving.

As I look at the institutional church, and our local franchise operation, I must acknowledge that a natural tendency is to default into such a mindset, to become "custodians of the status quo." We have obligations to meet which require unruffled supporters which in turn indicate an avoidance of challenging rhetoric from the pulpit and elsewhere. The unintended consequence of such a "safe" outlook is that we therefore tend to associate with others like us, who share our priorities and pleasures which means, over time, we tend to end up becoming a "Stepford" church. There is a certain truth to the long-voiced opinion that the most segregated hour of the week is 11 o'clock on Sunday morning. We stay mostly to "our kind": no muss, no fuss. I'm pretty sure this is not what Jesus had in mind.

When I was at the *Gathering of the Orders* in January – surrounded by colleagues of many ages, cultures, and languages – I got the sense that this was more like the promised kingdom of God than almost any of our churches on any given week. In worship on Sunday, February 4, I gave those in attendance an assignment: to conduct two conversations in the coming week with people who were not like them and to write down what they learned from those intentional interactions. The responses I received included these:

- *Two coworkers, one from Iran and one from Algeria, both loved their first root beer floats!*
- *What it is like to be helpless and dependent on others 24/7.*
- *I had a conversation with a woman who came from Poland many years ago. She told me about living behind the 'Iron Curtain': very interesting.*



I want to encourage all of us to have these interactions – with people who are not like us. It is awareness from such conversations which will help us move beyond being mere "custodians of the status quo." If we believe that Jesus loves everyone, let's get to know some of the ones who differ from us with regards to age, ethnicity, socio-economic strata, gender, sexual orientation or any combination of the above. Let us extend the grace and justice of our Lord Jesus Christ into the world – one life at a time, one conversation at a time. And by all means, let me know what you learn!

Yours for the journey,

Pastor Gary



UMCOR Special Offering

This March 11 is UMCOR Sunday. Since 1940, UMCOR has continued to respond to those in desperate need – today throughout more than eighty countries around the world.

Your generous giving to UMCOR Sunday (formerly One Great Hour of Sharing) is what allows UMCOR to act as the arms and legs of Christ's church, moving toward the most vulnerable in their darkest days. Together, we reach children, families and communities who have experienced devastation in the wake of disaster. Please consider a generous donation.

Worshipping Together

March's MP3:

Monthly Parish Prayer Priority

As winter begins to give way to spring, let us prayerfully consider new and renewing ways we might grow in grace and service to others in our congregation and community.

March Worship Themes

Our first service begins at 9:00 AM and the second at 10:30 AM. Our Coffee Hours are at 10:00 AM and 11:30 AM in the Social Hall.

Sunday School classes for children and adults run concurrent with the 10:30 AM service.



Sunday, March 4

3rd Sunday in Lent

Sermon: *Opting for Righteousness*

Scripture readings: Exodus 20:1-7; John 2:13-22

Sunday, March 14

4th Sunday in Lent

Sermon: *Look Up, Lift Up*

Scripture readings: Numbers 21:4-9;

Psalm 1-7:1-3, 17-22; John 3:14-21

UMCOR Sunday (a special offering will be collected)

Sunday, March 18

5th Sunday in Lent

Sermon: *The Price of Faithfulness*

Scripture readings: Jeremiah 31:31-34;

Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33

Sunday, March 25

Palm/Passion Sunday

Scriptures for Palms portion:

Mark 11:1-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Scriptures for Passion portion:

Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1-15:47

Reader's Theater presentation of Gospel lesson in lieu of Sermon



Special Lenten Worship Opportunities

Midweek Dining and Devotion

(Thursdays March 1, 8, 15, 22)

Soup Supper, 6:00 PM, Social Hall;

Devotional Study, 7:00 PM, Sanctuary

This weekly series, shared by Sparks UMC and Lord of Mercy Lutheran will combine a simple, shared meal with meditative worship aimed at improving our prayer lives.

Maundy Thursday (March 29)

Potluck Dinner and Worship beginning at 6:00 PM, Social Hall

Our evening will begin with a shared meal, then transition into a worship event featuring foot washing / hand washing and The Lord's Supper in an informal setting.

Good Friday (March 30)

12:00 Noon, Sanctuary

We will share a quiet, meditative time as we consider *The Scriptural Way of the Cross*, blending Bible readings with prayer, silence, and singing.

7:00 PM, Sanctuary

Our revisiting of our Lord's Passion will come through the cantata *Light in the Darkness*, by Patrick M. Liebergen.

Growing Our Faith Together

Mark Your Calendars

- March 4 – 2:00 PM
Reno Youth Jazz Orchestra Concert
- March 30 – 7:00 PM
Light in the Darkness Cantata
- April 29 – 2:00 PM
Sierra Nevada Children's Choir
Concert



Benji and Tommy Schoech delivering candy to Rosewood Convalescent Center Feb 10.



Wendy's Café

If you can help, we would appreciate your financial donations to the ministry as well as help with meal delivery and serving. Please hold this ministry in your prayers and help us keep this vital ministry going!

We'd love for you and your family to attend our Café meals. Our hope is this meal is a chance for everyone and anyone to enjoy good home cooked food, friendship, fellowship and a time of prayer, music and a message to follow. The next Wendy's Café meal will be at 4:00 PM on...

Saturday, March 31

Adult Bible Studies

Friday Morning Bible Study

Our group meets on Fridays, at 9:30 AM in Room 105. We are now studying the book of Genesis. Please join us; all are welcome!

Journey Through the Bible

This ongoing adult Bible study meets on Sundays, at 10:30 AM in Room 106. A few books are still available if you don't already have one. Contact Patricia Wilson



at 853-2753 for more information. Please join us!

Spread the news – call your friends. Youth Group is going strong! Join us each Wednesday in the Social Hall at 6:00 PM. We will be serving dinner, after which the youth will meet.



Join the fun! For more information, contact Adele Grube at 425-9110.

**Oh, how my soul praises the Lord.
How my spirit rejoices
in God my Savior!**

Luke 1:46-47

Musical Musings



Greetings from Music Ministries!

Special Music & Events – Thank you, Sanctuary Choir members, for presenting a beautiful anthem at our special Ash Wednesday worship service earlier this month.

Also, a huge thank you to those who performed this past Sunday at the Sparks HS Music Department fundraiser concert – Bob Estey, Gary Pope-Sears, Mark & Mona Sargent, Jacqueline Dickman, and Linda Young. Praise God that from all the donations received we were able to raise \$1,693.00 to help their program!

Flames Youth Choir – just helped lead worship on Feb. 25 with the rest of the Beatitudes Praise Band.

Glorious Noise Children’s Choir – presented special music at worship Feb. 18, and will again as they lead the palms processional on Palm Sunday, March 25.

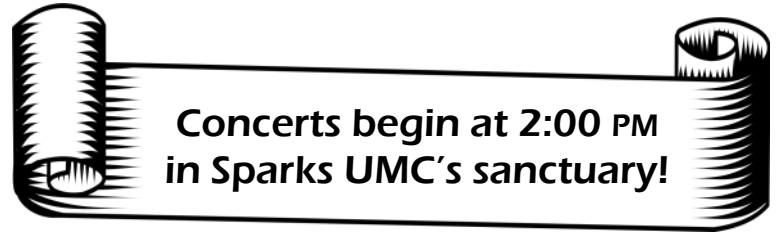
Sanctuary Choir – continues to lead worship at our 9:00 AM worship service, and is in the process of preparing their Good Friday cantata “Light in the Darkness.” They will be joined by members of the Spanish Springs Presbyterian Church choir as well.

Beatitudes Praise Band – led worship Feb. 25, and will be part of worship March 18.

Thank you for your thoughts, prayers, cards, and food these past few weeks, as I mourn the loss of my dear husband John! I feel so much love from my church family and it makes me smile.

God bless you!

Cindy Sabatini, Director of Music Ministries



**Concerts begin at 2:00 PM
in Sparks UMC’s sanctuary!**

Reno Youth Jazz Orchestra March 4

We’ll have the privilege of hearing 2 different bands that afternoon. There will be no charge, but donations will help these young jazz musicians continue their music studies and performances. Invite a friend to enjoy their music, too! Visit RenoYouthJazzOrchestra.com.



Sierra NV Children’s Choir April 29

The SNCC is for 1st – 12th graders with a talent and passion for singing. Their music ranges from modern to medieval. Students are divided into three magnificent choirs with top-tier directors who combine education and fun! Come and enjoy these young performers. Learn more at sierranevadachildrenschoir.org.



Tintabulations Handbell Ensemble May 20

Tintabulations educates diverse communities with terrific performances that go beyond standard handbell conventions. They entertain a broad, multi-generational audience with their interpretations of music from multiple genres and sources. Learn more at Tintabulations.com.



Celebrating Our Family



Edith Finley	3/02	Curt Weigel	3/19
Amelia Eidson	3/03	Lance Semenko	3/20
Clint Baker	3/05	Jan Carnahan	3/21
Jane Diedrichsen	3/05	Richard McClain	3/22
Claire Evans	3/08	Silas Little	3/23
Eileen Tibbitts	3/08	Abby Mulcahy	3/24
Heather Ann Bussiere	3/09	Michael Ridgeway	3/24
Casey Higgins	3/09	Denny Schoonover	3/25
Karen Hensley	3/11	Vern Bowman	3/26
Glenn Sevrens	3/13	Ashlyn Costello	3/27
Margie Steele	3/14	Faith Manson	3/27
Kathryn Young	3/14	James Sargent	3/27
Sam Somerhalder	3/15	Kristin Curtis	3/30
Cindy Evans	3/16	Daniel Felipe	3/30
Kathy Rusche	3/18	Doug Hopkins	3/30
Alexis Carrasco	3/19	Ellie Imers	3/30
Sylvia O'Dea	3/19	Easton Baker	3/31

Congratulations!

Ray & Edna Pelfrey	61
Rev. Dr. Tom & Carolyn Butler	49
Vern & Barbara Bowman	39
Gary & Sybella Pope-Sears	36
David & Patty Rahn	30
Daniel & Ernyll Felipe	27
Trent & Carol Ryan	26
Bruce & Edwina Pfeiffer	18

**"I was cold & hungry
and you gave me a
sleeping bag, a tent
and some food."**

Matthew 25:35-36



Our Daily Ministry to People in Need

The verse above might not be exactly what Jesus said in Matthew 25, but it's certainly the essence of the message. On average, once a day someone visits our church office asking for some food – and maybe a jacket, gloves or a blanket if we have it. This past week I had several conversations with people of various backgrounds as well as mental and physical abilities. Here's one:

CW: It's good to see you again. How've you been doing?

Mike: Hangin' in there. I got a part-time job at a local roofing company; what a blessing. But I won't get paid for two more weeks so I've just got to make it until then. It'll be OK.

CW: What do you need?

Mike: Oh, this food is great; y'all have the best food. And nobody else has can openers; that's perfect! Hey, would you happen to have some kind of a blanket? It's getting pretty cold out.


CW: How about a sleeping bag?

Mike: That'd be great! This church has the kindest people.

CW: What would you like me to tell them for you?

Mike: You know... just pray for my mother: Lillian Roberta Lane. She abandoned me when I was 17, but I don't hold it against her. God's shown me how to love her anyway. But I worry about her. So if y'all could pray for her... That's all I want.

March 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<p><i>Please visit the calendar on our website www.SparksUMC.org for updated events.</i></p> <p>4 9:00 AM Traditions Svc 10:30 AM Open Hearts Svc NOON Lord of Mercy 2:00 PM Reno Youth Jazz Orchestra 3:00 PM Spanish Class</p>	<p>5 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM World Religions</p>	<p>6 6:00 PM Stephen Leaders 6:30 PM Stephen Ministers 6:30 PM Cub Pack #43</p>	<p>7 4:00 PM Glorious Noise Reh. 6:00 PM Youth Group</p> <p> Find us on: facebook®</p>	<p>1 9:00 AM Rummage Setup 3:00 PM Spanish Class 4:00 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 6:00 PM Soup Supper 7:00 PM Lenten Worship</p> <p>8 12:30 PM Crafters Corner 3:00 PM Spanish Class 4:00 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 6:00 PM Soup Supper 7:00 PM Lenten Worship</p>	<p>2 9:00 AM Rummage Sale</p> <p>9 8:30 AM T. M. Quilters 9:30 AM Bible Study Class</p>	<p>3 9:00 AM Rummage Sale 9:00 AM Disciple 4 Class</p> <p>10 8:00 AM UM Men's B' fast 9:00 AM 1st Sat. Cleanup 9:00 AM Disciple 4 Class</p>
<p>11 9:00 AM Traditions Svc 10:30 AM Open Hearts Svc NOON Lord of Mercy 3:00 PM Spanish Class</p>	<p>12 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM World Religions</p>	<p>13 6:00 PM Worship Comm. 6:30 PM Cub Pack #43 7:00 PM Outreach Comm.</p>	<p>14 9:00 AM "P & S" Quilting 4:00 PM Glorious Noise Reh. 5:00 PM HD Board Meeting 6:00 PM Big Band Reh. 6:00 PM Finance Comm. 6:00 PM Youth Group 7:00 PM Visitation Meeting</p>	<p>15 12:01 PM Gold & Silver 3:00 PM Spanish Class 4:00 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 6:00 PM Soup Supper 7:00 PM Lenten Worship</p>	<p>16 9:30 AM Bible Study Class</p>	<p>17 8:30 AM T. M. Quilters 9:00 AM Disciple 4 Class 3:00 PM Ruth Ahlberg Memorial Svc.</p>
<p>18 9:00 AM Traditions Svc 10:30 AM Open Hearts Svc NOON Lord of Mercy 3:00 PM Spanish Class</p>	<p>19 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM World Religions</p>	<p>20 "CR" Deadline 6:30 PM Cub Pack #43</p>	<p>21 4:00 PM Glorious Noise Reh. 6:00 PM Youth Group 7:00 PM Bd. of Trustees</p>	<p>22 3:00 PM Spanish Class 4:00 PM Sanctuary Choir R. 5:00 PM Nominations Com 6:00 PM Soup Supper 7:00 PM Lenten Worship</p>	<p>23 9:30 AM Bible Study Class</p>	<p>24 9:00 AM Disciple 4 Class</p>
<p>25 9:00 AM Traditions Svc 10:30 AM Open Hearts Svc NOON Lord of Mercy 3:00 PM Spanish Class</p>	<p>26 6:30 PM Boy Scouts 7:00 PM World Religions</p>	<p>27 6:30 PM Cub Pack #43</p>	<p>28 9:00 AM "P & S" Quilting 4:00 PM Glorious Noise Reh. 6:00 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM SPRC</p>	<p>29 Maundy Thursday 4:00 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 6:00 PM Soup Supper 7:00 PM Lenten Worship</p>	<p>30 Good Friday! 9:30 AM Bible Study Class NOON The Scriptural Way of the Cross, Sanctuary 6:00 PM Good Fri. Service</p>	<p>31 9:00 AM Disciple 4 Class 10:00 AM Build Box Lunches 4:00 PM Wendy's Café 4:45 PM Worship Service</p>

Comings and Goings



FREE ADMISSION!!

SPARKS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1231 Pyramid Way, Sparks

Friday, March 2nd, 9am to 4pm

Saturday, March 3rd, 9am to 2pm

Donations are accepted from 9am- 3pm

Wednesday February 28th and Thursday March 1st

For information contact Pat McMillan at 626-8297

or Charlie Harwell 358-4713

Proceeds benefit United Methodist Women's Mission Projects

Help Spread the Word!

In the Reno-Sparks area, there is a website called Nextdoor.com. We can post our events, concerts and our services, etc. With your help, we can reach more people and let them know what a great church we have!

If you are interested in participating, please contact Molly Gardner at 775-673-1628 or email at mollygbb@yahoo.com. She will send you flyers and you can post them to your neighborhood's site. Nextdoor.com is also a great place to find out what is happening in your area such as yard sales, lost pets, crime and more. Check it out!

**He has shown you, O mortal,
what is good. And what does
the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly
with your God.**

Micah 6:8

Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM

775-358-0925 Office@SparksUMC.org

Visit our website at www.SparksUMC.org

Pastor Gary Pope-Sears

Dir. of Music Ministries Cindy Sabatini

Church Administrator Charles White

Webmaster Cheri Vocelka

Happy Days Preschool 775-331-6699

Director: Yvana Majalca

Sunday Worship Services

9:00 AM & 10:30 AM

Nursery care is provided at all services.

Circuit Rider articles are due by the 20th each month.

Contact Office@SparksUMC.org

Printer Church Office

Reporters All of You!

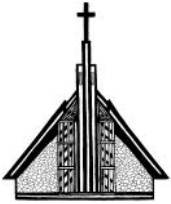
Circulation: Grace Anderson, Jean Cleveland, Diana Greer, Donna McKibben, Carol Rogers, Jewel Sertic, Sally Snow, Wanda Vogel

Quilting at the Lake

Join fellow quilters April 3-6 at Lake Tahoe UMC & Retreat Center in Kings Beach. The event is for quilters of all levels. To register or for more info, contact Rev. Lisa Jean Hoefner at 503-449-3094.



Like us on Facebook, join the conversation, and share us with your friends!



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Annual Rummage Sale
March 2-3 from 9 AM to 3 PM
There will be something for everyone in our Social Hall!

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Coffee Hour Hosts

Each Sunday after worship one group from our congregation hosts this time of fellowship.



If you or your group would like to be added to the rotation, please contact the church office.

- March 4..... Helping Hands
- March 11..... UM Women & UM Men
- March 18..... Gold & Silver Fellowship
- March 25..... Board of Trustees

Gold & Silver – March 15

Join us for a special program on the ancient history of the people of the Great Basin area of Nevada, by Molly Gardner. She will bring some of her baskets to show and will have a slide presentation on basketry through the ages. The potluck lunch begins at 12:00 NOON in the Social Hall. Your friends are welcome to join us.



Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.