



## Invitation to Go Deep this Holy Week

Holy Week is at the heart of the Christian story. Our worship and mission, the foundation of our belief system, and our traditions as a community of faith are grounded in, lead to, and spring from this week. The life and mission of Jesus meet their greatest test. Jesus faces headfirst the political and religious powers calling for his death and remains true to his calling and the work of God's kingdom. Jesus is executed by crucifixion. Three days later, God rises Jesus from the dead, restoring our hope and reminding us that death is never the end of the story, but the beginning of something new. During Holy Week, we remember, enact, and participate in the hope of the resurrection of all creation, starting with our lives and loves, here and now.

The weight of this week is felt in the sheer number of worship services we participate in during Holy Week. The journey these services take us through is intense; life, love, hope, community, betrayal, trial, execution, death, burial, watching at the grave, and the disturbing and even terrifying surprise of resurrection and an empty tomb meet us through this week. And in gathering to observe them all, we open ourselves to the many ways the Holy Spirit has been active, is active, and will be active in the church and world throughout history, in our own lives, and in the lives of those who follow us in seeking to follow Jesus in generations to come.

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## Welcome . . .

to the April 2025 issue of the Clinton United Methodist Church newsletter. We are a community sent for others; our hope is for all people to experience God's love in Jesus Christ.

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As we approach this holy season, the opportunity is ours, to open our hearts and spirits to the fullness of the Holy Week journey; the highs and lows, the heartbreaks and joys. It is my prayer that through worship and community, you may walk closely with Jesus, reflecting on how our faith transforms you from the inside out and gives you hope through even the darkest days.

Together, may we journey through life and faith, through the darkness of Holy Week to the hope and joy of resurrection this Easter!

Blessings and peace,

*Pastor Jess*

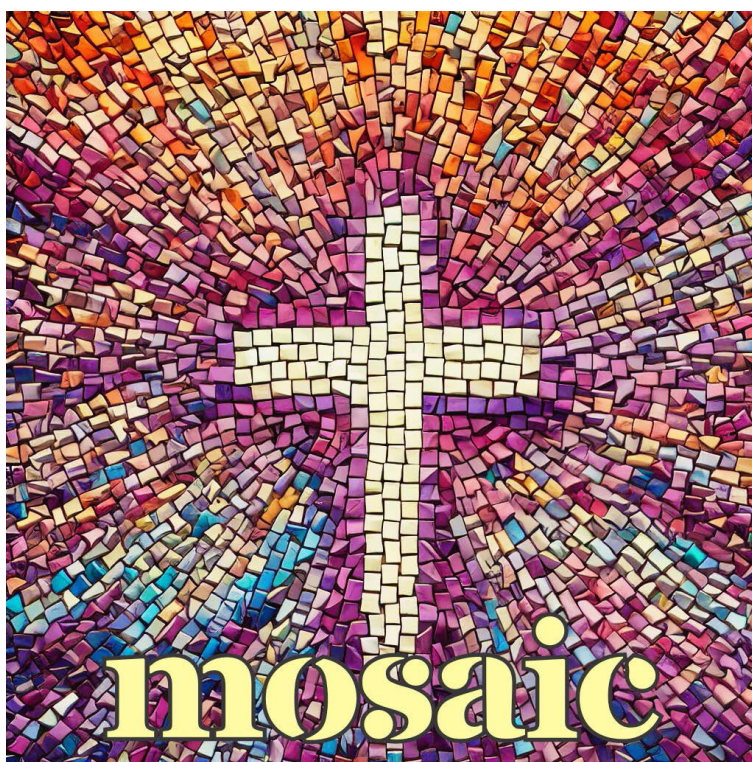
Rev. Jessica Brendler Naulty

Senior Pastor

[pastorjess@sentforothers.org](mailto:pastorjess@sentforothers.org)

908-400-2343 (cell)

## Lenten Worship Series - Mosaic



"All of us have imperfections, mistakes, failures, and brokenness—jagged edges of our lives that mark the long journey for what it becomes, but also for how the pieces, broken apart by circumstance and mistake, either continue to cut our lives in two or become the eternal masterpiece of the Creator."

*Mosaic: When God Uses All the Pieces, Shane Stanford*

This Lent, we have been exploring how Christ is able to bring redemption to the places of brokenness in our lives—our rebellion, restlessness, regret, rejection, responsibility, resources, and relationships. Just as mosaics bring together individual pieces to create a masterpiece, God takes all the pieces of our lives to create something beautiful. Join us in worship throughout April as we wrap up our series and journey through Holy Week and the celebration of Easter.



# Holy Week and Easter At Clinton UMC

**Palm Sunday**

**April 13, 10 am**

**Maundy Thursday**

**April 17, 7 pm**

**Good Friday**

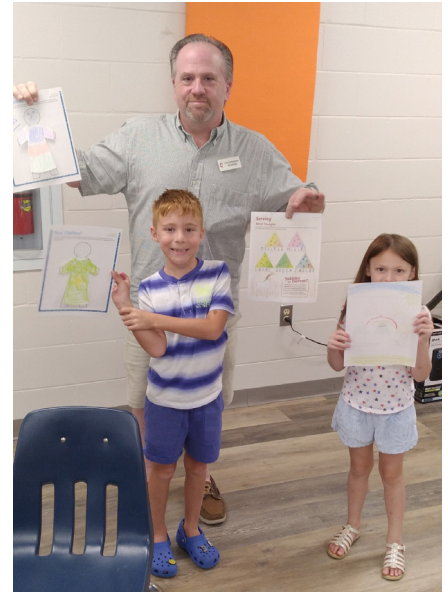
**April 18, 7 pm**

## **Easter Sunday** **April 20**

**Sunrise service at the river 6 am**

**Easter service 10 am**

## Time and Talents: Treasured Gifts



Sometimes we equate generosity with financial gifts, but there are so many ways to be generous. When it comes to serving others in Jesus' name, Clinton UMC depends on people who are generous with their time and talents.

Serving others is a grateful response to all that Christ has done for us, but it's good for us as well. Mayo Clinic says that volunteering is good for our physical and mental health; gives us a sense of purpose; and nurtures relationships.

We have so many volunteering opportunities at Clinton UMC right now. For instance, you're invited to:

- Help us provide low-cost, high-quality clothing and home goods to our community by serving at our North Hunterdon Thrift Shop
- Support our diaper drive to benefit Harvest Family Success Center (see this month's Missions article for more information on upcoming missions)
- Beautify our church (just in time for Easter!) by joining our church-wide workday April 6
- Serve our children or youth through Sunday School or youth group
- Help with worship, digital ministry, coffee hour, or devotional writing

If you're looking to make a difference by serving others, we have an opportunity that matches your gifts and passions. Contact Pastor Jess, the church office, or any member of the Nominations Team if you want to explore ways to get more involved.

## Pathways Midpoint Update

In August 2023 Clinton UMC's Administrative Council approved four goals for our Pathways initiative. The goals focused on ensuring our financial strategy is sustainable, deepening congregational engagement, fostering greater inclusivity, and building intergenerational bridges. Halfway through our initiatives, here's where we stand.

### Financial sustainability team

- We've achieved our initial goal of increasing operating income by 15%, driven largely by investment income and thrift shop income.
- Although the Pathways goals were set mid-year, financial sustainability goals are being measured at year-end for more accurate comparisons.
- Rather than set a new income goal at this time, the team is assessing the primary sources of income to focus efforts where they're needed most.

- The team will focus on congregational generosity in 2025, and specifically on assembling a Generosity Team. Congregational giving has gone down over the Pathways time period. We are looking for a team co-lead as well as others who are interested in educating and inspiring others to generosity. Generosity discussions will extend to children and families as well.
- Also a priority for 2025 is working with the Trustees on a building use donation schedule. Currently, donations are not discussed when an organization requests building use. A formal, consistent approach would enable Clinton UMC to recoup utility costs, etc. associated with other groups using our building.

### **Engagement team**

- A thorough membership audit was completed. Because our membership changes constantly, a new audit is underway for completion in 2025.
- An engagement survey was completed in 2024, which gave us a deeper understanding of how people prefer to be involved at Clinton UMC. The survey gave rise to a pastor-led Bible study and ideas for worship topics.
- Our first connection fair, a post-worship event spotlighting mission and ministry opportunities, was held in 2024. The fair helped people find ministries to plug into. People signed up for community groups and committees as a direct result of the fair.
- The current focus of the team is to engage people through hands-on missions. Among them:
  - Diaper drive March-April, which will be incorporated into the community via egg hunt and the North Hunterdon Thrift Shop
  - Family Promise hosting in March-April
- A mission calendar will be launched to raise visibility of mission opportunities by June 2025.

### **Inclusivity Team**

- Clinton UMC's Way Forward covenant (inclusivity statement) was drafted, discussed, and adopted in 2024
- Our focus in 2025 is indoor and outdoor signage:
  - Outdoor banner
  - Adding color to permanent outdoor sign
  - Welcome signage in narthex
- Signage language will incorporate the welcoming language of our covenant
- Colors will visually indicate inclusion

### **Intergenerational Team**

- The Intergenerational team began by hosting activities that foster intergenerational involvement, including coffee hour activities, Kids' camp, an Inside Out movie night, and a cookie exchange.
- Intergenerational activities were incorporated into the CUMC brunch March 16.
- The team will be involved in the Easter egg hunt.
- Other potential activities (not yet confirmed/scheduled) include a "people bingo" or trivia night with questions from different eras and events for "super seniors."

## **Genesis Bible Study with Pastor Jess**

During the months of March and April, Pastor Jess's Thursday morning Bible study will be on pause. Look for more information about the class restarting in May. Until then, please consider joining in our Wednesday evening Lenten study at 7:00 pm.



## Community Egg Hunt: Join the Fun



**Free Community Easter Egg Hunt**

**Saturday, April 12, 10 am**

Clinton Community Center  
Halstead St., Clinton, NJ

Eggs, Crafts, Refreshments & More

**Scavenger Hunt Follows in Downtown Clinton!**

Sponsored by the Clinton United Methodist Church  
[www.sentforothers.org](http://www.sentforothers.org)  
(908) 735-7025  
[office@sentforothers.org](mailto:office@sentforothers.org)

Want to share love with our community and raise Clinton UMC's visibility— right before Easter? Support our community egg hunt on April 12 at 10 am at the Clinton Community Center (next to the library). There are many ways you can help:

- Volunteer on April 12
- Come, and bring friends and family
- Share our social media posts
- Donate candy for the eggs we're hiding (by April 6)
- Help stuff eggs

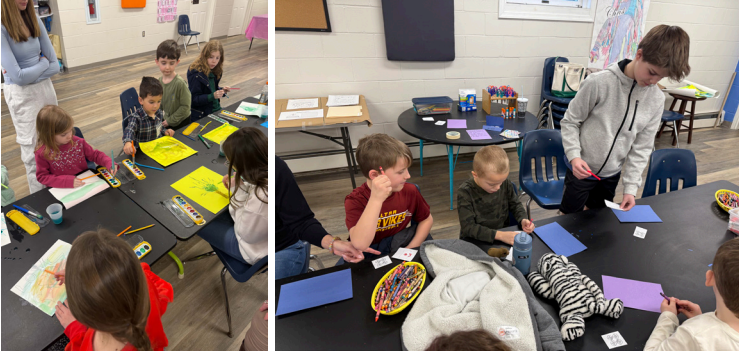
Contact Evangelism Committee Chair Kelly Lewis or the church office.

## Churchwide Work Day April 6



Help us beautify the church in time for Easter: Join us for a church-wide workday Sunday, April 6, at noon. Lunch will be provided. We'll be doing outdoor work, so bring your gloves and other gardening tools if you have them. Contact the Trustees or church office for details or to RSVP.

## Children's Ministries



### Sunday School

#### April Schedule:

4/6: Jesus' Arrest and Death

4/13: Jesus Is Risen!

4/20: Happy Easter! - No Sunday School

4/27: One Body

Over the next 13 weeks, children will hear parables of Jesus, engage with the events of Holy Week, and learn some important lessons sent to early followers of Jesus. We invite you to read together,

pray together, and write together as a family. See some specific ideas below to engage in these themes together.

#### Read Together!

The first four sessions of this quarter focus on parables, or stories, told by Jesus. Spend time together as a family reading some of your favorite children's books and Bible stories. Parents can also tell stories from their childhood to their children. Talk about any lessons that you can learn as a family from each story you read or hear together.

#### Pray Together!

During Lent, the children will sense many different emotions, from the high of Palm Sunday, to the low of Jesus' final meal with friends leading to his death on the cross, to the confusing high that Jesus is alive on Easter! Children will pray about the "mountains" and "valleys" in their lives for several sessions. Pray together as a family in the same way. Take turns talking about the highs and lows of life. What are the positive and negative moments from your past week? Offer them to God in prayer.

#### Write Together!

The final five sessions of this quarter will teach children about important messages to the early churches in letters sent by Paul and John. Work together to write letters and send them in the mail to family and friends. Even just a note to remind people that they are loved can make a huge difference.

If you are interested in volunteering for Children's Time or Sunday School, please contact Hailey ([hailey@sentforothers.org](mailto:hailey@sentforothers.org)) for more information!

QR code for Sunday School Volunteer Interest Form:



### Compassion Camp: What Every Living Thing Needs

**Save the Date: August 4-8, 2025**

Mark your calendars! Kids' Camp will be held August 4-8 this year from 9 am -12 pm. This year's theme is "Compassion Camp: What Every Living Thing Needs," and students will learn about how we can show compassion for ourselves, one another, and the world! Students will explore what all living things need - shelter, water, air, and community - and how they can show compassion for the living earth, especially in their local ecosystem.

This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to come together for a week of fun, fellowship, and spiritual growth. The camp is open to children going into Kindergarten through 5th grade.

#### Want to help make this event a success?

*Volunteer!*

**Our volunteer registration form is open**, and we would love to have you join us! If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions, please fill out the form below and contact Hailey ([hailey@sentforothers.org](mailto:hailey@sentforothers.org))!

*Spread the word!*

Send your kids. Invite your friends and neighbors. Kids' Camp is a major outreach event for Clinton UMC!



## Youth Ministries

Happy April!

Youth Group will be held on Sundays evenings from 5:30pm - 7:30pm for students in grades 4 - 8! Students are welcome to join as we share a meal, learn about our faith, and create memorable experiences with one another.

This month, we are continuing our series, Invited. In this 5-week series, we'll see what it's like when we celebrate all that God has done through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We'll celebrate that with Jesus, everyone's invited, and we'll celebrate who Jesus is. Then, we'll see how we're invited to remember what Jesus has done, let Jesus make us new, follow the Holy Spirit's lead, and how Jesus invites us to invite others.

### April Schedule:

**4/6:** Egg-stravaganza

**4/13:** Youth Group

**4/20:** Happy Easter - NO YG

**4/27:** Youth Group

If you enjoy working with youth and joining them on the journey of better understanding themselves, then we think you'd be a wonderful addition to our Youth Group volunteers. The volunteers are the heart of what the program is all about, and we would love for you to join us. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Hailey ([hailey@sentforothers.org](mailto:hailey@sentforothers.org)) for more information.

### Youth Sunday

**Sunday, May 4**

During Sunday morning worship, the children and youth will be hosting Youth Sunday. Students will participate in planning the service, and will lead the congregation in a morning of worship. We look forward to seeing you there!

QR code for Youth Group  
Volunteer Interest Form:



QR code for Spring 2025  
Youth Group Dinner &  
Dessert Sign-Up:



With love,

Hailey Becker

Director of Children's & Youth Ministries



## Prayer Chain

We would love to add you to our prayer chain to receive the prayers of our people each week. We appreciate every prayer that is lifted for healing and comfort for those who are in a time of need.

Call or email your request to the church office: [office@sentforothers.org](mailto:office@sentforothers.org) or 908-735-7025. Prayer is a treasure that is never exhausted.





## NH Thrift Shop



Spring into style with our latest spring/summer collection, boasting hundreds of fresh new looks that will take your wardrobe to the next level. Our shop is bursting with the latest spring/summer must-haves. Visit us regularly and discover something new. Weekly discounts pop up throughout the shop so be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date on our sales.

Spring Sale: our sanctuary will be filled with a collection of children's Easter clothing/shoes, flower arrangements, bird houses, garden decor and tools, garden themed household items and other miscellaneous springtime goods! One week only, Saturday, April 5 - 12 during our regular hours of operation.



The North Hunterdon Thrift Shop offers new and gently used clothing, home goods, linens, children's toys, books, vintage items and more to people who want to stretch their budget or reduce waste and pollution.

Donations are needed! Our donation shed is open 24/7 and is convenient and hassle-free. We love your donations, but please only drop off usable, in-working-condition, clean items. Accepted items can be viewed online at <https://www.sentforothers.org/northhunterdonthrift>.



Make a difference and meet great people—volunteer at the NH thrift shop. If you have a warm smile and a heart for others, this may be the ministry for you! You don't need experience, and you can choose days/times that work for you. For more information stop in during shop hours or call 908-735-0177, email [office@sentforothers.org](mailto:office@sentforothers.org) or visit us on Facebook or Instagram.

Come on in; we're more than just a thrift shop!

**Hours:** Monday: 8:30 am–12 pm | Wednesday: 8:30–12 pm and 3 pm–6 pm | Saturday: 8:30 am–2 pm

**Location:** 51 County Road 635, Hampton, NJ (corner of Norton Church & Charlestown Roads)

**Phone:** (908) 735-0177

Blessings,  
Volunteer Staff

## Celebrating April Birthdays



Kelly Femenella – April 5

Andrew Dunn – April 21

Marie Belanger – April 6

Ann Calvin – April 22

Jesse Melick – April 6

Chris Stone – April 27

Charlotte Johnson – April 20

## Care Committee

Do you join us for coffee and treats after worship? (Please do!) You can help us keep coffee time going throughout the year, and show your appreciation to the Care Committee, by signing up for an open date. If you have never participated before, don't worry. A Care Committee member will be partnering with you to help you serve.

Contact Nancy Smith ([nsbestemor41@gmail.com](mailto:nsbestemor41@gmail.com)) or the church office to let us know which Sunday works best for you.



### Shop Rite Cards for Sale

Every Sunday, Shop Rite cards are available for sale in the social hall.

**5% of all sales go toward our church mission.**

Please come prepared with cash or check made out to CUMC.



## CUMC Missions

CUMC is a missional church and the team has been focused on providing mission opportunities for all ages and skill levels. If you have any ideas for missions that you would like the church to be involved in, please reach out to one of the committee members. Here are some of the many ways you can help support our local community and beyond.

Our friends at Zion Lutheran church in Oldwick will be hosting a food packing event called Feed Our Hungry Children MobilePack on Friday and Saturday April 4 and 5. This is a fun event and there are many 2-hour slots available. Visit <https://zionoldwick.com/events/feed-my-starving-children-mobilepack-2-989-530-870/> to sign up or for more information. For more information on the organization Feed My Hungry Children, visit <https://www.fmsc.org/>

2) CUMC is the Family Promise host church March 30 through April 5. Support our neighbors experiencing homelessness by signing up to make or transport a meal for families in transitional housing that week. Sign-up sheet located in social hall or contact Brenda (908) 797-4731.

3) Have an enjoyable evening with some friends while supporting Family Promise. Come to the 6th Annual Trivia Night at Lone Eagle Brewery in Flemington on April 30, 6:30-8:30 pm. Enjoy food, prizes, and some team trivia. Go to <http://tinyurl.com/TriviaFP> for more information or to purchase tickets.

4) Donate to our upcoming diaper drive beginning March 30 through April 27. We are collecting baby and toddler size diapers, baby wipes, Balmex and Desitin for Harvest Family Success Center in Flemington. There will be a bin in the social hall. If you prefer, you may order from Amazon and have it delivered directly to Harvest Family Success Center, 5 East Main St. Flemington, NJ 08822.

To read more about the important work Family Harvest does in our community, visit <https://njprevent.com/harvest/>.

5) Join us on Sunday May 18 from 2:00-3:00 pm at the Country Arch Care Center, a nursing home in Pittstown. We will be getting to know the residents and playing some Bingo with prizes. For more information, contact Hailey Becker or Brenda Jaffe.

Thank you for your support. Happy Spring!

Brenda Jaffe

The Missions Team

## Kid Space Is Open and Staffed

Worship services can be challenging for families of young children, who love to move and wiggle. To provide a convenient space for kids age 0-4 and families to take a break, Clinton UMC offers a Kid Space Room just down the hall from the sanctuary. The room is filled with age-appropriate toys and also includes a screen where parents can watch the service.

Childcare staff members, Amanda Santiago and Jessica Buntine, are well prepared to care for your child. Parents have the option of dropping their little ones off or visiting the kid space room with them. Children are still welcome to stay in the service with their parents if that's more comfortable.



## Church Season

**Easter/Holy Week** is the week of Christian observances leading to Easter Sunday. It begins with Palm Sunday, April 13. Purple and red are the colors used at this time, which progresses through Holy or Maundy Thursday and then Good Friday (when the seasonal color shifts to black). It culminates with the Easter Sunday celebrations April 20, when the seasonal color is white.

The majority of the world's Christians, including United Methodists, have used the following means to arrive at the timing of our celebrations during Holy Week.

- Thursday evening: Last Supper and Great Commandment. After sundown marks the beginning of the first day (Eve of Friday). Jesus is arrested and tried.
- Friday morning: First day continues, and Jesus is executed, removed from the cross and buried.
- Friday sundown: Second day begins. (Eve of Sabbath/Saturday).
- Saturday (sunrise to sunset): Jesus lies in the tomb.
- Saturday sundown: Third day begins. (Eve of Sunday).
- Sunday morning: Third day continues and Jesus is raised from the dead.



## Photo Gallery



The church does not receive mail at 12 Halstead Street (the church) or  
10 Halstead Street (the church office).

**Ensure your mail is not lost: Send mail** to the church's Post Office Box in Clinton:  
P.O. Box 5331, Clinton, NJ 08809  
**Send packages** to 10 Halstead Street, Clinton, NJ 08809.

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# CUMC Staff

## **Rev. Jessica Brendler Naulty**

Senior Pastor

908-735-7025

Cell 908-400-2343

[pastorjess@sentforothers.org](mailto:pastorjess@sentforothers.org)

## **Sandi Graham**

Administrative Assistant

908-735-7025

[office@sentforothers.org](mailto:office@sentforothers.org)

## **Hailey Becker**

Director of Children's and Youth Ministries

[hailey@sentforothers.org](mailto:hailey@sentforothers.org)

## **Karl Dietel**

Accompanist

908-735-7025

[office@sentforothers.org](mailto:office@sentforothers.org)

## **Eric & Erica Rasmussen**

Directors of Digital Ministry

[erica@sentforothers.org](mailto:erica@sentforothers.org)

## **Amanda Santiago**

Childcare Staff

[office@sentforothers.org](mailto:office@sentforothers.org)

## **Beth Crawford**

Communications Director

908-442-3934

[beth@sentforothers.org](mailto:beth@sentforothers.org)

## **Rose Leonard**

Accountant/Bookkeeper

908-735-7025

[rose@sentforothers.org](mailto:rose@sentforothers.org)

## **Brian Repsher**

Sexton

[office@sentforothers.org](mailto:office@sentforothers.org)

## **Jennifer Gursky**

Choir Director

[jen@sentforothers.org](mailto:jen@sentforothers.org)

## **Jessica Buntine**

Childcare Staff

[office@sentforothers.org](mailto:office@sentforothers.org)