

Reverend Ronald L. Sparks



Rev. Ronald L. Sparks is a native of Toledo, OH. Immediately after graduating from high school, Rev. Sparks enlisted into the United States Air Force. He was honorably discharged after serving six years. Rev. Sparks is married to his life partner and best friend Candace M. Sparks. They have been blessed with three wonderful children, Cameron, Symone, and Braedon. In 2020, Rev. Sparks and Sister Candace became grandparents as they welcomed Shaelyn Alexandra Sparks to the family.

Reverend Sparks holds a Bachelor of Science Degree, Business Management, from the University of Maryland University College. He received his Master of Divinity, Drew University Theological School

Rev. Sparks accepted his call to ministry in 1997 and was mentored by his father in the ministry, Rev. Dr. Kenneth L. Saunders, former Pastor of North Stelton AME Church in Piscataway, NJ. In 1998, Rev. Sparks received his first ordination as an Itinerate Deacon and in April 2001 he received his second ordination as an Itinerate Elder. In 2005, Rev. Sparks began his pastoral ministry at St. Paul AME Church in South Bound Brook, NJ. Currently Rev. Sparks serves as the Pastor of Bethel AME Church in Freehold NJ.

Pastor Sparks' ministry extends beyond the walls of the church. Some of his current and past community service and civic roles includes incoming Convener of the Greater Freehold Clergy Association, Vice President of the Board of Directors for the Senior Citizens Activity Network (SCAN), a non-profit organization supporting the needs of seniors; New Brunswick District President of Ministers & Spouses Fellowship; Coordinator of the District HIV/AIDS Awareness Program in the Steelton, PA; Served as Treasurer of the African American Ministerial Alliance (AAMA) of Steelton PA and vicinity; he was instrumental in the reestablishment of the Freehold Chapter of the NAACP; he delivers the invocation and/or benediction at numerous civic and interfaith services (Lewis Pavilion Dedication, 911 Memorial, Community Lenten and Martin Luther King Jr. Ecumenical Services and the YMCA's MLK Jr. community breakfast).

The fruits of his labor are evident through his intentional community involvement to foster and improve relationship between the community and local and state governments. While at Bethel, he has hosted a town hall meeting with the Monmouth County Prosecutors Office, Freehold Borough Chief of Police, and Deputies from Monmouth County Sheriff's Department. He works tirelessly to see that information is filtered to the community and their needs met. Rev. Sparks is a member of the Freehold Borough Human Relations Advisory Committee, the Freehold Safety Net Food Program, member of the Monmouth County ACTS Behavioral Hub. He also serves as a community liaison for CentreState Hospital Covid-19 vaccinations and booster shots, ensuring vaccines are accessible to the people in the community.

In addition to pastoring, Rev. Sparks has been employed for the past 28 years at Agilent Technologies, Inc., formally Hewlett-Packard, a Life Sciences and Chemical Analysis Corporation. As a Supplier Relationship Manager, he is responsible for evaluating suppliers; conducting audits; managing the suppliers throughout the procurement process for 3rd party suppliers.

Rev. Sparks believes it is important for each one of us to understand our history. Because if we understand our history, we will recognize that we are not standing alone, but rather we are standing on the shoulders of those who stood before us.