

SPARTA
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors
March 15, 2026, 10:30 A.M.

Prelude *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian* *Stand in body or spirit
Spiritual
Arranged by Patti Drennan
Patti Drennan Music © 2022

Words of Welcome

*Call to Worship

Jesus offers a new-old commandment that we should love each other.

With the incredible power and the unfathomable depth of God's love for us we can, we must, love one another.

Our love for one another becomes known to those around us as we serve one another humbly and with joy.

And it is in this, our love for one another, our serving one another, the world will know whom and what we worship.

Come, children of God,

Let us love one another.

*Opening Song *Together We Serve* FWS 2175

Congregational Prayer

Loving God, you call us to turn away from our own selfish interests, to take up our cross, and to follow you. You have shown us in the example of Jesus that to find our lives, we need to be in service to you and your mission. As we come before you this morning, give us open hearts and open hands. Make us eager to hear your voice and seek your guidance. Open our minds to your ever-present spirit that is always moving within and around us. Open our spirits to your nudging and open our lives to your love, that in our worship and in our daily living we might serve our neighbor as an expression of our love for you. For we pray in the name of Jesus who taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer

Ian Good

Bell Anthem *Holy Manna* Arr. by Betty B. Garee,
Harold Flammer Music, ©1987

A Time for Young Disciples

Scripture Reading *Matthew 20: 20-28*

²⁰ Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to him with her sons, and kneeling before him, she asked a favor of him. ²¹ And he said to her, "What do you want?" She said to him, "Declare that these two sons of mine will sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom." ²² But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" ²³ They said to him, "We are able." ²³ He said to them, "You will indeed drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left, this is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father."

²⁴ When the ten heard it, they were angry with the two brothers. ²⁵ But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. ²⁶ It will not be so among you, but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave, ²⁸ just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many."

Choir Anthem *Look to the Rose* Words & Music by Joseph M. Martin
Malcolm Music © 1994

The Message *A Seat of Honor*

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

This Week in the Life of the Church

The Offering of Our Prayers

*Closing Song *Here I Am, Lord* UMH 593

*Sending Forth

Postlude *Who Is On the Lord's Side?* Tune: *ARMAGEDDON*
by C. Louise Reichardt

arranged by Anna Laura Page
Lorenz Publishing Co. © 2022

**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**

MINISTERS Every Member of Sparta UMC
PASTOR.....Rev. Dr. Steven Bechtold
PASTOR EMERITUS.....Rev. Dr. Alden Welch
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTSue Reynolds
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES.....Bonnie Pomeroy
SEXTON Eleanor Shumaker

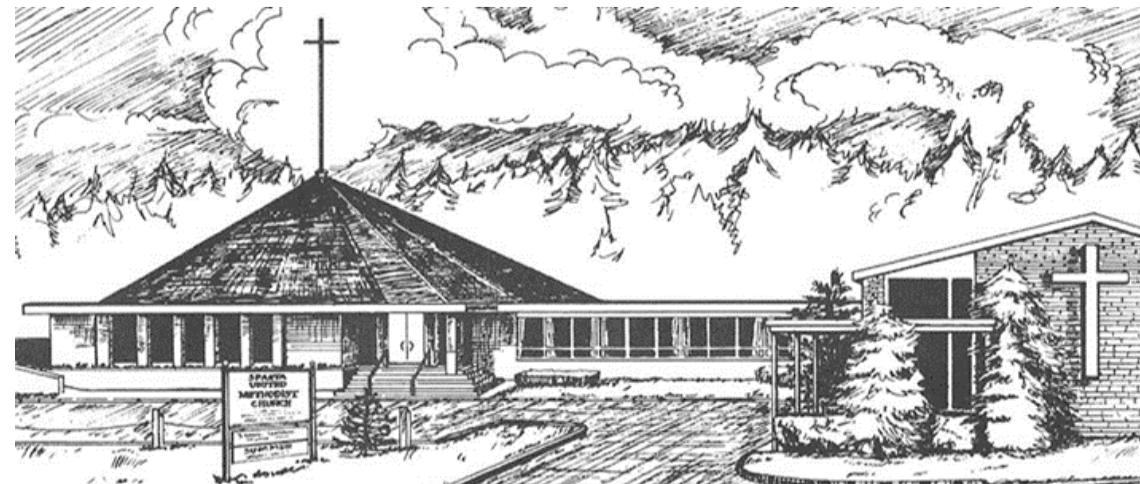
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March 15, 2026
10:30 A.M. Worship Service

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