SPARTA
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors
October 4, 2026, 10:30 A.M.
World Communion Sunday

*Please stand in body or spirit

Prelude *They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love* Words & Music by Peter Scholtes
Arranged by Mark Hayes
The Lorenz Corporation © 2006

Words of Welcome

*Call to Worship (Japan)

In a world that remains divided and in conflict, God is inviting us, to make us one.
Today we gather around one table, in answer to God's will.
What do we find at today's table?
God's love, which endures all things and connects all things.
What is not at today's table?
The many powers of the world, which seek to stand over others.
Let us turn towards God and give thanks to God's power to bring wholeness and peace to all.
Thanks be to God! Let us worship together the true God, who makes us one.

*Opening Song *As We Gather at Your Table* 2268 (U.S.A. and Mexico)

Congregational Prayer (South Africa)

Holy God, we gather today as the people of God, as a community of Christ's followers. We gather to share Word and sacrament, to discern the ways of faithful service. We serve God in this community and throughout every land. We ask for forgiveness when we fail to feel the sufferings of others, when we live comfortably with injustice. Strengthen us to serve by working toward justice where there is oppression, by offering comfort where there is pain, by sharing love where there is hatred. The Spirit beckons us, because Jesus calls us to enact our faith. Hear this, our prayer in the name of the One who taught us to pray:

The Lord's Prayer Ian Good

A Time for Young Disciples

Reading of the Scripture *Acts 1: 6-14*

6 So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9 When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. 10 While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. 11 They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."
12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying: Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of[a] James. 14 All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

The Message *What the World Needs Now*

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

This Week in the Life of the Church

The Offering of Our Prayers

Anthem *Bread of the World* Based on *Eucharistic Hymn*
by John S. B. Hodges
Lyrics by Reginald Heber
Music by Daniel Burton
Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp. © 1978

The Celebration of the Lord's Supper FWS 2257 b, c, d

*Closing Song *Let Us Go Now to the Banquet*
(Vamos todos al banquete)
by Guillermo Cuéllar, El Salvador
English translation, Bret Hesla
and Bill Desheimer Pharris
©1996 GIA Publications

Chorus: Let us go now to the banquet,
To the feast of the universe
The table's set and a place is waiting
Come everyone, come with gifts to share.
1. I will rise in the early morning; the community's waiting for me.
With a spring in my step I'm walking with my friends and my family.
3. God invites all the poor and hungry to banquet of justice and good,
Where the harvest will not be hoarded so that no one will lack for food.
4. May we build such a place among us where all people are equal in love
God has called us to work together and to share everything we have.

*Sending Forth

Postlude *Revive Us Again* by John J. Husband
arranged by Mark Hayes
Lorenz Publishing Co. © 2011

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,
Adults, 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

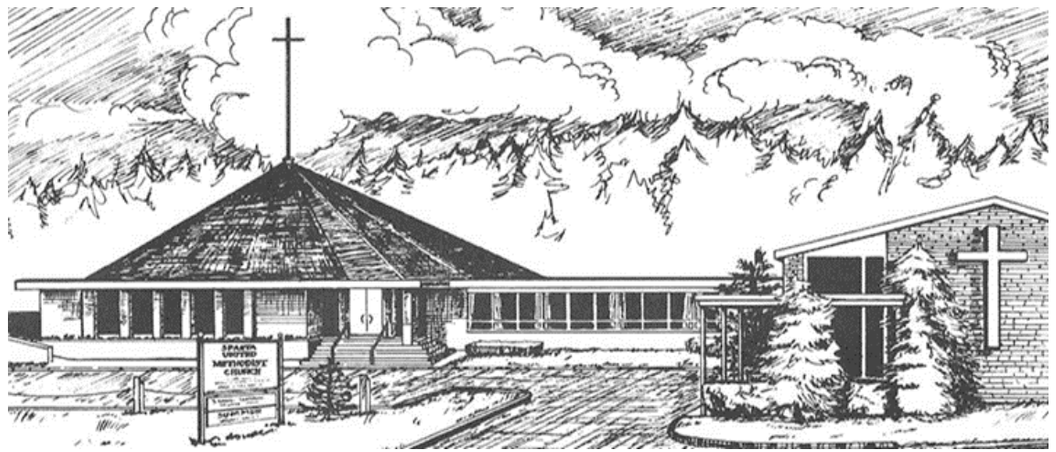
MINISTERS ..... Every Member of Sparta UMC
PASTOR.....Rev. Dr. Steven Bechtold
PASTOR EMERITUS ..... Rev. Dr. Alden Welch
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT..... Sue Reynolds
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES ..... Bonnie Pomeroy
SEXTON.....Eleanor Shumaker

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SPARTA
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



October 4, 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