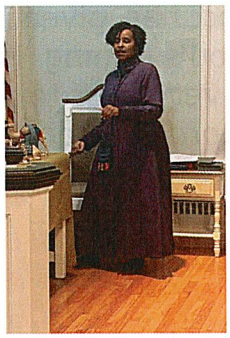
Newsletter



January 2026

Another year has come and gone. Where did the time go? It seems as if once a person hits the ripe age of 50 years old and older, time feels like it speeds up significantly, or maybe that's just me (LOL)!

We want time to slow down when we are having fun or when we find ourselves in a good place. The opposite holds true when things are not working out as expected. When we find ourselves in a difficult spot, or hurting, or experiencing a rough moment, we want time to speed up so that we can get past the unfortunate situation. I chalk it up to human nature. I mean really, who wants to spend time in pain or in the place of emotional instability and exhaustion – I know I don't want to and I'm guessing neither do you.

For me, a new year signifies another opportunity to get right with God and to love my neighbor as myself. It is a time to be renewed and cleansed from my sinful nature, and embrace a fresh start. It is being given another moment of grace to share the love of Jesus Christ and to let go of my will and live out the will of God. But it is hard. Especially when we are bearing

witness to the rise of hate, division, apathy, malice, and evil. However, that's when though difficult as it may seem, the Lord shows up. That's when the spirit of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love is manifested in real time through a real person who is fully human and fully God, Jesus.

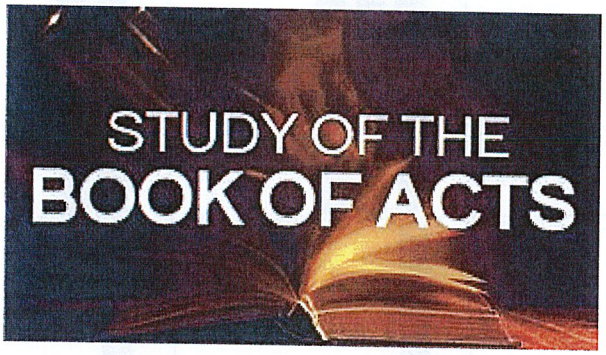
The Lord can alter time and circumstances. In this New Year, I am looking for Jesus to alter some things within me like my attitude, my heart, my priorities, and not be afraid to stand up to injustice, hate, even when it is uncomfortable for me or others. Therefore, in this New Year, I will hold onto the visions and dreams that God has given me. Understanding that God's ways are not my ways, and God's timing is not the same as my timing. Therefore, I am going to try my very best to *[therefore keep watch, because I do not know on what day the Lord will come. So, I must be ready, because Jesus will come at hour when I do not expect him*, Matthew 24:42-44, adapted].

Peace,

Pastor Rhonda

John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, introduced this annual covenant renewal service to the Methodist societies in 1755. Every year, on or near January 1, the Methodists gathered to renew their covenant with God. The heart of the service, focused on Covenant Prayer, requiring persons to commit themselves to God. It is a powerful time of self-examination and confession that culminates in renewal of commitment to discipleship and leadership.

On **Sunday, January 4, 2026** at 10:00 a.m. we will have our Covenant Service/Epiphany of the Lord and celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion. During service, we'll discuss what it means to be in covenant with God and with one another.



Online Bible Study will resume on **Tuesday evening, January 13, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.**
Google video call link: https://meet.google.com/zyk-gbfm-dkb
or dial: (US) +1 318-81-8377 PIN: 803 541 446#

In-person Bible Study will resume on **Thursday morning, January 15 at 10:00 a.m.** in the Adult Sunday School classroom.

The Baptism of the Lord Sunday, January 11, 2026
marks the end of the Christmas Season, commemorating Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, revealing His divine Sonship and starting His public ministry. We will gather to celebrate Christ's baptism and to remember and reaffirm our baptismal covenant.

JANUARY

Clinton UMC, Holidays in United States

Jan 2026 (Eastern Time - New York

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28 9am - Sunday School 10am - Sunday Worship	29 2pm - Book Club	30 [redacted]	31 New Year's Eve 9am - TOPS	1 New Year's Day	2 Office Closed 5:30pm - AA Friday Happy	3
4 9am - Sunday School 10am - Sunday Worship	5	6 8am - WIC [redacted]	7 9am - TOPS 5pm - Soup Kitchen 6pm - SCOUTS COMM	8 [redacted] 7:30pm - Choir Practice	9 5:30pm - AA Friday Happy	10
11 9am - Sunday School 10am - Sunday Worship	12	13 7pm - Bible Study Online 7pm - Patty's Ukulele	14 9am - TOPS 5pm - Soup Kitchen 7pm - Church Council	15 10am - Adult Bible Study 7:30pm - Choir Practice	16 5:30pm - AA Friday Happy	17
18 9am - Sunday School 10am - Sunday Worship 11am - Soup Sale in	19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day 8am - WIC	20 7pm - Bible Study Online	21 9am - TOPS 5pm - Soup Kitchen 7pm - AA Meeting	22 10am - Adult Bible Study 7:30pm - Choir Practice	23 5:30pm - AA Friday Happy	24
25 9am - Sunday School 10am - Sunday Worship	26 2pm - Book Club	27 7pm - Bible Study Online	28 9am - TOPS 5pm - Soup Kitchen	29 10am - Adult Bible Study 7:30pm - Choir Practice	30 5:30pm - AA Friday Happy	31 9am - Emergency

January Soup Sale

Where: Clinton United Methodist Church
12 Commerce Street

When: Sunday, January 18th
After church~ 11:00am - 1:00pm

All Sales will Benefit the Holy Advent
Refugee/Immigrant Fund

Sponsored by the UMC Missions Committee

Interested in Disaster Response Ministry?

UMCOR Basic Early Response Team (ERT) Training

Saturday, 1/31/26 from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Location: UMC of Clinton, 12 Commerce Street, Clinton, CT

UMCOR ERT Trainer: Rev. Mel Kawakami

$20.00 (Covers lunch and training materials.) Applicants must be 18 years or older.

Register by sending an email to disaster-response@sumct.org with name, address, and phone number.

Learn the Best Practices

for being part of a disaster Early Response Team (ERT). ERTs provide a caring Christian presence in the aftermath of a disaster.

Learn How to Assist Survivors

of natural disasters, offering both helping hands and hope to those in need.

Learn about the Stages of Disaster

and procedures for on-site work, and early response techniques, including tarping, debris removal, cleaning out flooded homes, and more.

Earn a 3-year ERT Badge

Upon successful completion of the training and after fulfilling a background check, you will be eligible to apply for a 3-year ERT badge.

For more information,
contact Cassandra Broadus-Garcia, Simsbury UMC (CT) Disaster Response Advocate, at disaster-response@sumct.org

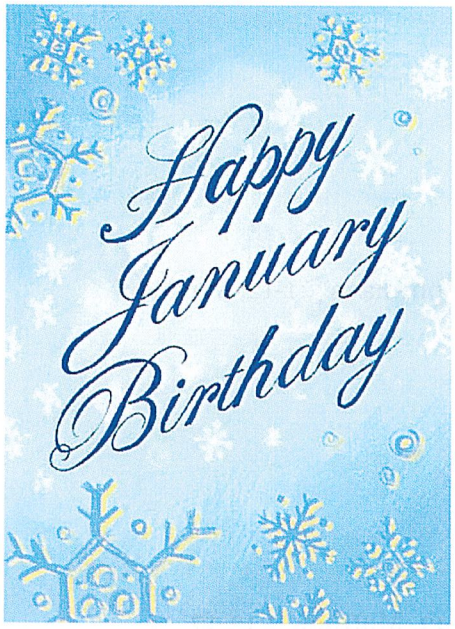
MONTH OF SERVICES

Jan 4 (Epiphany Sunday /Communion)
Ushers: Evelyn and Dennis Scalione, Sally Maxwell, Charlotte Parisi
Camera Operator: Banks Babjak
Video Coordinator: Karin Thelin
Worship Leader: Tammy/Sydney Drena
Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor
Lectionary scriptures: Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (UM795), Ephesians 3:1-12, Matthew 2:1-12
Fellowship Hosts: Babjaks

Jan 11 (Baptism of the Lord)
Ushers: Lyle Cubberly, Lynn Sellers, David Moore, Bob Morrison
Camera Operator: Lisa Sutherland
Video Coordinator: Dan Attanasio
Worship Leader: Rick Gilcher
Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor
Lectionary scriptures: Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 29 (UM761), Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 3:13-17
Fellowship Hosts: Templetons

Jan 18 (Human Relations Day)
Ushers: Jeane Howard, Diana Vincent, Rick Gilcher, Sherry Hynes
Camera Operator: Val Gilcher
Video Coordinator: Erica Babjak
Worship Leader: Lydia Templeton
Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor
Lectionary scriptures: Isaiah 49:1-7, Psalm 40:1-11 (UM774), 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, John 1:29-42
Fellowship Host: Laurie Bell

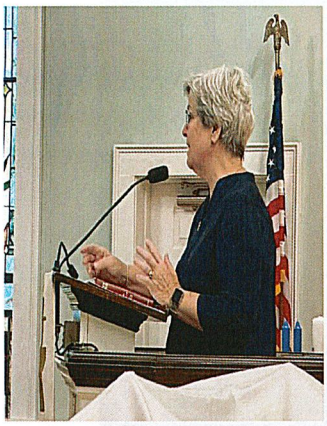
Jan 25th
Ushers: Sharon Minick, Bill Hancock, Lynda Larson, Banks Babjak
Camera Operator: Erica Babjak
Video Coordinator: Sharon Minick
Worship Leader: TBA
Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor
Lectionary scriptures: Isaiah 9:1-4, Psalm 27:1. 4-9 (UM758), 1 Corinthians 1:10-18, Matthew 4:12-23, Luke 4:14-21
Fellowship Hosts: Hales

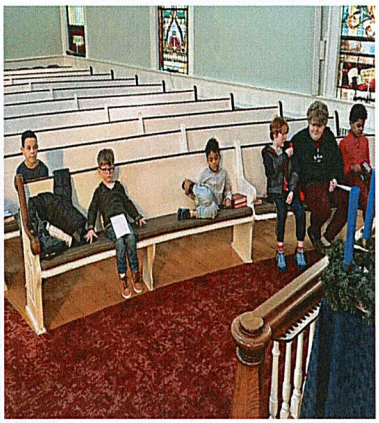
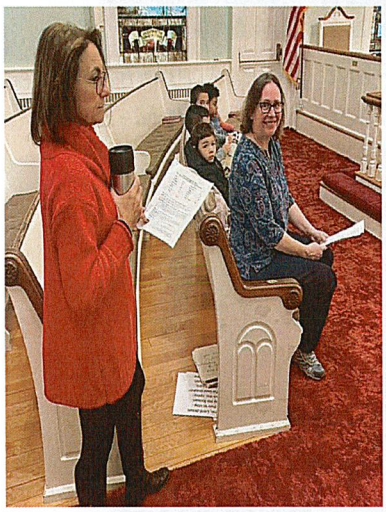
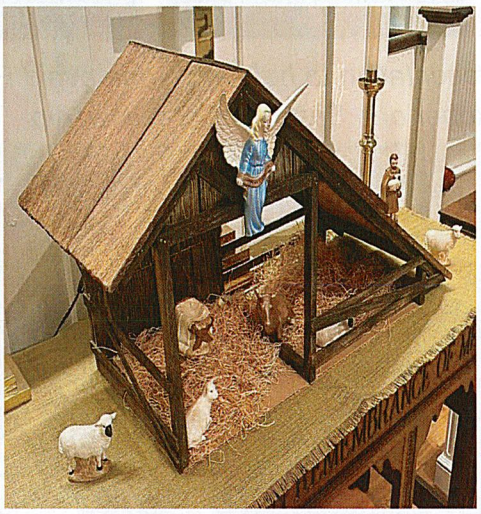


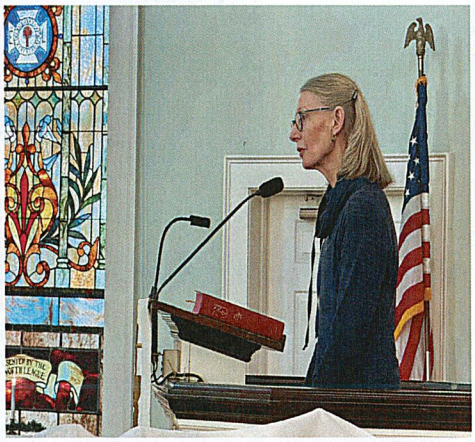
3rd Heidi Hayes
4th Dennis Dollahite
9th Rick Gilcher, Kelly Patten
11th Nathan Becker
12th Clarke McKinnon, Brynn Egan
15th Brooke Hawes
17th Jeff Durnin
18th Lisa Sutherland
21st Kevin Byington, Gerald Cotter, Jenifer Cardarelli
22nd Karen Johns-Ahern
23rd Jeane Howard, Norma Bucko
25th Brenda Griswold
28th Gavin Bell
29th Diana Vincent
31st Siena Lee

1st Sandi and Michael McKinnon
23rd Sherrie and Roger Marlowe

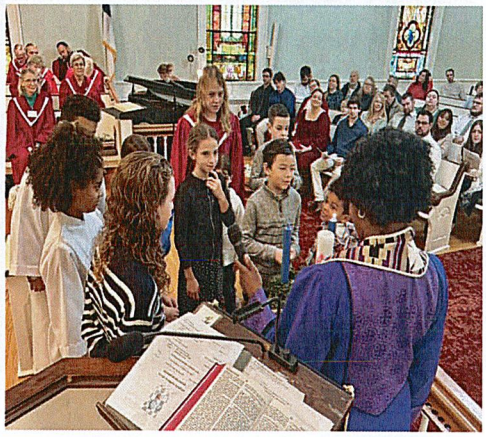
Church Happenings

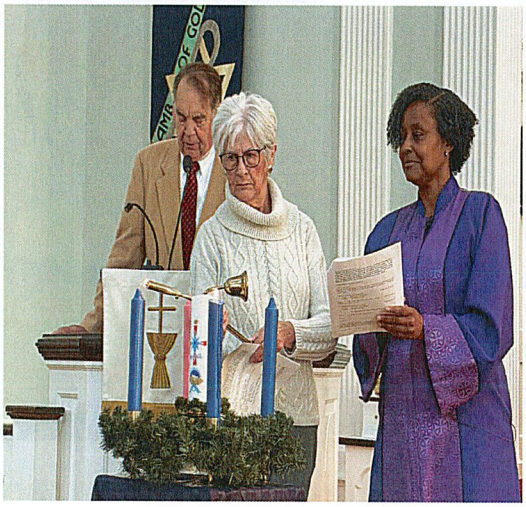


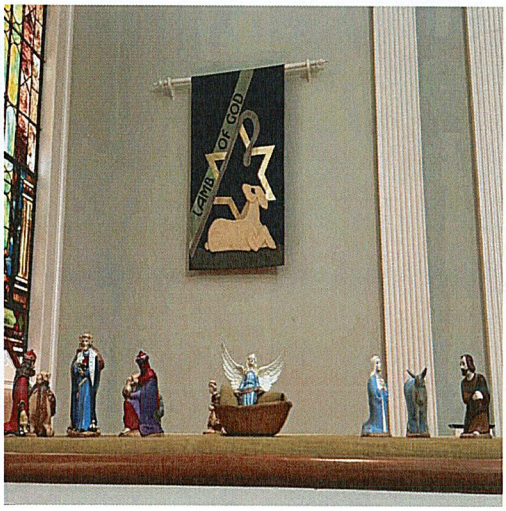




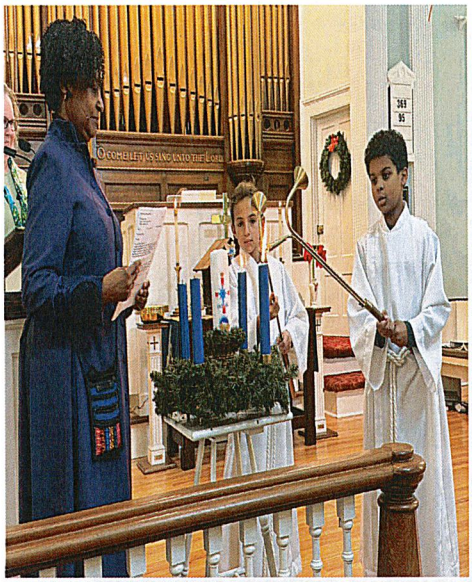


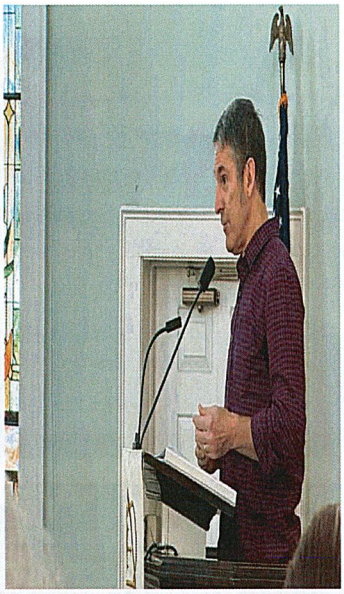
We had a very informative presentation to help everyone avoid Fraud, Scams, and Identity Theft by our own Martina Jakober one Sunday after fellowship. Thanks so much Martina!

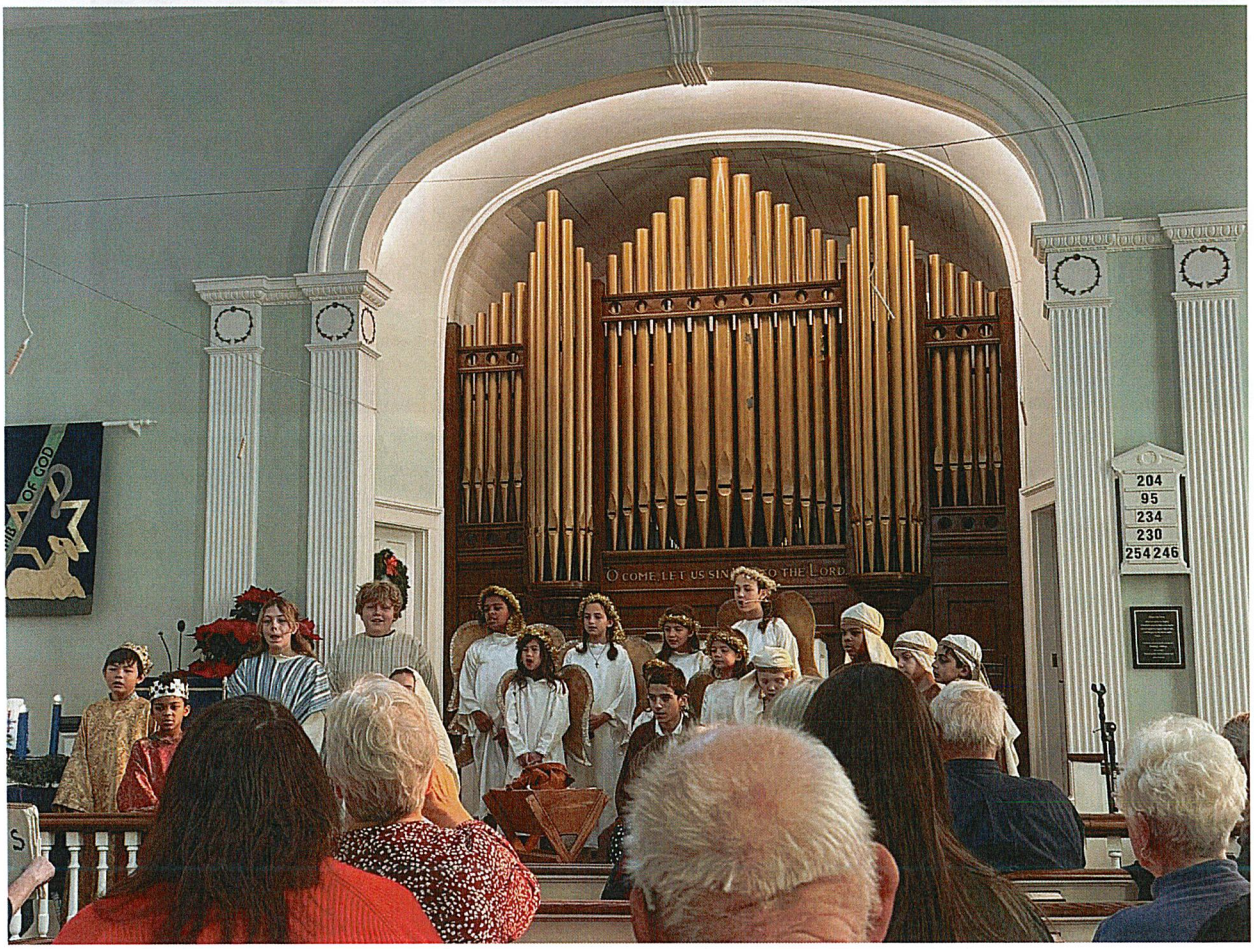








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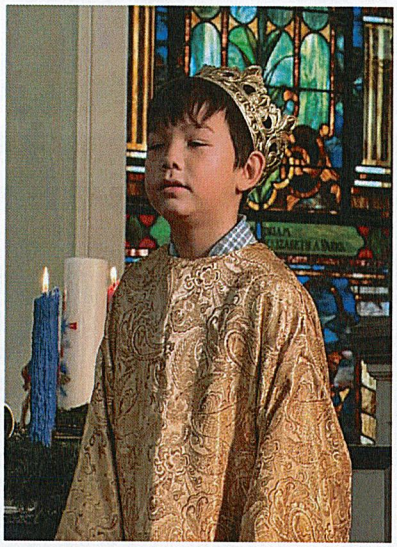
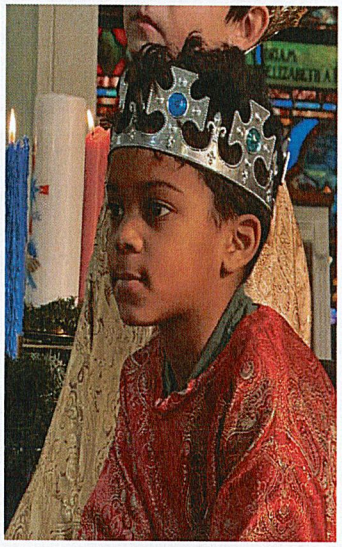
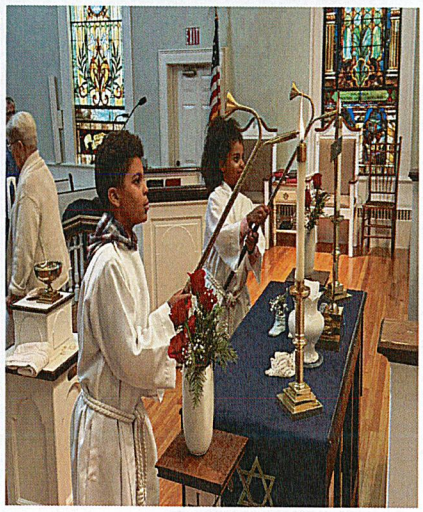
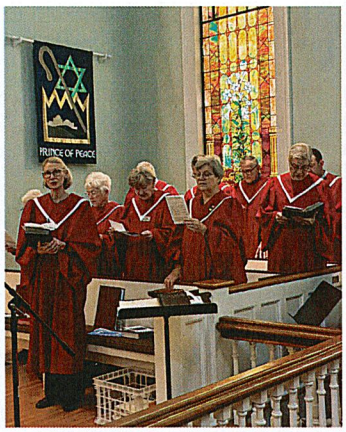
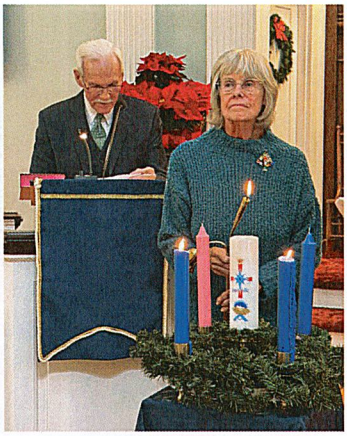


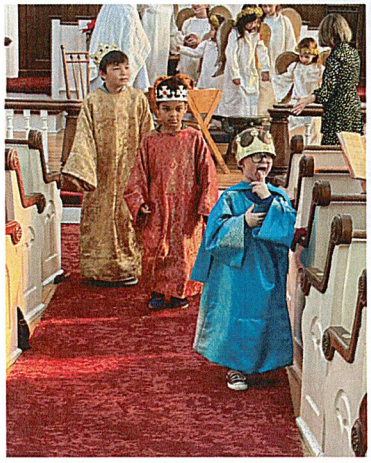


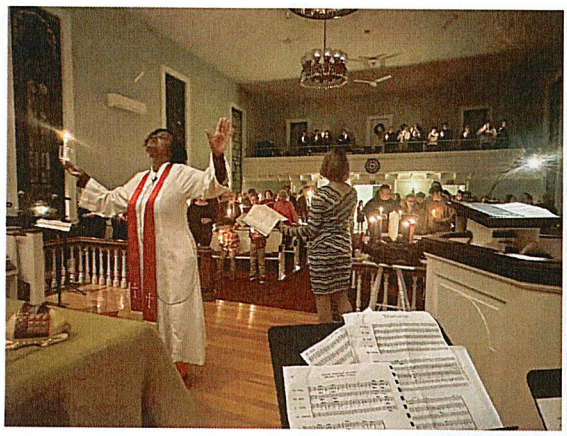
O COME, LET US



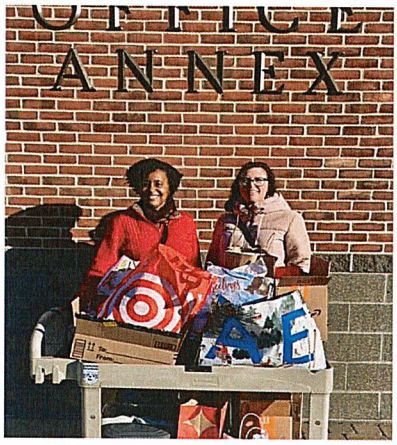

PRINCE OF PEACE



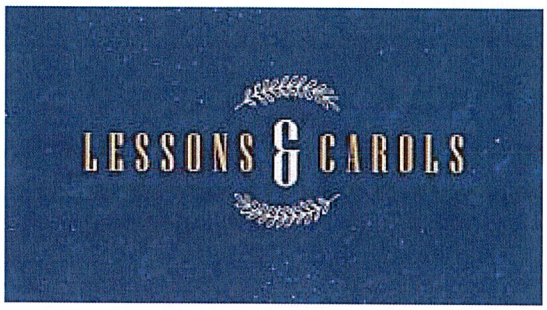




Members of the congregation were invited to sing the chorus of O Holy Night at the Christmas Eve service. It was wonderful.



Thank you to everyone who generously took a tag for social services this year. Laura B. and Pastor Rhonda were honored to deliver the gifts to Social Services.



Thank you to all who read for our Lessons and Carols Service. We are truly blessed to have such talent in our Church.

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.