



Circuit Rider for February 2018

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



Pastor's Ponderings

This is one of those years where it seems we have just put the Christmas décor away and we find ourselves entering Lent. Indeed, Lent begins on St. Valentine's Day with Ash Wednesday, and concludes with Easter falling on – no fooling – April 1st.

As an aside, you may be wondering how the date of Easter (and correspondingly Ash Wednesday and Lent) are established. It is really quite straightforward: Easter is the first Sunday **after** the first full moon **after** the vernal equinox. As a result, the date for Easter can range from March 22 to April 25 depending on how the full moon falls after the first day of spring. Obviously, we are on the earlier side of things this year.

I'm delighted that we as a congregation will be sharing our journey to Easter alongside our friends from Lord of Mercy Lutheran. We have outlined a variety of shared events in which our two congregations will enjoy feasting, fellowship and worship.

We will begin with shared worship on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary, preparing our hearts for a holy Lent through contemplation, receiving the imposition of ashes as well as Holy Communion.

On the subsequent five Thursday evenings, we will gather for a potluck soup dinner at 6:00 PM in the Social Hall followed by a brief service of worship and teaching in the sanctuary at 7:00 PM.

Each week, we will focus on a different aspect of prayer and how we might experiment with it. Pastor Sarah and I hope to put new prayer tools in your faith tool box.

On Thursday, March 29, our weekly feast in the Social Hall will transition into an observance of Maundy Thursday accompanied by hand- or foot-washing (as one prefers) and Holy Communion among the relaxed environs of our dining space. The next evening our observance of Good Friday will feature a choir cantata blending narrative, anthems and poignant reminders of all Jesus endured on our behalf.

My hope is that our trek from Ash Wednesday to Good Friday will help us experience more fully the love of God as reflected in the life, teachings, and even death of Jesus, so that we can celebrate Easter with a more profound appreciation of God's grace.

Yours for the journey,

Pastor Gary

Pie with the Pastor

Want to know more about Sparks UMC— what we're about, how things work, ways to be involved, maybe even become a member? Here's your chance to explore all those things and a slice of pie to go with it. Join Pastor Gary on Wednesday, Feb. 7 at 7:00 PM. in the Social Hall for *Pie with the Pastor*.

All are welcome! If you're planning on attending, please let Pastor Gary know:

pastorgary@sparksumc.org or 358-0925. If childcare would be helpful, let him know that as well.



Worshiping Together

February Worship Themes

Our first service begins at 9:00 AM and the second at 10:30 AM. Our Coffee Hour is at 10:00 AM in the Social Hall. Sunday School classes for children and adults run concurrent with the 10:30 AM service.



Sunday, February 4

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Sermon: *The Breadth of Our Call*

Scripture readings: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23;
Mark 1:29-39

Sunday, February 11

Transfiguration Sunday / UMC Scouting Sunday

Sermon: *Ready? Set? Glow!*

Scripture readings: 2 Kings 2:1-12;
2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Sunday, February 14

Ash Wednesday

Meditation: *From Shadows to Light*

Scripture readings: Psalm 51:1-17;
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

This shared worship experience with Lord of Mercy Lutheran will include imposition of ashes and Holy Communion.

Sunday, February 18

First Sunday in Lent

Sermon: *Resources for Keeping On*

Scripture readings: Psalm 25:1-10;
1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

Sunday, February 25

Second Sunday in Lent

Donna McKibben, preaching

February's MP3: Monthly Parish Prayer Priority

Let us pray for openness to God's guiding as we begin our Lenten journey towards Easter, looking to grow in faith and faithful service.

Mark Your Calendars

- February 14 – 7:00 PM
Ash Wednesday Service
- February 18 – 2:00 PM
Fundraising concert for Sparks High School's Music Department
- March 4 – 2:00 PM
Reno Youth Jazz Orchestra Concert
- April 29 – 2:00 PM
Sierra Nevada Children's Choir Concert

Adult Bible Studies

Friday Morning Bible Study

Our group meets on Fridays, at 9:00 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!



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.

Upcoming meals are at 4:00 PM on...

Saturday, February 24

Saturday, March 31

Growing Our Faith Together

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

Isaiah 6:8

Lay Servant Classes

We're all called to proclaim God's wonder and works! Methodist churches depend upon our laity to carry out our mission and purpose. The United Methodist Church offers numerous ways to grow your faith, knowledge and skills.



Becoming a trained Lay Servant is a great way to discover the many ways our church serves others as well as discover which ministries appeal to you.

The Great Northern District (that's us) School for Lay Servant Ministries is offering **"The Basic Course"** on Saturday, Feb. 10 at Redding UMC in Redding, CA. This class costs \$20 + textbook (about \$10) and **is open to anyone** who wishes to enroll. There is no obligation after this class; just take it all in and see where the Spirit leads you!

This course is foundational for all courses in Lay Servant Ministries. Participants are encouraged to discover and employ personal spiritual gifts as God intended and to consider the importance of exercising servant leadership, developing future leaders, remaining rooted in consistent spiritual practices, and being part of a group that holds members accountable for their discipleship.

Completion of this course will qualify participants to become a Local Lay Servant with their home church. It is a prerequisite to become a Certified Lay Servant or Certified Lay Speaker. For additional information, call Jim Frey at 530-842-4980.

United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women's purpose is to know God and experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ, to develop a creative, supportive



fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church. To meet our goals, we begin the year with our Pledge/Gift service. As the year progresses we have our annual Charlys Waldrop Rummage Sale, Call to Prayer and Self-Denial. This April we will celebrate Arbor Day by planting a tree in the park in memory of our Sisters in Christ we lost in 2017.

In past years we hosted the Bike and Build group that travels across the country doing volunteer projects. Autumn finds us going to our annual District Celebration and the CA/NV Conference meeting followed by the annual Soup Supper in November. As the year winds down, we celebrate the birth of Jesus by emptying our bank account. In the spirit of giving, we donate to Veteran's Guest House, Evelyn Mount, Heifer Project, Gifts of Hope (international) and UMCOR to name a few.

We say **Thank You!** to all who support us in our efforts to be a beacon of Love and Hope to the world. All women are invited to join our group; for more information contact the President, Patricia Wilson at 853-2753.

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.



We have invited the Lutheran youth to join with us. This is going to be a lot of fun!

For more information, contact Adele Grube at 425-9110.

Musical Musings




Greetings from Music Ministries!

Special Music & Events – Even though there haven't been any special music events this past month, I would like to thank Sybella

Pope-Sears for graciously filling in for me at both the Dec. 23 memorial service and the Dec. 31 Watch Night Worship Service, and also Delia Bohdan for agreeing to play for the Worship after Wendy's services each month. Thank you, ladies... you're both angels from God!

Sparks High School Music Dept. Fundraiser – See the next article for all the details.

They need our help! Hope to see you there. 

Flames Youth Choir – has enjoyed being a part of the Beatitudes Praise Band.

Glorious Noise Children's Choir – presented special music this past Sunday at both worship services and will be part of worship on Feb. 11.

Sanctuary Choir – continues to lead worship at our 9:00 AM worship service. They've just started preparing a Good Friday cantata – "Light in the Darkness" for the Tenebrae service we'll be having that evening – March 30.

Beatitudes Praise Band – are set to lead worship this Sunday, Jan. 28 at both services + Feb. 25. They'll be welcoming back Sierra Little Vaglivielo, once again, who's back with us while her husband is deployed with the US Navy.



Thank you, again, for your thoughts and prayers for both John and me... they're so very much appreciated! I feel so much love from my church family and it makes me smile.

God bless you!

Cindy Sabatini, Director of Music Ministries

Sparks High School Music Dept. Fundraiser – Feb. 18 at 2:00 PM

Please join us Feb. 18 to attend a special concert here in our Sanctuary. Sparks UMC musicians include Bob Estey, Jacqueline Dickman, Mark & Mona Sargent, Gary & Sybella Pope-Sears, and me plus two different groups from the school – the choir and orchestra ensembles. There will be both choir and orchestra ensembles from Sparks HS performing that afternoon.

Their music department has had major struggles to keep the programs going and is in great need of community support. Donations will be gladly accepted either at the concert or can be given to me at another time if you cannot attend. Thank you! ~ Cindy Sabatini ☺



In Memoriam

Former Sparks UMC member Mary Jackson passed away on Nov. 28, 2017, after suffering a stroke. Mary reached her goal to live to be 100 years. Her Allen, TX, Seattle, WA and Madison, WI, family gathered to celebrate her 100th birthday on Sept. 27, 2017 in Allen, TX.

Mary was placed with her husband Douglas Jackson at Mountain View Cemetery in Reno.

A Celebration of Life Service was held at First UMC-Allen, in Allen, TX, shortly after her passing. She is survived by her three children, three grandchildren and five great grandchildren. She was an amazing lady with a deep faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

~ Carole Jackson Smithwick, Mary's daughter



Celebrating Our Family



Congratulations!

Bob & Kathy Rusche	46 years
Jake Sr & Linda Young	42 years
Tim & Corinne Miner	40 years
John & Elaine Schmidt	9 years



Tawnia Johnson	02/01	Nadine Phinney-Tarbell	02/18
Dave Warfe	02/01	Carol Arrance	02/20
Christopher Woolf	02/01	Steve Harris	02/20
Jerry Boger	02/02	Katherine Norris	02/20
Eric Sanderson	02/02	Susan Phillips	02/21
Bob Estey	02/03	Vicky Claiser	02/23
Julie Smith	02/04	Jacqueline Meadows	02/23
Vivien Furtado	02/05	Amanda Eidson	02/24
Tencha Nevius	02/05	Ernyll Felipe	02/25
Marie Harrison	02/11	Gene Cushing	02/26
Shar Hickman	02/11	Jean Squire	02/26
Timothy Coles	02/12	Edith Cushing	02/27
Dolores Lantrip	02/13	Corinne Miner	02/28
Garry Mills	02/15	Sharolyn Mulvaney	02/28

Christmas Elves visit Rosewood Convalescent Center

It is such a busy time of year; school winding down, family arriving, last minute preparations for Christmas; however, our Sunday School kids always find time to visit Rosewood.

It starts with the United Methodist Women providing the candy and the kids using class time on Sunday morning to prepare the bags. Once we arrive at Rosewood, we visit every room that we are allowed to enter and are greeted by smiles and sometimes tears. This isn't just good therapy for the patients; the children also benefit from the experience.


Tommy and Benji Schoech represented our church on Friday, Dec. 22; Freida Schoech and Sherry Beard accompanied them.

We thank the women who continually provide the candy (and recently a donation from the Human Needs Fund has also assisted).

Please let Sherry know if you would like to join us for the Valentine's Day delivery!



February 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<i>Please visit the calendar on our website www.SparksUMC.org for updated events.</i>					
4 9:00 AM Traditions Svc 10:30 AM Open Hearts Svc NOON Lord of Mercy	5 6:30 PM Boy Scouts	6 6:00 PM Stephen Leaders 6:30 PM Stephen Ministers 6:30 PM Cub Pack #43	7 6:00 PM Youth Group	8 12:30 PM Crafters Corner 4:00 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal	9 9:30 AM Bible Study Class	10 9:00 AM Disciple 4 Class
11 9:00 AM Traditions Svc 10:30 AM Open Hearts Svc NOON Lord of Mercy	12 6:30 PM Boy Scouts	13 6:00 PM Worship Comm. 6:30 PM Cub Pack #43 7:00 PM Outreach Comm.	<i>14 Ash Wednesday</i> 9:00 AM "P & S" Quilting 4:00 PM Glorious Noise Reh. 5:00 PM HD Board Meeting 6:00 PM Flames Reh. 6:00 PM Finance Comm. 6:00 PM Youth Group 7:00 PM Ash Wed. Service	15 12:01 PM Gold & Silver 4:00 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal	16 9:30 AM Bible Study Class	17 9:00 AM Disciple 4 Class
18 "CR" Due Date 9:00 AM Traditions Svc 10:30 AM Open Hearts Svc NOON Lord of Mercy 2:00 PM Fundraiser for Sparks High School	19 6:30 PM Boy Scouts	20 6:30 PM Cub Pack #43	21 4:00 PM Glorious Noise Reh. 6:00 PM Flames Reh. 6:00 PM Youth Group 7:00 PM Bd. of Trustees	22 4:00 PM Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 5:00 PM Nominations Com 6:00 PM Soup Supper 6:30 PM SPRC 7:00 PM Lenten Worship	23 9:30 AM Bible Study Class	24 9:00 AM Disciple 4 Class 10:00 AM Make Boxx Lunch NOON Memorial Service for Darrel A. Wright, Jr. 4:00 PM Wendy's Café 4:45 PM Worship Service
25 9:00 AM Traditions Svc 10:30 AM Open Hearts Svc NOON Lord of Mercy	26 6:30 PM Boy Scouts	27 6:30 PM Cub Pack #43	28 9:00 AM "P & S" Quilting 9:00 AM Rummage Sale Setup 4:00 PM Glorious Noise Reh. 6:00 PM Flames Reh. 6:00 PM Youth Group 7:00 PM Church Council			Find us on:  facebook [®]

“I was a stranger, and you invited me in.” ~ Matthew 25:35

“Any immigrant who lives with you must be treated as if they were one of your citizens.

You must love them as yourself, because you were immigrants in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.”

Leviticus 19:34

Our refugee families from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continue the process of rebuilding their lives in our community. Dedicated volunteers from our church are working with a wonderful conglomeration of volunteers from faith-based organizations across the Reno/Sparks area.

Recently, we received a request for **board games and card games** for the children who are 12 years old and younger. You can donate new or used games in good condition. Please bring whatever you can to the church office.

For more info, contact Kristin Curtis at 331-2097. Thank you!



FREE PARKING PRICE \$120	KENTUCKY AVENUE PRICE \$120	CHANCE PRICE \$120	INDIANA AVENUE PRICE \$120	ILLINOIS AVENUE PRICE \$120	RAILROAD PRICE \$200	ATLANTIC AVENUE PRICE \$200	VENTNOR AVENUE PRICE \$200	WORKS PRICE \$150	MARVIN GARDENS PRICE \$200	GO TO PRICE \$100
WENTWORTH AVENUE PRICE \$120	TERENCE AVENUE PRICE \$120	COMMUNITY CHEST FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS ON TOP CARD PRICE \$100	ST. JAMES PLACE PRICE \$120	PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD PRICE \$200	VERMONT AVENUE PRICE \$120	STATES AVENUE PRICE \$120	ELECTRIC COMPANY PRICE \$120	ST. CHARLES PLACE PRICE \$120	PACIFIC AVENUE PRICE \$100	NORTH CAROLINA AVENUE PRICE \$100
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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.



Like us on Facebook and join the conversation.
It's a great way to share our church with your friends!

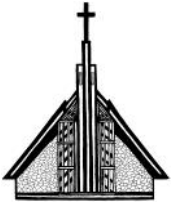
Articles for each issue of the *Circuit Rider* are due by the 20th of each month.

Contact..... Office@SparksUMC.org
Printer Church Office Reporters..... All of You!

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Church Council Meeting Wednesday, Feb. 28

Church Council will meet at 7:00 PM in the Social Hall. Everyone is invited to attend Church Council meetings and participate in discussions. Only members of the Church Council can vote.



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Feb. 14 – Ash Wednesday
Feb. 18 – Sparks High School Music
Department Fundraiser
Feb. 24 – Wendy's Café

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

What is Lent and why does it last forty days?

One Wednesday a year, sometime in February or March, you notice someone at work, school, or elsewhere with a smudge on their forehead.

The “imposition of ashes” on Ash Wednesday is a practice we use to mark the first day of Lent. If you think a mark on your forehead is odd, in the early days of the church, it was even more dramatic. Rather than dip their thumbs into the ashes to draw the shape of a cross on your forehead, Pastors poured or sprinkled ashes over your head. So much for the good ol’ days!

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencen*, which means “spring.” The

forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.

Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others.

Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a “mini-Easter” and the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection.



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