



Light for the Days Ahead

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." — John 1:5

A new year often arrives with a lot of noise—resolutions to keep, goals to set, expectations to meet. But faith reminds us that beginnings don't have to be loud or dramatic to be meaningful.

January offers us space to pause, to breathe, and to notice how God is already at work among us. The season of Epiphany invites us to look for God's presence not only in grand moments, but in everyday faithfulness—acts of kindness, quiet prayers, shared meals, and communities that choose love again and again.

As we begin this year together, my hope is that we remain rooted in grace rather than urgency. May we listen deeply, love generously, and trust that God's light continues to guide us—sometimes clearly, sometimes gently, always faithfully.

(continue to next page)

Welcome . . .

to the January 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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Thank you for being a community where faith is lived with compassion, honesty, and care. I am grateful to walk into this new year with you.

With hope,

Pastor Jess

Senior Pastor

pastorjess@sentforothers.org

908-400-2343 (cell)

January Sermon Series – Love Made Visible



This January, we will begin a new sermon series exploring the United Methodist Social Principles—our denomination's long-standing effort to connect loving God with loving our neighbors in concrete, everyday ways. Together, we will reflect on how our faith speaks into the social, economic, political, and environmental realities of our world, and what it means to live Christ's love with integrity and compassion today.

And if you'd like to dive deeper, we're offering a four-week discussion group beginning January 18 after worship.

Welcoming New Leadership to Clinton UMC

As we begin 2026, Clinton UMC welcomes a leadership slate that includes both new and familiar faces. If you missed our annual conference in October, here are the leadership highlights. For full details, ask Administrative Assistant Sandi Graham for an electronic or paper copy of the CUMC 2025 Annual Church Conference booklet.

Christine Burton continues as Chair of the Administrative Council, and Debbi Clewell continues as CUMC's Lay Leader. Our new Ad Council Secretary is Kelly Lewis; we are very grateful to Nancy Smith, who served as Secretary for three years (in addition to previously serving for several additional years).

Other changes in leadership include:

Greg Crawford is CUMC's new Christian Education and Community Groups Chair.

Kelly Lewis is our new Outreach and Evangelism Chair.

Also joining the Administrative Council this year is Lily Tonzetich, our Youth Ministry Member.

Clinton UMC's Generosity Team, which was established in 2025 by the recommendation of the Pathways Financial Sustainability Group, is co-chaired by Rev. Jessica Brendler Naulty and Beth Crawford; members are Chris Stone, Kelly Femenella, Pete Godshalk, Shannon Moyer.

Our church has a strong core of servant leaders. The full slate is published on page 11 of this month's newsletter.

Financial Update: 2026 Budget

Thank you for your financial support of Clinton UMC's ministries! This line-item budget shows our plans for 2026 alongside our 2025 budget and expenditures as of November 30. The 2025 numbers do not capture mission disbursements in December. See our February 2026 issue for a final accounting of the year. If you have any questions, contact Finance Chair Shannon Moyer or the church office.

	2025 Budget	Expenditures as of 11/30/2025	2026 Budget	
Administration/Maintenance				
Administration/Office	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 10,220.69	\$ 13,000.00	
Trustees	\$ 40,510.00	\$ 37,330.67	\$ 50,610.00	
Utilities (All Facilities)	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 44,021.45	\$ 55,000.00	
Finance	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 894.19	\$ 1,500.00	
Communications	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 1,851.21	\$ 4,000.00	
Denominational Ministry Connection				
Ann.Conf-CUMC Apportionment	\$ 9,091.00	\$ 8,336.13	\$ 8,840.00	
GNJ Shared Ministries	\$ 42,184.00	\$ 38,668.63	\$ 43,407.00	
Boy Scouts Settlement - 3 of 3	\$ 1,743.63	\$ 1,743.63		
Spiritual Growth				
Christian Education (All Ages)	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,696.78	\$ 3,000.00	
Worship	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,091.44	\$ 5,000.00	
Youth	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,067.70	\$ 3,000.00	
Mission and Outreach				
Evangelism/Outreach	\$ 750.00	\$ 679.01	\$ 1,500.00	
Missions	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 17,500.00	
NH Thrift Shop Expenses	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 10,603.70	\$ 10,000.00	
Staffing				
SPRC (Employees' Salaries/Benefits & Professional Fees)	\$ 289,300.00	\$ 272,676.06	\$ 325,088.00	
Congregational Care				
Pastoral Care Team	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 200.00	
CARE/Hospitality	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,735.34	\$ 2,000.00	
TOTAL	\$ 477,278.63	\$ 448,616.63	\$ 543,645.00	Estimated
2025 Operating Income		\$ 481,719.55	\$ 536,451.00	2026 Income
2025 Gain/Deficit		\$ 33,102.92	\$ (7,194.00)	

Pastor's Bible Study – Thursdays at 9:30 am

Our weekly Bible study will resume on Thursday, January 8th at 9:30 am in the church office. We hope you join in our study of the Gospel of Luke as we journey alongside Jesus through the Galilean countryside. Hear again the story of Jesus' ministry and dig deeper into what his ministry means for us today. Contact Pastor Jess (pastorjess@sentforothers.org) for more information.

Get Your Ministry Noticed: CUMC Communications

Whether you're planning an event or recruiting for a ministry, communicating the right messages through the right channels can help you raise awareness and increase engagement. If you want to get the word out, contact Communications Beth Crawford, who will work with you on a plan, messaging, and a call to action that fits your ministry's needs. Below are some ways that are typically used to communicate events and ministries.

Weekly Bulletin

Typical bulletin announcements include calendar updates, notices, and worship information. Announcements for larger audiences will be given preference.

Deadline: Tuesday, 5 pm. Typical run is 2-3 weeks.

Midweek News

This email covers timely events and announcements. Most messages cover events/information no more than four weeks out.

Deadline: Tuesday, 5 pm. Typical run is 2-3 weeks.

Newsletter

Covers ministries and missions in a little more depth. Due to space limitations, not all content submitted will be used.

Deadline: Typically the 15th of the previous month.

Verbal Announcements

Cover major events and missions, and are typically delivered by staff. Due to time constraints not all submissions can be included.

Deadline: Wednesday, 5 pm. Typical run is 2-3 weeks.

Indoor Signs and Displays

As with other communication vehicles, please obtain approval before posting signs and displays must be approved prior to posting. This helps maximize readership and minimize clutter.

Facebook, Instagram, and NextDoor

Social media is best used for special events, updates and timely messages. Photos are encouraged (with permission of subjects, particularly minors)

Photos

We love seeing and sharing your photos! Use [this link](#) to share your photos.

Pathways Inclusivity Update



CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH WELCOMES ALL:

- **AGES**
- **ABILITIES**
- **COLORS**
- **CULTURES**
- **GENDERS**
- **ORIENTATIONS**
- **NATIONALITIES**
- **BACKGROUNDS**



Our "Way Forward Covenant," adopted in 2024, makes clear our welcome to LGBTQ persons as well as persons from all backgrounds and walks of life. When we adopted the covenant, we focused on communications to our congregation and on our website. Now, our Inclusivity Team has completed the first phase of our external signage: outdoor yard signs. Thanks to an anonymous donor, we have a few signs available for free to those who want to display one on their lawn—and if needed we will order more. To receive a sign, contact the church office. This same concept will be used to create banners and other communications, so stay tuned!

Organizing? Recurring Giving Can Help

Are you organized for the new year? In less than five minutes, you can schedule your giving to Clinton UMC for all of 2026. Just update your pledge as needed and choose an option that works for you:

Online Banking. If you're already using your banks' online bill payment platform, it just takes a moment to add Clinton UMC to your list of payees. The process varies slightly by bank, but you will enter Clinton UMC's name and address (PO Box 5331, Clinton NJ 08809) and payment details. Because there's no cost to you or to the church, this is one of our most cost-effective options.

App. With mobile giving, you can give how, when, and where you prefer. Simply click on the "Give" icon and follow the prompts.

Don't have the app? Go to the Apple app store or Google Play store and download the app titled "Church Center." Once you have downloaded this app, it will connect you to a search for Clinton UMC using Clinton's zip code: 08809. You'll only have to do this once.

If you're reading our newsletter online, [click here](#) for more information on giving online.

Website. You can also give on our website: www.sentforothers.org. Find the "Give" tab near the top of the screen on the right side. Select "Set up recurring" to schedule repeating gifts.

If you're reading our newsletter online, [click here](#) for more information on giving through our website online.

Questions on recurring giving? Contact the church office.

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.

Contact Nancy Smith (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.

Children's Ministry

Happy New Year! We are so excited to enter 2026 with you all and share in the joy of church, community, and Christ!

Sunday school will be based on lessons from Current: Seeking God Together which is an exploration of 13 spiritual practices that can deepen and transform our relationship with God and others. These are individual and corporate practices that are explored in interactive, age-appropriate ways. The unit is divided into three sections: God Within Us (weeks 1-4), God

Above Us (weeks 5-9), and God Beside Us, (weeks 10-13). In January, the topics covered will include:

1/4: Praying

1/11: Making Time

1/18: Making Room

1/25: Honoring our Bodies



Sunday School Registration

As we continue throughout this school year, we are asking all parents to complete our 2025-2026 Sunday School Registration form. Please complete the sign-up by using the QR code or visiting our website.



Volunteer!

Our Sunday school program wouldn't be possible without our team of volunteers! If you are interested in volunteering to teach Sunday school, please contact Hailey Becker (hailey@sentforothers.org).

Youth Ministries



Youth Group, *Grades 5th through 12th*, Sunday Evenings from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Happy New Year! We are so excited to kick off the new year alongside your youth and look forward to sharing our faith journeys!

December Schedule:

1/4 Craft, Chat, & Snack

1/11 Debate Night

1/18 Discussion Night: Justice

1/25 Service Night



Youth Group Registration

As we continue throughout this school year, we are asking all parents to complete our 2025-2026 Youth Group Registration form. Please complete the sign-up by using the QR code on the right or finding it on our website.



Parent Communication

If you want weekly updates on Youth Group happenings, please join our Youth Group GroupMe chat via the QR code on the right.



Volunteer!

Enjoy cooking and want to provide nourishment to our youth group? Use the QR code on the right to sign up and provide a meal for our students! If you have any questions, please contact Hailey (hailey@sentforothers.org).



CUMC Missions

Thank you to all who donated toys for Project Self Sufficiency's Holiday Hope toy drive for families in need.

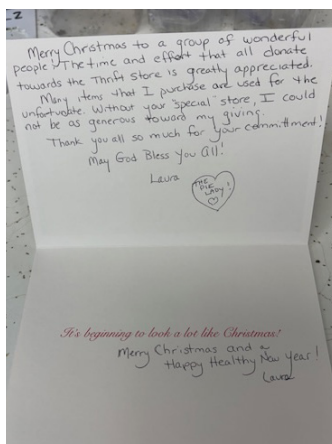
The missions team was able to distribute our final budgeted \$5000 equally among three Missions we support, thanks to your faithful giving. Open Cupboard Food Pantry, Good News Home for Women, and Family Promise of Hunterdon each received \$1666.67 to help with the important work they do.

As we begin a new year, we look forward to continuing to partner with the congregation to discover new ways to serve the most vulnerable in our community and throughout the world.

We wish you all a happy and healthy 2026!

The Missions Team

NH Thrift Shop



As we embark on a new year, all of us at the NH thrift shop thank you for your continued support and donations.

Through generous donations to the thrift shop we recently donated \$190.00 to the Open Cupboard Food Pantry. We continue to supply sleeping bags, backpacks and coats to Tina who hand-delivers them to the homeless in Easton. We received two thank-you notes, attached, from those who we partner with to help the needy. (One of our partners thanked us by making homemade pies for us!)

This month unwrap 50% off on all fitness wear. Additionally, weekly discounts pop up throughout the shop. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to stay up to date on these weekly sales and weather updates/shop closures.

Come on in to see what's new and have a chat with our friendly volunteers.

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 8:00 am – 8:00 pm daily 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>.

[sentforothers.org/northhunterdonthrift](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 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 am–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

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 or 908-735-7025. Prayer is a treasure that is never exhausted.



Thank You Note

Dear CUMC Family,

Thank you so much for your generous Christmas gifts! It's heartwarming to be appreciated—and please know that we appreciate you just as much. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you. It's an honor to serve alongside this amazing church family, and we look forward to another year of ministry with you.

With love,

Pastor Jess, Beth, Sandi, Jennifer, Karl, Hailey, Brian, Rose, Jess, Amanda, Eric, and Erica

Outreach & Evangelism Team

The Outreach and Evangelism Team, with other helpers, made and packaged over 200 chocolate-dipped spoons which were handed out to parade-goers at the Clinton Parade. With each spoon was a card inviting the recipient to come to the church after the parade for cookies and cocoa, hosted by our Care Committee, and to come, as well, to our upcoming events in December. This was a well-received offering out to our community. Our hope is that it provided people with enough of a welcome invitation to join us that we'll have seen some new faces over the Christmas season services.



Kelly Lewis,
Outreach & Evangelism Chair



Celebrating January Birthdays

Margaret Drew – 1/2

Chris Rice – 1/5

Blanche Milheim – 1/18

Lynette Stone – 1/20

Church Season

Christmastide:

The Christmas season immediately follows Advent. The traditional Twelve Days of Christmas begin with Christmas Eve on the evening of December 24 and continue until the feast of Epiphany which is on January 6.

The Time After Epiphany (Ordinary Time)

The first period of Ordinary Time, called the Season after Epiphany, begins on Epiphany Day and ends on February 17, the day before Ash Wednesday (the beginning of Lent). The central theme of this season is the calling of disciples and the early ministry of Jesus. The color for this season is **green**.

Photo Gallery



CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

LEADERSHIP FOR 2026

Nominations and Lay Leadership Development Report

The following persons are nominated to serve the ministry of Jesus Christ through the Clinton United Methodist Church. Positions take effect on January 1, 2026. Persons listed in **boldface** are new to that position.

Lay Members to Annual Conference (AC)

Beth Crawford

Alternate Lay Member to AC

Debbi Clewell

Lay Leader

Debbi Clewell

Administrative Council - 4th Monday at 7:00 pm via Zoom

Chairperson: Christine Burton

Secretary: Kelly Lewis

Pastor: Rev. Jessica Brendler Naulty

Trustees: Rich Burton

Finance: Shannon Moyer

SPRC: Laura Tonzetich

Lay Leader: Debbi Clewell

Lay Member to Annual Conference: Beth Crawford

Worship: Lisa Maul

Christian Education, Children and Youth: Hailey Becker

Christian Education, Adult & Community Groups: Greg Crawford

Membership Care: Elaine Peete

CUMC Care Ministry: Nancy Smith

Outreach & Evangelism: Kelly Lewis

Missions: Brenda Jaffe

North Hunterdon Campus: Greg Crawford & Nick Tonzetich

NH Thrift Shop: Elaine Peete

Communications/Publicity: Beth Crawford

Young Adult Member: Hannah Dunn

Youth Ministry Member: Lily Tonzetich

Public Theology Representative: Phyllis Pedersen

Member at Large:

Dick Peete

Pathways Goals Teams

Inclusivity: Beth Crawford

Engagement: **Greg Crawford** (Adult Ed) and Brenda Jaffe (Missions)

Financial Sustainability: Shannon Moyer (Finance)

Intergenerational Ministry: Robin Godshalk and Pete Godshalk

Staff Parish Relations Committee - 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 pm via Zoom

Chairperson: Laura Tonzetich **Lay Leader: Debbi Clewell**

Class of 2026

Steve Drew
Georgea de Medina
Grete Straube

Class of 2027

Priscilla Cartwright
Laura Tonzetich
Debbie Lenig

Class of 2028

Elaine Peete
Robin Godshalk
Bob Gliniecki

Board of Trustees - 1st Monday at 7:00 pm (hybrid in person and zoom)

President: Rich Burton
Vice-President: -----
Treasurer: Terry Oliver
Secretary: Mike Chen

Class of 2026

Terry Oliver
John Kluthe
Michael Chen

Class of 2027

John Uray
Corbin Payne
Richard Burton

Class of 2028

Donna Sims
Corey Ranauro

Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development - Meets as needed

Chairperson: Rev. Jessica Naulty **Lay Leader: Debbi Clewell**

Class of 2026

Phyllis Pedersen
Nick Tonzetich
Beth Crawford

Class of 2027

Chris Rice
Greg Crawford
Emily Dunn

Class of 2028

Karen Gliniecki
Dorothy Myers
Christopher Graham

Finance Committee - 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 pm (Via zoom)

Chairperson: Shannon Moyer
Treasurer: Nancy Smith
Financial Secretary: Rose Leonard
Lay Member to Annual Conference: Beth Crawford
Senior Pastor: Rev. Jessica Naulty
Chairperson/Rep, Administrative Council: Christine Burton
Chairperson/Rep of SPRC: Laura Tonzetich
Rep of Trustees: Rich Burton
Lay Leader: Debbi Clewell

Members at Large:

Kelly Femenella
Sue Murray

Chris Stone

Mike Stockl

Generosity Team

Co-chairs: Pastor Jess and Beth Crawford

Chris Stone, Kelly Femenella, Pete Godshalk, Shannon Moyer

Church Program Staff:

Communications Director: Beth Crawford
Administrative Assistant: Sandi Graham
Director of Childrens' and Youth Ministries: Hailey Becker
Choir Director: Jen Gursky
Directors of Digital Ministry: Eric & Erica Rasmussen
Accompanist: Karl Dietel
Volunteer Thrift Shop Manager: Elaine Peete
Bookkeeper: Rose Leonard

Care Ministry - 2nd Sunday at 11:15 am in person

Chairperson: Nancy Smith
Staff Liaison: Sandi Graham
Hospitality Ministry: Rosie Ranauro
Members at Large:
Bonnie Dorsey Bonnie Adair Sue Murray
Susie Stuart Priscilla Cartwright Marilyn Stowell
Joan Boehm Phyllis Pedersen Vicki Stoble
Ann Calvin

Adult Education & Community Groups

Chairperson: Greg Crawford

Outreach & Evangelism Committee

Chairperson: Kelly Lewis
Staff liaison: Beth Crawford
Emily Colo **John Kluthe** **Pam Rifino**
Robin Godshalk **Kelly Corby**

Missions Committee

Chairperson: Brenda Jaffe
Staff Liaison: Rev. Jessica Brendler Naulty
Chris Stone Lisa Maul Deb Clewell
Nick Tonzetich Mickey Stoble

Worship Committee - 2nd Monday of the month

Chairpersons: Lisa Maul
Pastor: Rev. Jessica Brendler Naulty
Communion Steward: Pat Tillisch
Aesthetics: Linda Williams and Grete Straube
Choir Director: Jen Gursky
Praise Band Rep: Jim Moyer
Digital Ministry: Eric and Erica Rasmussen
Communications: Beth Crawford
Members at Large:
Donna Zehnbauer Sue Murray

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.

CUMC Staff

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Senior Pastor

908-735-7025

Cell 908-400-2343

pastorjess@sentforothers.org

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Jessica Buntine

Childcare Staff

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