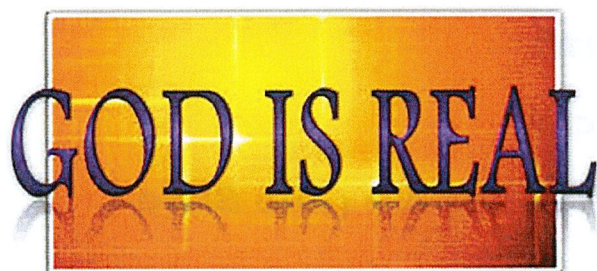


United Methodist Church of Clinton



In late June, I drove down to Virginia to visit with family and friends. I had a great time catching up with my cousins and college roommate, and being introduced to some of my cousin Erica's military buddies. While driving back to Connecticut from

Virginia on Route 81-N, I saw a huge disturbing billboard sign at exit 77 which read, "Jesus is not God! He did not pre-exist in heaven".

Having to catch my breath in disappointment without swerving my car, I said in a gentle and quiet voice, "Wow – Just Wow". I felt my heart hurting, perhaps even stop beating for a millisecond.

After coming back "to earth, to life", I began to reflect upon the bold statement that was written on the billboard. And as a theologian, ordained elder in the United Methodist Church, a former seminarian, and simply a follower of Christ, I embraced the uncomfortable opportunity and sat in the midst of feeling disappointed.

Unfortunately, the message on the billboard rings true to many people today. There are people who do not believe that Jesus is God, or that God exist. While there

are several schools of thought and different beliefs about Jesus (i.e. He is a good man, a prophet, but not God), we who profess to be followers of Christ, must be clear about who, what, and why we believe in Jesus Christ.

In other words, tell your story about your relationship with Jesus. You have to know without any doubt that Jesus is God, and that He did pre-exist in heaven. He is God who came to earth in human form, and who:

Created the heavens and earth from the beginning

Walked this earth

Performed miracles

Provided a road map and instructions for life (The Bible and Prayer)

Died for our sins on the cross

Conquered death and gave us eternal life (present and future)

Ascended into heaven and is seated on the throne

Will return to earth

Our Friend, Savior, and Beginner of all good things and people

This is just a microscopic representation of who Jesus is - He is so much more! And, yes He is real and He is GOD!

With the world at odds with itself, people hurting and searching for answers, let our living be an example to counteract those negative messages that Jesus is not God...God is not real. Jesus did pre-exist in heaven.

It is not our job to convince people or bully people into believing and wanting Jesus. What we are called to do is live as good examples and love our neighbors, despite the bad examples the world sees from some of our Christian siblings today. We cannot give up, even when we are disappointed or uncomfortable.

I am learning to take those disappointments and uncomfortable moments as learning opportunities for spiritual growth. The billboard sign caused me to ask myself deeper theological, biblical, and spiritual questions about my relationship with Jesus. Not as a means to argue or discredit Christianity. But rather to help me grow in Christ and to make sure my election in Christ is firm and not wavering.

So, the next time I see a disturbing billboard or anything that may challenge my beliefs about my King Jesus, rather than being hurt, the Holy Spirit within me will be able to say, "Yeah, bring it on".

Peace,

Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

***"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him." Hebrews 11:6
(NIV)***

1st Ashley Policar, Ray Silvernale

4th Steven Clark, Bev Engelhart

5th Ellie Wells

10th Don Shogren

11th Gary Hawes, Olivia Kluz,

Reagan Riley, Paula McPhee

12th Austin Remetta, George Andres

13th Makenna Clark

15th Donald Merry

18th Ron Dangona

20th Lisa Benisvy

21st Robert McLeod

22nd Jeffrey Mckinnon, Jr., Linda Thelin

24th Cynthia Harding, Bud Ford

28th Finley Nicklis

30th Connor Drena



4th Bev and Ken Bowen/Nathaniel and Kristen Brown

9th Carolyn and Hill Gbunblee

24th Emily and Jose Gonzalez

Month of Sundays

August 3rd

Ushers: Jeane Jarusik, Diana Vincent, Rick Gilcher, Sherry Hynes

Camera Operator: Erica Babjak

Video Coordinator: Karin Thelin

Worship Leader: Natalie Sutherland

Lectionary scriptures: Hosea 11:1-11, Psalm 107:1-9,43 (UM860),
Colossians 3:1-11, Luke 12:13-21

Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

Communion Steward: Evelyn Scaglione

Fellowship Hosts: Hales

August 10th

Ushers: Sharon Minick, Bill Hancock, Lynda Larson, Banks Babjak

Camera Operator: Val Gilcher

Video Coordinator: Lisa Sutherland

Worship Leader: Sue Alexander

Lectionary scriptures: Isaiah 1:1, 10-20, Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23 (UM783),
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16, Luke 12:32-40

Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

Fellowship Host: Becky Templeton

August 17th

Ushers: Evelyn Scaglione, Dennis Scaglione, Sally Maxwell, Charlotte Parisi

Camera Operator: Banks Babjak

Video Coordinator: Dan Attanasio

Worship Leader: Deb Anderson

Lectionary scriptures: Isaiah 5:1-7, Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19 (UM801), Hebrews 11:29-12:2, Luke 12:49-56

Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

Fellowship Host:

August 24th

Ushers: Lyle Cubberly, Lynn Sellers, David Moore, Bob Morrison

Camera Operator: Jill Hale

Video Coordinator: Erica Babjak

Worship Leader: Laura Attanasio

Lectionary scriptures: Jeremiah 1:4-10, Psalm 71:1-6 (UM794), Hebrews 12:18-29, Luke 13:10-17

Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

Fellowship Hosts: Deb Anderson and Robin Patten

August 31st

Ushers: Jeane Jarusik, Diana Vincent, Rick Gilcher, Sherry Hynes

Camera Operator: Val Gilcher

Video Coordinator: Lisa Sutherland

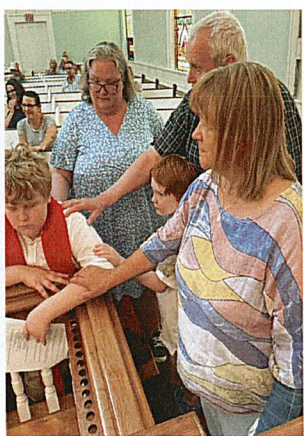
Worship Leader: Banks Babjak

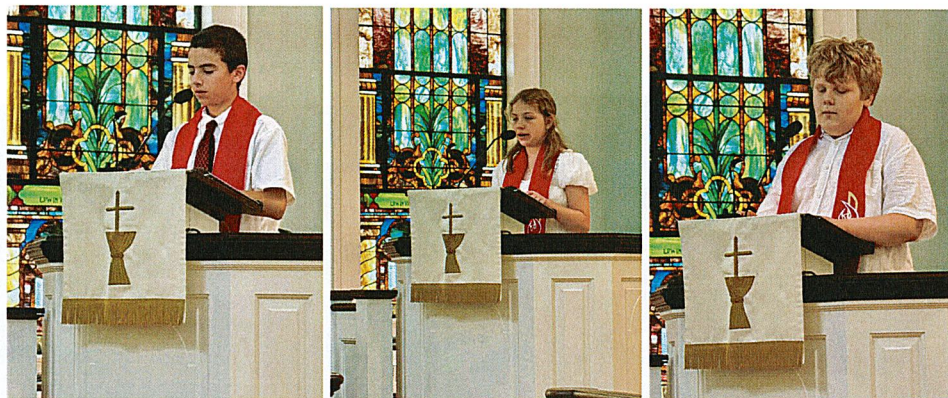
Lectionary scriptures: Jeremiah 2:4-13, Psalm 81:1, 10-16 (UM803), Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16, Luke 14:1, 7-14

Sermon: Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor

Fellowship Hosts: Babjaks

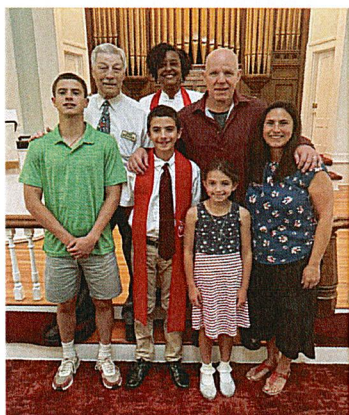
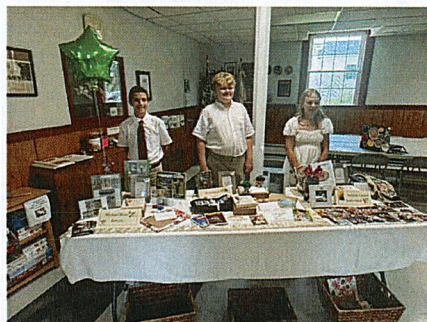
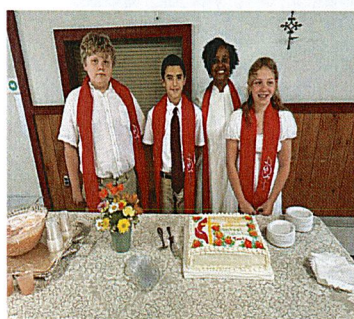
Confirmation Sunday

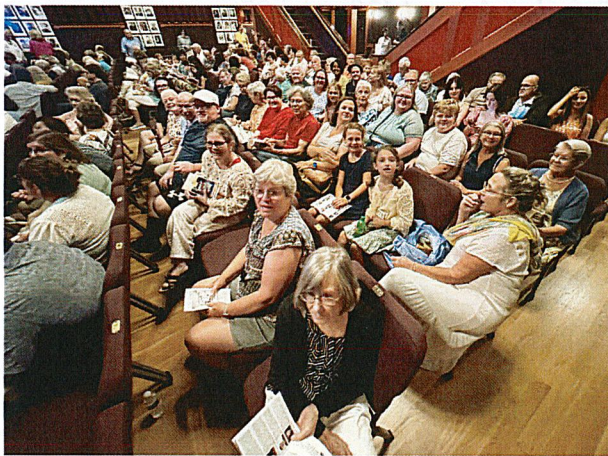
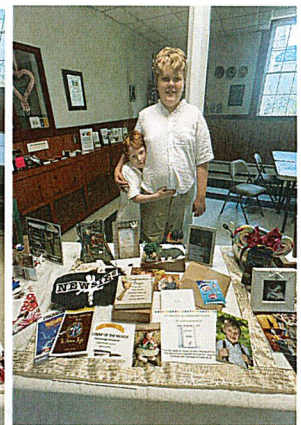
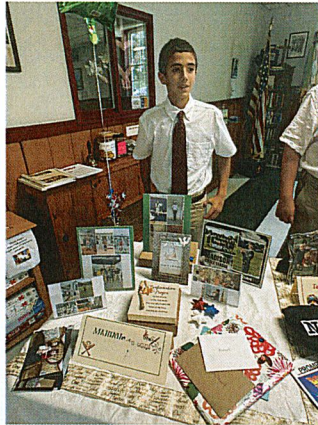




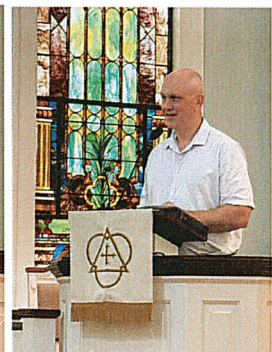
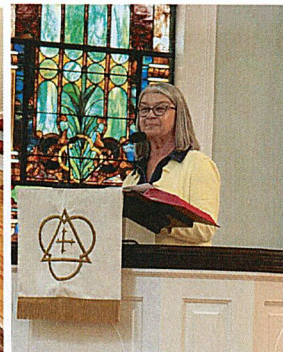
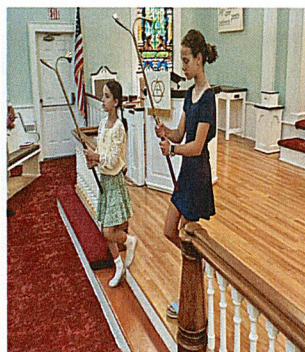
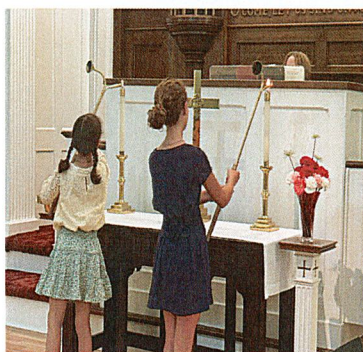
Michael, Natalie, and Tavis each shared their personal statement of faith as part of their confirmation service.

Sharon Minick made a beautiful (and delicious) cake for fellowship after our confirmation service. Our newest members also displayed some favorite mementos highlighting their interests and achievements!





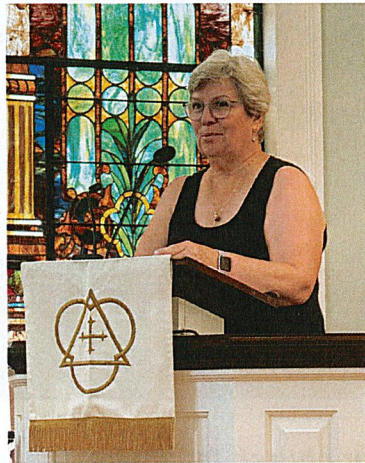
We had a great turnout from our church family for *The Ivoryton Playhouse* production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*! Thanks to Laura and Lisa for hosting and organizing this opportunity!!



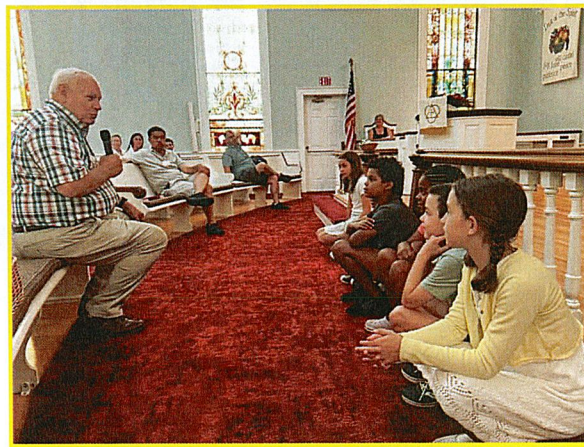


We are not having a SPPRC Picnic due to dates not available.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, August 19th, at 4:30pm.



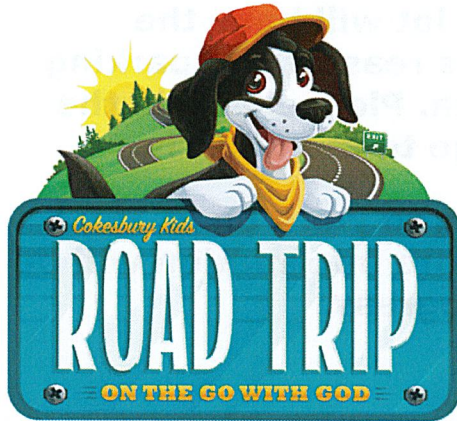
Jill Hale delivered a sermon one Sunday, explaining her understanding of Jesus' interactions with Martha and Mary. She did a great job as always!



Bob Hale provided the Children's Time message one Sunday explaining how it's important for them, and all of us, to show Jesus' love to others through our interactions with them.

Vacation Bible School is happening again!

August 11-15, 9am to 12:00 pm



Sing and Play, Bible Adventures, Games, Snacks, and more...Registration forms are available in the back of the church, in the church office, in Fellowship Hall and in Sunday School Classrooms. If you have questions, talk to Val Gilcher or Karin Thelin.

Thursday, August 14th at 6:00pm

Welcome one and all to a cookout to celebrate Our Road Trip. We will eat together and share with you some Bible lessons and songs we have been busy learning during the week.

Bring a side dish and come enjoy!



Trustee Report-Rick Gilcher

The month of August is going to be very busy with the three main summer projects being initiated during this time period.

1) Due to leakage in fellowship hall we have contracted Grove Gardens to install three (3) French Drains in the yard between the church and the parsonage.

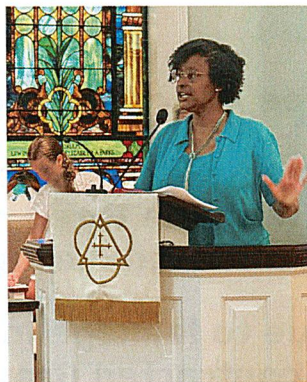
2) Electronic doors and an intercom system will be installed at the door by the kitchen and in the Kathy Fell building which will allow the office to buzz people in during office hours.

3) The week of August 18th the parking lot will have the cracks tarred, sealed and relined. For this reason, the parking lot will be closed the week of August 18th. Please park in the medical building parking if you need to go to the Church

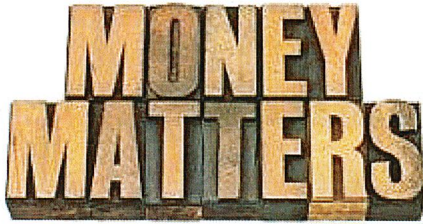
A long term project which we are starting to work on is archiving the church's old documents more information will be provided in the coming months as we progress.



The week of the 18th of August the church parking will NOT be available ALL week. It will be re-opened the following Sunday.



Pastor Rhonda spoke about the importance of "Persistence in Prayer" during her sermon one Sunday.



**Money Matter\$ – Carl Engelhart –
Finance Chairperson**

**Brief financial comments for
UMC-Clinton @ 7/26/25**

**Our Financial Secretary Jackie
recorded and deposited \$216,500 of
contributions received for the**

twelve months Jul24-Jun25.

- **Our Treasurer Carol wrote checks totaling (\$287,600) that cashed Jul24-Jun25**
- **UMC-Clinton spent (\$71,100) more than received for twelve months Jul24-Jun25.**
- **This compares to FY24 of (\$65,100), excluding non-routine expenses.**
- **Contributions are flat with last year while routine expenses are up 2-3%.**
- **Bank balances and Investments were drawn down to cover the deficit.**
- **UMC-Clinton Investments @ 12/31/24 were \$998,600**
- **(\$40,100) has been withdrawn to cover the deficit thru June 2025.**
- **The stock market has increased equity values an estimated 3.6% thru June 2025.**
- **Investments are estimated to be \$994,400 down (\$4,200) @ 7/26/25.**

If anyone would like a detailed finance report, please contact us @ carlengelhart@comcast.net or 828-288-1315 and we will get a copy to you.



Sunday, September 7th, before church.



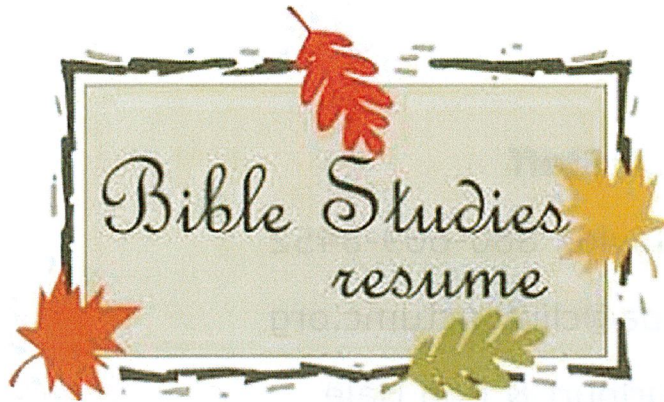
Our incredible Ukulele group offered special music one Sunday. They played and sang beautifully! Thanks Patty, Bev, and Jill!



Lydia did a fantastic job with her first time as Worship Leader last Sunday. Congratulations and Thank you Lydia!

It was Graham's first time as an acolyte. Good job!!!





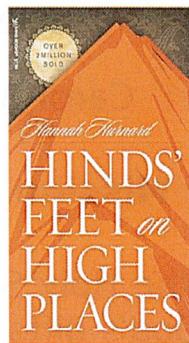
Tuesday Night on-line Bible Study will resume on September 9 at 7:00 PM

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/zyk-gbfm-dkb>

Or dial: (US) +1 318-814-8377 PIN: 803 541 446#

Thursday Morning in-person Bible study will resume on September 11 at 10:00 AM

Join us as we study Hannah Hurnard's best known book:



Hinds Feet on High Places.

In this timeless allegory, we'll be led to journey to new heights of love, joy, and victory as God's children. "In this moving tale, follow Much-Afraid on her spiritual journey as she overcomes many dangers and mounts at last to the High Places. "

A sign-up sheet will be available in the Fellowship Hall. If you would like to make a donation the cost of the book is \$7.00.

Church Staff

Pastor Rhonda R. Taylor, 860-669-8452

Email: pastor.rhonda@clintonctumc.org

Music: Patty Hurlburt & Bob Hale

Office Staff

Donna Carpenter-Bronson, 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