

SPARTA

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

December 28, 2025, 10:30 A.M.

			*Stand if able
Prelude:	<i>Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming</i>	Traditional Arranged by David Nevue David Nevue (BMI) / Midnight Rain Productions © 2003	
Words of Welcome			
*Call to Worship			
The Word became flesh and lived among us. We have seen his glory, full of grace and truth. The light that shone in Bethlehem continues to shine in our lives. We gather to walk in that light and to give thanks. Come, let us remember the gift of God's love made known in Jesus Christ. With hearts full of wonder and gratitude, we worship the Lord.			
*Opening Song	<i>O Come, All Ye Faithful</i> Verses 1, 3, 5	UMH 234	
Congregational Prayer			
Open our hearts, merciful God, to the sparks of your presence still in this world. Open our eyes, that we might behold your presence in the least likely of places, and among the least likely of people. Kindle your spark within us that together we may shine forth your light, we might banish the shadows of this world, we might be the continuation of the Christmas miracle: Emmanuel is in this world, God is with us, now and evermore. For we pray in the name of Christ who taught us to pray			
The Lord's Prayer			Ian Good
Anthem:	<i>I Ponder</i>	Text by Pamela Martin Music by Craig Courtney Beckenhorst Press, Inc. © 2005	

A Time for Young Disciples

Song of Preparation	<i>The Snow Lay on the Ground</i> Verses 1 and 3	FWS 2093
Scripture Reading	<i>Matthew 2:13-15</i>	
<i>¹³ Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt ¹⁵ and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”</i>		
The Message	<i>Surprising Opposition</i>	
This Week in the Life of the Church		
The Offering of Our Gifts and Our Prayers		
*Closing Song	<i>Love Has Come</i>	W&S 3059
*Sending Forth		
Postlude:	<i>Joy to the World</i>	by George Frederick Handel arranged by Philip Wesley Philip Wesley (BMI) © 2005

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

Who hope for a better world & all who have lost hope:

Believers and seekers,
Conventional Christians & questioning skeptics
Women, men, youth and children
Of all sexual orientations & gender identities
Of all races and cultures,
Of all income levels,
Of all social classes
Of all physical & mental abilities.

SPARTA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Ministry Team

MINISTERSEvery Member of Sparta UMC
PASTOR Rev. Dr. Steven Bechtold
PASTOR EMERITUSRev. Dr. Alden Welch
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT..... Sue Reynolds
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES Bonnie Pomeroy
SEXTON..... Eleanor Shumaker

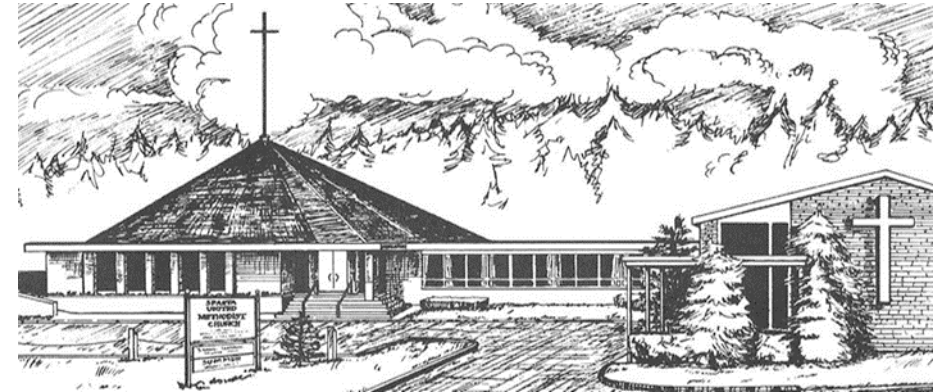
WEBSITE: www.spartaumc.org

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Code to reach the Sparta UMC On-line Giving
Platform through Vanco.*

SPARTA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



December 28, 2025
10:30 A.M. Worship Service

71 Sparta Avenue
Sparta, New Jersey 07871
973-729-7773

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