

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

April 12, 2026, 10:30 A.M.

**Please Stand in body or spirit*

Prelude: *Jesus Paid It All* by John T. Grape
arranged by Myra Schubert
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Words of Welcome

*Call to Worship

Here is the table set for our special meal. The bread, the cup, prepared and presented. Ready to be shared and received.

We remember Jesus sharing a meal like this with his disciples, his friends.

He included everyone, those he could trust and those less trustworthy.

Today we are his disciples, his friends. Each one of us is welcome. How amazing it is to be loved and wanted even when we have not been perfect.

How wonderful it is to be included as we are.

*Opening Song *Lord of the Dance* UMH 261

Congregational Prayer

God of hope, hewn everything was dark and it seemed that the sun would never shine again, your love broke through. It was too strong, too wide, and too deep for death to hold. The sparks cast by your love dance and spread and burst forth with resurrection light. Gracious God, we praise you for the light of new life made possible through Jesus. We praise you for the light of new life that shone on the first witnesses of resurrection. We praise you for the light of new life that continues to shine in our hearts today. We pray that the light of life, hope and joy that embraces us in this season of Eastertide will live in us each day; and that we will be bearers of that light into the lives of others. For we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer Ian Good

Anthem: *Be Thou My Vision* Traditional Irish Melody
Soloists: Pat Harvey Traditional Irish Hymn Text:
Ruth Kelley Translated by Mary E. Byrne, 1905
Rev. Steve Bechtold Verses by Eleanor H. Hull, 1912
Arranged by Jay Althouse
Alfred Publishing Co., Inc. © 2004

A Time for Young Disciples

Song of Preparation *He Is Lord* UMH 177

Scripture Reading *Matthew 28:11-15*
11 While they were going, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened. 12 After the priests[c] had assembled with the elders, they devised a plan to give a large sum of money to the soldiers, 13 telling them, "You must say, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.' 14 If this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." 15 So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story is still told among the Judeans to this day.

The Message *When the Truth Is Too Costly*

The Receiving of Our Tithes and Offerings

This Week in the Life of the Church

The Offering of our Prayers

The Celebration of the Lord's Supper

The Great Thanksgiving

The Consecration

The Receiving of the Bread and the Cup

*Closing Song *He Lives* UMH 310

*Sending Forth

Postlude: *Triumphant Resurrection* Tunes: DARWALL
by John Darwall (1731-1789)
ST. KEVIN
by Arthur S. Sullivan (1842-1900)
Arranged by Mary McDonald
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**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 ASSISTANT Sue Reynolds
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES..... Bonnie Pomeroy
SEXTON Eleanor Shumaker

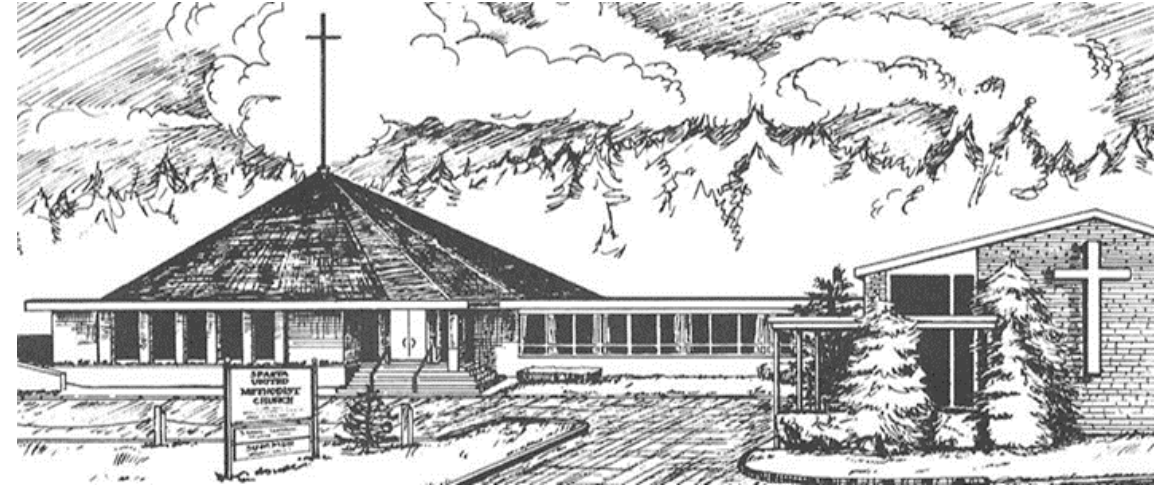
Website: www.spartaumc.org

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SPARTA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



April 12, 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