

**SPARTA**  
**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
*Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors*

April 21, 2024 10:30 a.m.

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Prelude *God Leads Us Along* by George A. Young  
arranged by Larry Shackley  
Alfred Music Publishing Co. © 2004

Welcome

\*Call to Worship

We are called to love one another, because love is from God.

**God's love is poured in us from our birth.**

We are called to extend the love of God to all people. To proclaim God's love in all that we say and do.

**God's loved is shown to us through the witness of God's faithful people. In all creation, in all our relationships, may God's love be made known.**

\*Opening Song *My Life is in You, Lord* FWS 2032

Congregational Prayer

Loving, creative God, we praise and bless you for your mighty acts of creation. We gather here this day to hear your message of power and love through the witness of Jesus Christ as he taught and prepared his disciples for the time when he would not be present with them. He gave to them the words of encouragement about living in your love, and through that love being witnesses to the whole world of your peace and hope. Be with us this day, Lord. Open our hearts and minds to receive your word with joy and expectation. For we pray in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer Ian Good

Bell Anthem *Blessed Assurance*  
arr. by Cynthia Dobrinski, Lake State Publications ©1990

A Time for Young Disciples

Reading of the Gospel

*Luke 6: 27-36*

<sup>27</sup> "But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; <sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. <sup>29</sup> If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. <sup>30</sup> Give to everyone who asks of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. <sup>31</sup> Do to others as you would have them do to you.

<sup>32</sup> "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup> If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. <sup>34</sup> If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. <sup>35</sup> Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return.<sup>[a]</sup> Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Anthem *The Gift of Love* American Folk Tune  
Arranged by Hal H. Hopson  
Hope Publishing Co. © 1972

The Message *Perception Matters*

This Week in the Life of the Church

The Offering of our Gifts and Our Prayers

\*Closing Song *They'll Know We are Christians by our Love* FWS 2223

\*Sending Forth

Postlude *They'll Know We Are Christians* Tune: *St. Brendan's*  
by Peter Scholtes (1938-2009)  
Arranged by Mark Hayes  
Lorenz Publishing Co. © 2020

\*Stand if able

Thoughts and Prayers

*Prayers for Tina Smilace and Terri Reno*

*Continued prayers for: Tammy and Mike Vrabel and family for their granddaughter Izabella Vrabel, Ann Freeman Price, Linda Donelson (friend of Ruth Kelley's), Edith VanHousen, Anthony Hutchison, Kelly Stites, Alba Haas, Diane Cironi, Judy Remo, Arnie Koriakin, Sue Gibson, Sharon Gordon, Karen Sutphen, Lester Hemphill, Rich Kelley, Linda Giammanco, Brenda Losey.*

*Healing for, Bev DeYoung, Pat and Sandy DeYoung's sister-in-law*

**COME AS YOU ARE . . .  
YOU ARE WELCOME!**

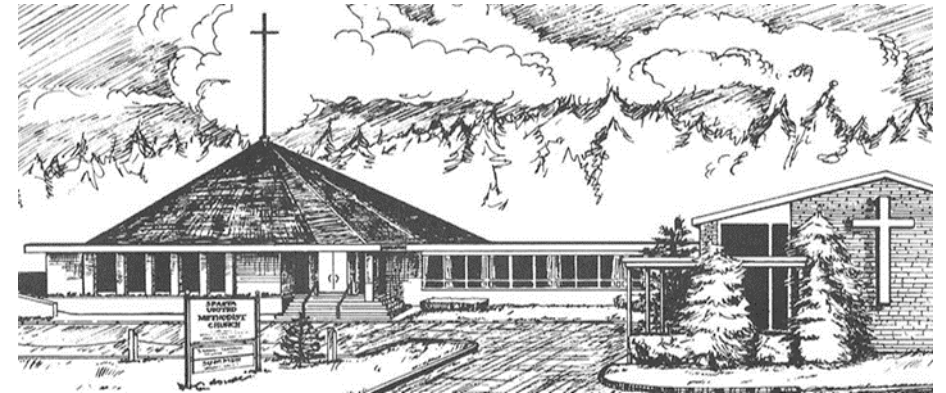
SPARTA  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
Ministry Team

MINISTERS.....Every member of Sparta UMC  
PASTOR..... Rev. Dr. Steven Bechtold  
PASTOR EMERITUS..... Rev. Dr. Alden Welch  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT ..... Karen Shaw  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES ..... Bonnie Pomeroy  
SEMINARY INTERN ..... Shan Gao  
SEXTON ..... Eleanor Shumaker

WEBSITE: [www.spartaumc.org](http://www.spartaumc.org)

*My Life is in You, Lord*, Words & Music: Daniel Gardner  
*They'll Know We are Christians by our Love*, Words & Music: Peter Scholtes  
All Songs One License A-719583

# SPARTA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



April 21, 2024  
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

71 Sparta Avenue  
Sparta, New Jersey 07871

*Open hearts, Open minds, Open doors:*  
**Not Just a Tagline: This IS who we are**



For your convenience, you may scan the QR Code to reach the Sparta UMC On-line Giving Platform through Vanco.