

February Newsletter



February 2026

Last month, in celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 97th birthday, Dr. King's daughter Rev. Bernice King celebrated her father during her powerful speech at the King Center on January 19th. The theme around her speech focused on "building community, uniting a nation the nonviolent way." Rev. Bernice urged people to live and act with love over rage, build connections and community with others, and personally apply her late father's teachings to combat injustices of all forms and "emphasize strategic actions and spiritual stamina over mere commemoration."

Other key themes that were lifted up in Rev. Bernice message were confronting present evils such as modern-day White Supremacy, racism, poverty, militarism, war, and discrimination. She also encouraged introspection and challenged all people to look within themselves, to look at their own hearts, and ask themselves how are they contributing to justice, rather than pointing fingers.

Rev. Bernice passionately reminded people to embrace the "authentic King" – the man who faced opposition on every side, death threats, but still worked toward justice and freedom for all people. In hearing Dr. Bernice words, I could not but help to think about people like the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther, Harriet Tubman, Viola Liuzzo, Malcolm X, Yuri Kochiyama, John Lewis, and many others who until their death, fought tirelessly for justice for all people. I also reflect upon people like Nikole Hannah-Jones, Tim Wise, Amanda Gorman, Reverend Rob Lee (Robert W. Lee IV), Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley, and Jane Elliott who are still fighting for justice for all people. Each person, both present and past, not only profoundly shaped and challenged my own thinking and theology, but they have caused me to have

a greater appreciation of the many people who have and who continuously shape our worldview.

This is so significant as we celebrate the Spirit of love and Black History month in February.

The expressions of how one loves another person and Black History should be limited to just one month. We are reminded by the words of our leaders of the past and present that love must be at the core of what we do. As children of God, specifically those who profess faith in Jesus Christ, we must see the humanity of others. As a great-great granddaughter of a slave from Virginia, I am obligated to seek love for all and to call out injustice when present.

However, the biggest and most important reason is because I am a child of God saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, the one who lived, died, and is coming back again for not only me, but also for you.

It is because of the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ that calls us to reconcile with one another and who promotes racial reconciliation (Luke 10:25-37). Jesus challenges us to expand our worldview and be open to learning from other Christian experiences such as those who are African American not only in February, but each day. This also include learning from other people who are different from you (John 4).

We as disciples/followers of Jesus Christ have a shared history that is based in God's love and uncomfortable truth, and not in political propaganda and hate masked as empathy and mercy.

As we enter into the season of Lent and celebrate Black History month, may we take time to engage one another with empathy and understanding. May our hearts be open to learning from one another, and we may stand together to fight against hate, falsehood, and deception. God wants us to be in community with one another and the world, and live in such a way that demonstrates LOVE.

Peace,

Pastor Rhonda

LENT

Pray + Fast + Give

United Methodist Church of Clinton Lenten Journey 2026

Lent begins: Ash Wednesday, February 18 – Thursday, April 2



The Worship Committee is conducting a poll to receive your feedback on the upcoming Lenten event (Ash Wednesday). Please return to Pastor Rhonda or email her with your response by Friday, February 6 (pastor.rhonda@clintonctumc.org).

An official announcement will be made on Sunday, February 8.

Please cut along perforation line and please return

Are you interested in attending an Ash Wednesday worship service?

Yes, I am interested in attending _____

No, I am not interested in attending _____

If yes, what time would you prefer?

Please check all that apply

1. 12:00 noon Service _____

2. 4:00 p.m. Service _____

3. 7:00 p.m. Service _____

Would you be interested in "Ashes to Go"? This allows individuals to receive ashes and a blessing from their vehicle on Ash Wednesday, providing a convenient, accessible option for busy commuters or those unable to attend traditional services.

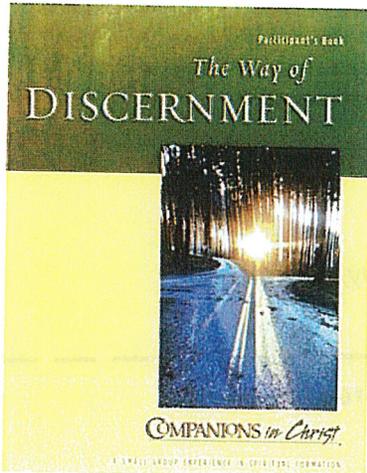
Time Slots: 8am – 9:30am, 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Yes _____ Time Slot _____

No _____ Time Slot _____

LENEN STUDY

We will take a pause from studying the Book of Acts as we enter into the Lenten Season. Join us online or in-person for our Lenten Study.



Book: The Way of Discernment by Steven V. Doughty and Marjorie J. Thompson

Suggested Donation: \$13.00

This study offers a biblical, theological, and practical framework for understanding the practice of discernment. The book provides: principles for personal and group discernment, daily exercises, and reflective questions.

Online Study: **Tuesday evenings at 7:00 PM**
Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/zyk-gbfm-dkb>
Or dial: (US) +1 318-814-8377 PIN: 803 541 446#

In-person Study: **Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m.** in the Adult Sunday School classroom.

Questions to Consider:

- Do I feel like I have a real relationship with Jesus? How well do I know Him and how well does he know me?
- Am I actively working on my relationship with God? How?
- Do I pray for other members of the congregation? Do I think they pray for me? Do I share with that person that I prayed for them?
- Do I look for God to do things in my life? If so, what types of things? If not, why not? Do I share my thoughts with others?
- Am I showing devotion to God through my attendance at worship or are other things getting in the way?

- How does my participation in worship, studies, and service bring me into a deeper relationship God?
- Do I feel connected to the church? In what ways do I show this (if yes) or why not (if no)?
- How does the Bible help me understand who God is? How can I get more out of the reading that I do?
- Who is a spiritual example for me? Why is this so? Have I told them? Am I a spiritual example to others?
- Does Jesus matter to me? How do I demonstrate that by my life?
- How do my actions and attitudes tell others about my belief in God and my discipleship to Jesus?
- Am I as thoughtful to family members as to others? Or do I “take it out” on my family when life at school or work gets hectic?
- When I hear someone being treated unjustly, do I speak up to correct the record, or am I a silent accomplice?
- When I pray, am I spending time listening to God or just giving a list of “suggestions” for God to manage?
- What progress am I making in sharing gladly what I have with others, particularly with strangers and the poor as Jesus asks?

Inward & Personal Disciplines:

- ✚ Spend at least 20 minutes in prayer each day (10 min just listening)
- ✚ Read a book that helps you grow closer to God
- ✚ Read through the Gospel of Luke or a book of the Bible you haven’t read and take notes. What does it tell you about God and/or Jesus?
- ✚ Begin to keep a journal of prayer concerns (and answers) and questions.
- ✚ Do three things you always say you don’t have time to do.
- ✚ Attend a Sunday School or study group that will help your faith grow.
- ✚ Make a list of how you experience God each day (be specific).
- ✚ Ask God to do something new in your life (make note of when it happens).
- ✚ Make a list of people with whom you need to be reconciled. Pray for them and let God guide your thinking and feeling toward them.
- ✚ Take time to meditate on faith-related issues that trouble you. Seek out someone with whom you can have an honest conversation about them.
- ✚ Take one hour to inventory your priorities. Pray about them and plan how you will reorder them.
- ✚ Write a letter to God as if God were a grandparent you haven’t seen in some time. What are your “updates”? What are your questions?

Outward & Social Disciplines:

- ♥ Do at least one new thing each week to show that Jesus matters to you.
- ♥ Take on a weekly loving task – show love to someone in need.
- ♥ Visit a shut-in neighbor or church member weekly.
- ♥ Find a local service agency, and volunteer to help on two different days.
- ♥ Pray for a different person in our congregation each week – then send them a card or note telling them you prayed for them.
- ♥ Attend all the worship services during the 40 days of Lent: (Sunday Worship, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday).
- ♥ Write a note to someone who is a spiritual example for you and thank them with the specifics of why.
- ♥ Go to coffee, lunch or dinner with someone you want to know better.
- ♥ Think of a relationship that needs work and find ways to improve it.
- ♥ Share your faith in Jesus with a friend (include your questions!).
- ♥ Say “No” to something that is a waste of money and time.
- ♥ Write a thank you note to someone in the church who you appreciate.
- ♥ Begin a new activity that will help you grow in your relationship with God.
- ♥ Ask God to help you resist prejudice and give guidance in opposing it.
- ♥ Bring someone to church who hasn’t been before or in a while.
- ♥ Reject the criticism of your own tongue; give a compliment instead.
- ♥ Find a new way to live out the baptismal promise to “resist evil, injustice, and oppression” in the power and liberty God gives us.
- ♥ Think of a country or region in distress and learn as much as possible about it. Then find ways to contribute positively to the situation.



40 Acts of Kindness

(adapted from February 16, 2021 by [HodgePodgeDays](#))

Let us engage in 40 acts of kindness together this Lenten season. Then during our fellowship time on Easter Sunday, let us share and testify together on how we participated in sharing the love and heart of Jesus Christ.

1. Leave a nice online review for a small local business
2. Write some notes telling people what you appreciate about them
3. Donate to a small charity
4. Be brave today. Do something that you found hard last time you tried
5. Put some loose change in a tip jar
6. Bake treats for your neighbors or co-workers
7. Have a clear out and donate your unwanted clothes to charity

8. Make someone you live with breakfast in bed
9. Phone a friend or family member each day
10. Do a beach clean, or street clean, or a litter pick in a park
11. Organize a charity bake sale
12. Ask somebody to tell you about themselves and really listen
13. Donate to your local food bank
14. Compliment other people
15. Make a point of doing self-care every day, whatever that looks like
16. Learn to say 'hello' and 'thank you' in some different languages
17. Make a log pile in your garden so the wildlife has somewhere to cozy up over winter
18. Make and send Easter cards to the residents of your local nursing home
19. Paint some happy rocks and leave them in your local park for people to find
20. Turn off lights, TV and chargers when you leave a room
21. Sellotape a bus fare to a bus stop
22. Write a letter to your teacher saying what you appreciate about them
23. Recycle any paper, plastic, tins or glass that you use today
24. Make and deliver a meal to someone who might appreciate that
25. Pass on some books you've enjoyed to others
26. Be the first to say sorry to somebody
27. Put bird feeders in your garden and make sure they're topped up
28. Tidy up your bedroom without being asked to
29. Start telling jokes, watch something fun together, or whatever makes you and your family laugh!
30. Be positive all day and try only to say encouraging things to other people.
31. Think before you speak and make sure your words build people up today
32. Make an extra effort to smile more at others, it really can bring joy to their day!
33. Ask someone how their day was
34. Surprise someone, in a nice way
35. Say a prayer for someone or something that needs it
36. Light a candle and remember someone special
37. Think of three good things about yourself and write them down
38. Make someone a Spotify playlist to cheer them up
39. Send someone a care package
40. Help someone take a photo



Sunday, March 29 - **Palm Sunday Worship Service**

Thursday, April 2 – **Maundy Thursday Worship Service**
Holy Communion ~ Foot & Hand Washing
7:00 pm Worship Service

Friday, April 3 - **Good Friday Shoreline Havens Cooperative Parish
Worship Service**
12:00 p.m.
Location: TBA

Church Office Closed

Service of Tenebrae Worship Service
7:00 p.m.
UMC Clinton

Saturday, April 4 **Prayer Vigil**
8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Church will be open from 8:00 a.m. – 12noon p.m.
Families are encouraged to continue praying throughout the day

Sunday, April 5 **Easter Sunrise Service**
UMC Clinton & First Church of Christ Clinton
6:30 a.m.
Location: Clinton Town Beach

Easter Egg Hunt
9:00 a.m.

Easter Worship & Holy Communion Worship Service
10:00 a.m.



COINS FOR LENT

During Lent, many of us are reminded to examine our lifestyles and ask, "What can we do for others?" Part of faith formation at any age is compassion and offering a serving heart to our neighbors and supporting those less fortunate than ourselves. Lent is a good time to commit to giving money to a project that helps those in need. One way to involve the whole family is to collect coins during the season of Lent and then following Easter, donate the money.

Like last year, Clinton UMC will be participating in **Coins for Lent**, part of the Discipleship Ministries of the United Methodist Church. The collections provided to the church at the end of Lent will be directed to the Heifer Project and added to the children's collection in June.

How to collect: decide what coins you want to collect. You may want to contribute a quarter for every item on the giving calendar. You may want to simply collect loose change and give whatever coins you have for each item.

Make a container to collect the money. Use a plastic tub, jar, or a coin bank that you aren't currently using in your home. Decorate it and place it where the entire family can see it (and contribute to it).

Follow the Daily Calendar.

Items on the daily guide will remind us of all we have and how little others may have. Each Sunday, pray for the project and the people who will benefit from your gifts. Our giving begins

on Ash Wednesday and concludes with Holy Saturday. During Lent, Sundays are for worship and praise to God and are reflected with a weekly day of prayer.

The Sunday after Easter, bring your coins to church to have them blessed.

FEBRUARY 2026 | LENTEN COIN CALENDAR



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 ASH WEDNESDAY <i>Pray today, thanking God for those who will journey with you during this Lenten season.</i>	19	20	21
22 PRAY TODAY: <i>Thank God for the people in your life that are with you when things become difficult. Pray for those who are having a difficult time and need to feel the presence of God in their lives.</i>	23 <i>A coin for every room in your home.</i>	24 <i>A coin for every pillow in your home.</i>	25 <i>A coin for every chair in your home.</i>	26 <i>A coin for every blanket in your home.</i>	27 <i>A coin for every bathroom in your home.</i>	28 <i>A coin for every bed in your house.</i>

MARCH 2026 | LENTEN COIN CALENDAR



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

1
PRAY TODAY:
Thank God for shelter. Pray for those who have no place to sleep at night.

2
A coin for every box of cereal.

3
A coin for every can of soup.

4
A coin for every type of bread in your home.

5
A coin for every jar of jelly.

6
A coin for every bottle of salad dressing/condiment.

7
A coin for every jar of peanut butter.

8
PRAY TODAY:
Thank God for the food you enjoy. Pray for those who have no food on this day.

9
A coin for every light switch in your home.

10
A coin for every candle in your home.

11
A coin for every flashlight (including the one on your smartphone) in your home.

12
A coin for every electrical outlet in your home.

13
A coin for every window in your home.

14
A coin for every pair of sunglasses in your home/car.

15
PRAY TODAY:
Thank God for love in your life that shines bright. Pray for those who are in darkness and need to feel God's love and grace in their lives.

16
A coin for every box of Band-Aids® in your house.

17
A coin for every bottle of vitamins in your house

18
A coin for every bottle of Tylenol® in your house

19
A coin for every tube of Chapstick® in your house.

20
A coin for every toothbrush and tube of toothpaste in your house.

21
A coin for every cough drop/throat lozenge in your house.

22
PRAY TODAY:
Thank God for your health. Pray for those who are sick.

23
A coin for every ball cap or hat in your house.

24
A coin for every sweatshirt in your house.

25
A coin for every pair of jeans or pants in your house.

26
A coin for every pair of gloves in your house.

27
A coin for every T-shirt in your house.

28
A coin for every coat or jacket in your closet.

29
PRAY TODAY:
Thank God for clothing that protects you from the elements. Pray for those who lack clothing to keep them warm and dry.

30
A coin for every Bible in your house.

31
A coin for every book of hymns or sacred songs in your home.

APRIL 2026 | LENTEN COIN CALENDAR



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 <i>A coin for every cross in your home.</i>	2 <i>A coin for every prayer you say today.</i>	3 <i>A coin for every story of Jesus you can tell.</i>	4 <i>A coin for every person in your family.</i>
5 PRAY TODAY: <i>Thank God for Jesus and for the many ways we can gather and worship God. Pray for those who will receive the coins collected that they would see God's presence through them.</i>	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

SAT

FRI

THU

WED

TUE

MON

SUN

7

6

5

4

3

2

Feb 1

5:30pm AA Friday

10am Adult Bible !
7:30pm Choir Prac

9am TOPS
5pm Soup Kitcher
6pm SCOUTS COI

8am WIC
7pm Bible Study C

9am Sunday Scho
10am Sunday Wor

14

13

12

11

10

9

8

5:30pm AA Friday

10am Adult Bible !
7:30pm Choir Prac

9am TOPS
5pm Soup Kitcher
7pm Church Coun

7pm Patty's Ukule
7pm Bible Study C

9am Sunday Scho
10am Sunday Wor
11am Trustee Mee

Valentine's Day

21

20

19

18

17

16

15

5:30pm AA Friday

10am Adult Bible !
7:30pm Choir Prac

Ash Wednesday
9am TOPS
2 more

7pm Bible Study C

Presidents' Day
8am WIC

9am Sunday Scho
10am Sunday Wor

28

27

26

25

24

23

22

5:30pm AA Friday

10am Adult Bible !
7:30pm Choir Prac

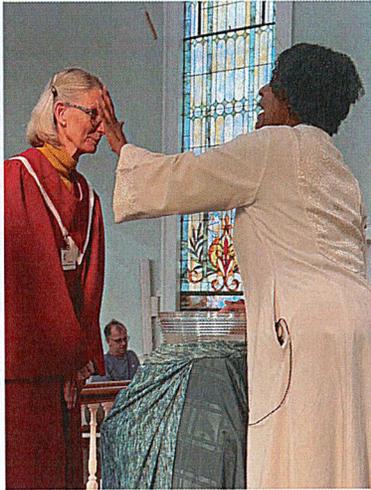
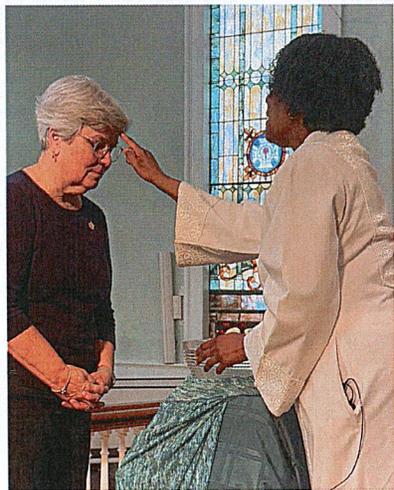
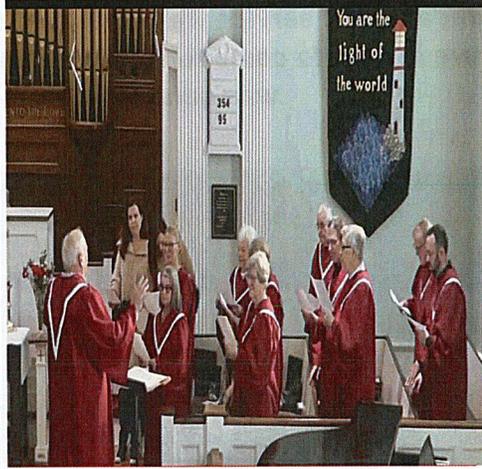
9am TOPS
5pm Soup Kitcher

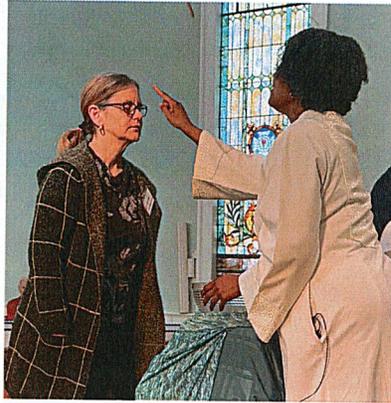
7pm Bible Study C

2pm Book Club

9am Sunday Scho
10am Sunday Wor

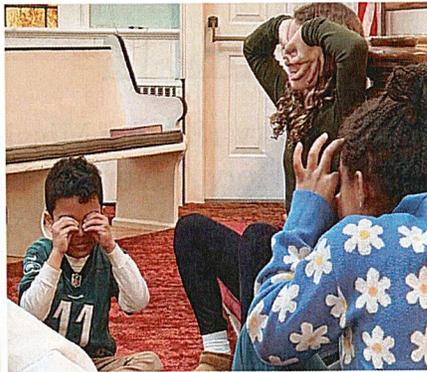
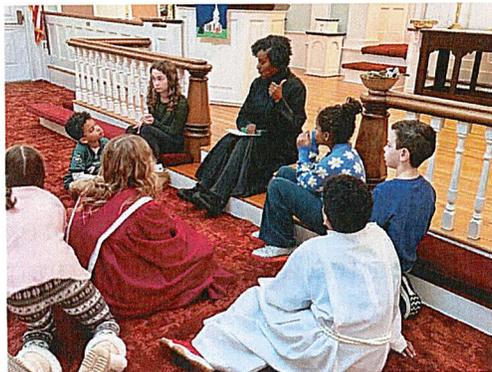
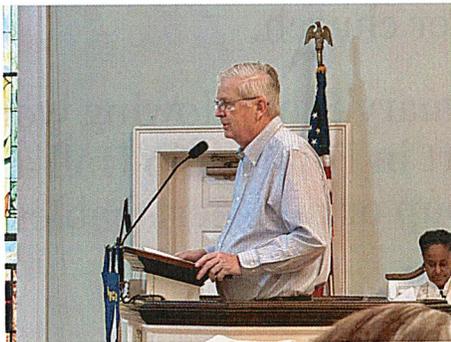
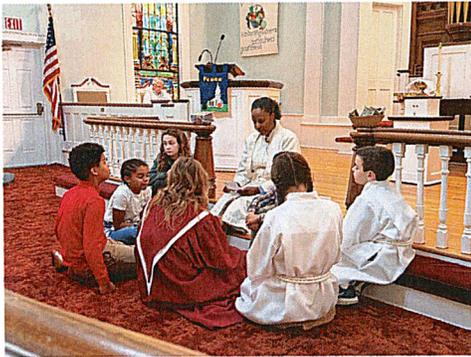
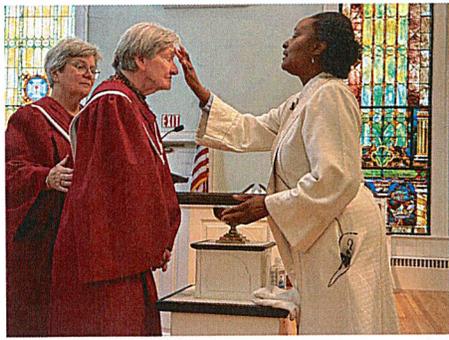






During Sunday, 1/11, service we celebrated the remembrance of our baptisms. Congregants were invited to come forward to be anointed and remember their baptism. It was quite a moving ceremony.







Pastor Rhonda, Becky, and Laura all had big roles in our worship service one Sunday. Hard to believe they didn't coordinate their outfits!

On February 8th, the day of our Annual Meeting, the DS will preach.

Join us for our **Souper** Bowl after church.

Annual Church Meeting on February 8th following worship. Sign up to bring a soup or dessert in Fellowship Hall and don't forget to bring a can or two of soup or non-perishables to donate.



Soup Sale Wrap-Up

On January 18th our Mission Committee sponsored a Soup Sale Fundraiser for the Holy Advent Refugee/Immigrant Fund. We are so grateful to our 23 Soup Makers for generously volunteering to prepare the 28 different kinds of soup and chili. We counted a total of 104 quarts of soup which resulted in a donation of \$1520.00.

It is wonderful that we can support our extended community in such an enjoyable and rewarding way thanks to you all.

Much Appreciation, Mission Committee

You know you're a
CRAFTER
when...

- you search Pinterest more than Google.
- others constantly ask or volunteer you to make something.
- paint or glitter in your hair is part of your hairstyle.
- you can't watch TV without doing something with your hands.
- the ironing board is always set up but you rarely iron clothes.
- the people at the craft or home improvement store know you by name.
- you sneakily take photos while shopping because you're thinking "I can make that!"

U Create

**Start a new year of friendship and crafting handiwork.
Room 102 from 10 to 2 pm every Tuesday.**

*STEWARDSHIP Thank you to everyone who fulfilled their pledge for 2025 and put in theirs for 2026. There is still time to do that. Stewardship isn't just financial support, it's also time and talent. If you haven't found how you can support the work of our church just talk to the Pastor or the chair of the area that you think would fit you the best. May our Lord lead all of us to how we should serve. Your Sister in Christ,
Sharon-----*

SSKP in Clinton

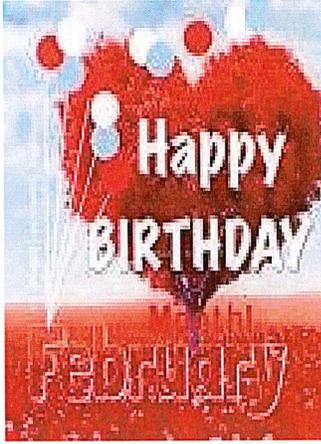
The Food Pantry gives food to over 300 families every week. The need is always there. Please remember to bring in a donation on Sunday. Items always needed: tuna, peanut butter, pasta, sauce, cereal, canned vegetables, beans and canned soups. Thank you

History from Sue Alexander

In 1960 Clinton, CT destinations for us were the United Methodist Church, Lupone's Department Store, a drug store and Clinton National Bank.

There was no traffic light at the intersection of Main and Commerce Streets and Policeman Weiss directed cars during busy hours. Three gentlemen met on the corner - Mr. Burnham, Mr. Evelyn Wright and one other, each of whom provided services for the community. The area was patrolled by two dogs - Lupone's and the Rev. Fell's Pablo. Mr. Weiss stopped traffic whenever they wanted to cross Main Street.





1st Lenny Carlone
3rd Graham Templeton
9th Melissa Gates, Stephanie Reinwald, Steve Yang
12th Corinne Brown
13th Dana Whitney
14th Jackie Watson
15th Brian Strukus
16th Ginny Hauser, Kieffer and Kyle Neumann
17th Lyle Cubberly, Emma Appleby, Garrett Bowen, Gerald Carlone
20th Barbara Cubberly, Jason Robinson, Caroline Yang, Marilyn Gerard
21st Tyler Byington
23rd Paul Brown, Christian Silvernale

24th Judy LeVesque
25th Don Hauser, Christopher Lohutko
27th Liz Clare
28th Gabby Dollahite



8th Linda and Jeff Grisillo

MONTH OF SUNDAYS

February 1st

Ushers: Evelyn and Dennis Scaglione and Charlotte Parisi
Camera Operator: Jill Hale
Video Coordinator: Lisa Sutherland
Worship Leader: Deb Anderson
Lectionary scriptures: Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15 (UM747), 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, Matthew 5:1-12
Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor
Communion Steward: Evelyn Scaglione
Fellowship Hosts: TBD

February 8th

Ushers: Lyle Cubberly, Lynn Sellers, David Moore, Bob Morrison
Camera Operator: Lisa Sutherland
Video Coordinator: Karin Thelin
Worship Leader: Laura Attanasio
Lectionary scriptures: Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12), Psalm 112:1-9 (10) (UM833), 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16), Matthew 5:13-20
Sermon: DS Rev. Heather A.M. Sinclair
Annual Meeting Soup Luncheon (Souper Bowl)

February 15th

Ushers: Jeane Howard, Diana Vincent, Rick Gilcher, Sherry Hynes
Camera Operator: Val Gilcher
Video Coordinator: Erica Babjak
Worship Leader: Banks Babjak
Lectionary scriptures: Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 99 (UM819), 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9
Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor
Fellowship Host: Jeane Jarusik

February 22nd

Ushers: Sharon Minick, Bill Hancock, Lynda Larson and Banks Babjak
Camera Operator: Banks Babjak
Video Coordinator: Dan Attanasio
Worship Leader: Michael Babjak
Lectionary scriptures: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7, Psalm 32 (UM766), Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11
Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor
Fellowship Host: TBD

Office Staff

Donna Carpenter, 860-669-8396, 9-1 weekdays

Email: office@clintonctumc.org

Website: www.clintonumc.org

[Calendar link](#)

Financial Secretary: Jackie Blomberg

Treasurer: Carol Bell

Our Mission

We celebrate the presence of the Holy Spirit; being and making disciples of Christ by sharing God's gifts through word and deed.

