

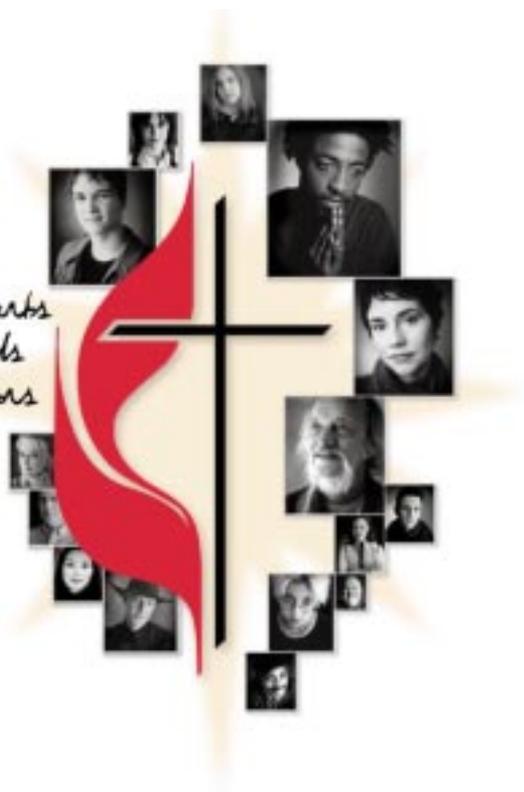
# The Messenger

## April 2019



The United Methodist Church, Clinton, CT  
Pastor Martha Rice Epstein

*open hearts  
open minds  
open doors*



The people of The United Methodist Church™



6:30 A. M. APRIL 21

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### Our mission statement

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



*From the  
Pastor's  
Desk*

*I look up to the mountains;  
does my strength come from  
mountains?*

*No, my strength comes from God,  
who made heaven, and earth, and  
mountains*

*Psalm 121 The Message*

Psalm 121 has been a favorite of mine for many years and I often use it at the graveside service when officiating a funeral. A few years ago I did a Bible Study on Psalms and discovered that this psalm was also used at the birth of babies in the Jewish faith because it says God guards you when you leave and when you return. I had always understood that to me our comings and goings throughout our days, not our coming into the world and leaving it. What a beautiful image. Then, just recently, I came across this Message interpretation by Eugene Peterson and I am now seeing it in a whole new light. Our strength, or help as it is translated in other versions, comes from God who made the mountains. What incredible strength our God has!

I have been looking to God for strength much more intentionally this last month. The stress and strain from the General Conference in St. Louis has created and exacerbated divisions in our denomination, our churches and in our families. The pain is running deep and people have reacted out of their hurt. Bishop Bickerton has called upon us to not return hurt for hurt and to take time to breathe.

One thing that has come forth as a result of this Conference is the authority of Scripture and how it is understood and interpreted. Although I was raised as a United Methodist I choose to be ordained in the UMC not just because it was what I was used to but because I deeply identified with Wesleyan theology, especially John Wesley's call to social holiness which Steve Manskar in the UMC Discipleship website explains, "is the practice of obeying Jesus' commandments to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, loving your neighbor as yourself, and loving one another . . . as Christ loves."

As you have already heard me say multiple times in these eight short months we have been together is how much I love studying the Bible. I love that every time I read a passage, especially in conversation with others, I learn more about God and grow in my discipleship. That is another reason why I cherish being a Methodist, because we are

encouraged to study the scriptures using the Wesleyan Quadrilateral. We start with scripture as the primary source for Christian doctrine and examine it in the context when it was written. Then we look at it through our tradition, the experiences and witness of development and growth of the faith through the centuries. Next we use our experience, our understanding of the faith in light of our own life. Finally, through reason we are to bring to bear discerning and cogent thought. When we continually apply this approach more and more is revealed to us.

We will be having ongoing discussions about the special sessions of the General Conference and our own New York Annual Conference. Our first church wide meeting will be on March 31<sup>st</sup> immediately following worship. At this time I will share with you the specifics of the Conference in terms of votes, what is being reviewed and what lies ahead. I will also share more in depth John Wesley's theology as well as Biblical and historical reflections. If you want to discuss this, or anything else that is on your heart, my door is always open.

Let us pray together, let us talk together, let us study the Bible together, and let us love one another. And let us remain true to our sign out front: "Open Hearts, Open Minds and Open Doors."

In Christ's Abundant Peace and Love,  
*Pastor Martha*

## **Spring clean up day**

Because of the weather last autumn, there are places that haven't been cleaned for a year! The Board of Trustees invite you to come on April 13 to clean up our buildings and grounds before Easter.

From 9 AM until noon (or until you finish your task) you can be of great use at 12 Commerce Street. Please bring tools if you prefer outdoor work. Indoor cleaning materials as well as doughnuts and drinks are provided inside.

*"Even if I knew that tomorrow  
the world would go to pieces,  
I would still plant my apple tree today."*

*Martin Luther*

## Month of Sundays

### April 7

Greeter  
Ushers  
  
Child care  
Children's church  
Sound coordinator  
Camera operator  
Worship leader  
Lectionary scriptures  
  
Sermon  
Communion steward  
Fellowship hostesses

### Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jessie Ryan  
Jeane Howard, Sherry Hynes,  
Rebecca and Richard Faust  
Gail Whitney  
Becky Faust  
  
Lyle Cubberly  
Isaiah 43:16-24; Psalm 126;  
Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8  
Pastor Martha Epstein  
Sue Morrison  
Barbara Cubberly and Laura Becker

### April 14

Greeter  
Ushers  
  
Child care  
Children's church  
Sound coordinator  
Camera operator  
Worship leader  
Lectionary scriptures  
Sermon  
Fellowship hosts

### Palm Sunday

Deb Anderson  
Sharon Minick, Ellen Hoyt,  
Lynda Larson, Bill Hancock  
Judy LeVesque  
Tammy Drena  
  
Ray Silvermale  
Mark 11:1-11; Psalm 118  
Pastor Martha Epstein  
Gbunbles and Templetons

## In your heart

If there is peace in your heart, you will find it impossible to hate.  
If there is honesty in your heart, you will find it impossible to judge another.  
If there is love in your heart, than that is all there is.  
Fear is gone, as is judgment and the desire for violence.

*Kim Hauenstein*

United Protestant Campus Ministries  
Cleveland, Ohio

**April 18, 7:00 PM**

**Holy Thursday**

Greeter

Ushers

Sound coordinator

Worship leader

Lectionary scriptures

Sermon

Communion steward

Sally and Alex Maxwell  
Evelyn and Dennis Scaglione

Jill Hale

Exodus 12:1-4; Psalm 116;

1 Corinthians 11:23-26;

John 13:1-17, 32b-35

Pastor Martha Epstein

Sharon Minick

**April 19, 7:00 PM**

**Good Friday**

Greeter

Ushers

Sound coordinator

Worship leaders

Lectionary scriptures

Sermon

Lyle Cubberly, Ray Lenda,  
Dave Moore, Bob Morrison

Jill and Juliana Epstein

Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22;

Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18-19:42

Pastor Martha Epstein



**Pretzel Sunday**

**March 3**

*Lydia and Natalie  
handing out pretzels*



# The Feast of the Deadline

Very few religious celebrations can be shared by liturgical and non-liturgical churches. Christmas and Easter are the obvious ones. But Anglicans resist the intrusion of Mother's Day and Baptists have little use for the feast of Saint Perpetua, virgin and martyr.

There is a season, however, that could be observed by all churchgoing Americans. Deadlinetide begins on January 1 and culminates at midnight on April 15, with an act of solemn mailing. I propose we proclaim April 15 "The Feast of the Deadline."

*Christianity Today*

## April 21

## EASTER

Greeter

Deb Anderson

Ushers

Jeane Howard, Sherry Hynes,

Rebecca and Richard Faust

Child care

Beth Kluz

Sound coordinator

Camera operator

Worship leader

Juliana Epstein

Lectionary scriptures

Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118;

1 Corinthians 15:19-26; John 20:1-18

Sermon

Pastor Martha Epstein

Fellowship time

Coffee, tea and breakfast leftovers!

## April 28

## Second Sunday of Easter

Greeter

Deb Anderson

Ushers

Sharon Minick, Ellen Hoyt,

Lynda Larson, Bill Hancock

Child care

Corinne Brown

Children's church

Karin Thelin

Sound coordinator

Camera operator

Worship leader

Roger Templeton

Lectionary scriptures

Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 150;

Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31

Sermon

Ray Silvernale

Fellowship hostess

Jill Hale

## Church finances

The Finance Committee chaired by Carl Engelhart met for the first time in 2019.

The expenses of the church average \$4400 per week. This might seem like a lot, but every time the parking lot and walks are cleared in the winter it costs at least \$75; insurance bills are more than \$1,000. Utility bills cannot be compared to an average household. Our church family and friends are quite numerous and happily use the buildings! We pay our apportionments to the Annual Conference and our bills on time, but this is difficult when church attendance is low and the offering even dipped below \$1,000 one week this winter.

You have undoubtedly noticed that we have had major problems with the aging heating system and repairs are costly, too. This may be covered by the trustees and that can be a “Church finances” message for another Messenger. Which entity pays for what?

Many churches ask their parishioners to donate their income tax refunds, but that may not be too helpful this year! Any help or suggestions for aiding our treasury will be greatly appreciated.

The committee is working on more timely financial reporting to the Church Council.

There were also two proposals regarding stewardship to be presented to the Council on March 13. These passed, giving access to more accounts for those involved.

Are you ready to adorn  
the Easter Chancel  
and enjoy some spring plants?

Please use the form on Page 8 or the envelopes from the pew racks; then get them to the Church Office by April 15th. Thank you!

## April book discussion

*The Passion of Artemesia* by Susan Vreeland is the book chosen for the meeting at 7 PM, April 29.

You are very welcome to join the club whenever you are interested in the book or have read it. The discussion and refreshments are enjoyed in Room 103 of the Kathy Fell Building.

## A memorial for Donna



There will be a lot of grounds work this spring and a beautiful churchyard next summer.

The Clever Crafters and Memorial Committee are working toward a peace pole in the garden area south of the parking lot. You may have seen poles like this. Pictured is one in an Avon, Ohio park. The exact wording and languages are yet to be determined.

If you wish to contribute in Donna's memory, please make your checks payable to: *The United Methodist Church of Clinton* and give to the church office or trustee treasurer Carol Bell.

---

## Easter Chancel Plants

Name \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of

in memory of

\_\_\_\_\_ Lilies @ \$8 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Hyacinths @ \$8 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Tulips @ \$8 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Daffodils @ \$8 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pick up my flowers after the Easter service.



APRIL  
BIRTHDAYS

9	Betty Andrew
11	Jeffrey Stevens
12	Emil Reinwald
15	Buddy Stigler
16	Jason Drena
17	Val Gilcher
18	Haley Parent
18	Auden Demers
19	Megan Lohutko
19	Alice Reale
21	LaVerne Atkinson
25	Johnna Sternberg
26	Avery Reinwald
28	Cathy Dangona
28	Charles Taczanowsky
29	Henry Taczanowsky
29	Howard Benisvy



APRIL  
ANNIVERSARIES

8	Amy and Tom Nicklis
19	Cynthia and Gary Stevens
25	Dale and David Moore
28	Vera and Jack Smith



Ray Silvernale and the Gonzalez Boys are making a diorama of Jesus and the apostles fishing!



Carolyn Gbunlee telling the story of Pretzels during Children's Church.

## United Methodist Hymn # 560

*This hymn based on the gospel of John 15:12 can also be our daily prayer. It can help us when we are impatient or can't understand another's view —*

Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;  
teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.  
Be present, Lord, among us, and bring us to believe  
we are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.

Teach us, O Lord, your lessons as in our daily life.  
We struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.  
Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,  
to love them as we find them or as they may become.

Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved  
in living situations to do the truth in love;  
to practice your acceptance until we know by heart  
the table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

Lord, for today's encounters with all who are in need,  
who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and bread,  
we need new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on;  
renew us with your Spirit, free us, make us one!

*Fred Kaan*

### UMC Teachers

My mother taught in one-room schoolhouses in Lake County, Ohio. Pastor Martha taught elementary and GED classes. Our Choir Director and several members of the Chancel Choir and the congregation are or have been Public School teachers. Did you ever wonder why? Perhaps it is in our "DNA". Philip Embury, Irish Methodist preacher, emigrated to New York City and became the first person to form a congregation in this country. He was a carpenter, treasurer, trustee and class leader in the John Street Church until John Wesley sent two ordained pastors from England.

Philip Embury once had an ad in the local paper -

<p><b>Philip Embury, teacher</b> reading, writing, and arithmetic in English</p>
--

*SAA*

## How strong is your house?

Remember the story of the Three Little Pigs? They each built homes with different materials and the wolf was able to destroy the first two, but not the third and strongest one.

Our church built in 1855 and the Kathy Fell Building in 1960 were built in keeping with their eras. The church building was supported in part with stacks of rocks upon which those four posts in Fellowship Hall rested. Probably in the early 1950s a cement floor was poured—in two stages which accounts for the rough line running from east to west.

A later “make-over” moved the church building’s furnace to the parsonage and reconfigured the office, enlarging it and moving the door from Fellowship Hall to the hallway.

If you can follow the above, it is understandable how we have pipes that go from here to there and back again - under and over - and for multiple purposes. So when a large puddle appeared in Fellowship Hall February 25, we checked the usual entry points through the foundation and Roy mopped. And mopped and mopped. Dick Bell and Jim Cave came in and discovered the water source - a small pipe under the western wall shelf.

What is it for? Where did it come from? Does it still serve a purpose? Only several days without heat and the plumber could tell.

While Curtis was painting Room 102, we noticed a small electric bell in a high corner. Where was the control? Were there other bells? When I first taught children’s classes here, at the end of Sunday School sessions the bells rang and the control was in the Sunday School supply closet. That is now the Soup Kitchen Pantry and the control there operates a much bigger bell in the lower hall of the Kathy Fell Building. Is there another bell upstairs? The mysteries abound.

At one meeting of the Church Council we had a discussion about the telephones in the Kathy Fell Building. Sharon Minick knew there was one upstairs, but choir members had never noticed any. Yes, the phone is still there and like the one outside the kitchen, only local calls will go through. That is because in the days when only the church office was locked, persons began using the church to make long-distance calls for which we needed to pay.

Much work is ongoing - the original Kathy Fell rooms only had two 2-prong electrical outlets. Those were wired in the days before projectors, coffee machines, etc. were considered. LTrain has just rewired Rooms 102 and 103 - No more fuses blown!!

Keep good records of work done on all your homes!

## **Our pantry closet is not as bare as Old Mother Hubbard's**

However there is much space left for the following items:

green beans	tomato sauce
carrots	pears
baked beans	mixed fruit
spaghetti sauce	coffee

Please bring all non perishable foods to the basket in Fellowship Hall. Anything not usable here will be delivered by Gary Hawes to the Food Pantry at the Congregational Church.

### **Mission news**

The church is now a registered charity with the SMILE donation program through Amazon. Amazon will donate .5% of your purchase to our church. It doesn't sound like much, but small amounts will add up!

When you are shopping at Amazon, just log on to *Smile.amazon.com*. Select *Clinton United Methodist Church (CT)*; then you may shop. There are several Clinton United Methodist Churches, so be sure you click on **(CT)**.

Thank you for using *Smile.amazon.com*!!

*Aern Pope*  
Mission Chair

### **Did you know?**

The earliest Methodist churches in New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore all began meeting in rigging lofts. In New York they met in a 60 by 18- foot loft at 120 Williams Street. Lofts were large and cheap to rent.

If you want to see a rigging loft, go to Mystic Village.

### **Four sayings that lead to wisdom**

1. I was wrong
2. I am sorry.
3. I don't know
4. I need help.

## The Fourth Day

One of the Fourth Day programs that I have been involved with has been South Central Emmaus. On this weekend high school age youth are offered a short course in the Christian way of life. Times of quiet reflection, inspiring talks, uplifting music and in depth discussion occur throughout the weekend. It is laity-run but two or three clergy serve as spiritual directors. It has been a joy for me to serve in this capacity both as the team prepares before the weekend and on the weekend itself. The first time I served I went to “direct” the youth and ended up being touched by the Holy Spirit in a life changing way. Candidates, as the youth are referred to, come from a variety of religious ecumenical backgrounds. Some have no connection to a church while others are P.K.’s (preacher’s kids ☺).

Juliana has been participating for the last four weekends (every year there is one in the spring and one in the fall). This is what she shared about her candidate weekend: *“Emmaus is a great experience. I’m really shy but the people are so nice and welcoming and accepting that by the end of the weekend I didn’t want to leave.”* After that she immediately went on the team, which prepares months in advance. *“I’ve made many friends and it gives me a sense of community that I know will never go away and will always be there for me whether I am participating in the weekend or not.”*

We are both on the team of Weekend XLI, which will be held April 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>. If you know a teen that would benefit from this wonderful experience please see Juliana or me for a brochure and application or to answer any questions. Adults are also welcome to come as observers so if you are interested in this let us know. Also, we need as many prayer angels as possible, so please sign up for that. You can either sign up in Fellowship Hall or go to <http://www.southcentralemmausct.com/> and sign up on the website.

Oh Juliana’s final word is *“the food is really good too!”*

*Pastor Martha*

## Emmaus

The Walk to Emmaus (the program for adults) seeks to inspire, challenge, and equip leaders for Christian action in their homes, places of work and communities. Read more about this in the folders found in Fellowship Hall.

## Church family notes

Bill Hancock has donated an office chair to the church, for which we are grateful!

*Sue and Roy*

Dear Deb and UMC of Clinton Outreach,

Thank you for the adorable handmade items you sent to us a while back! So sweet and thoughtful labors of love — we appreciate you all!

Lots of love,

*The Community Crossing Staff*  
West Virginia

## *Our Sympathy*

to Donald Buell and his children upon the passing of Janice on March 20. Janice and Don came to the UMC of Clinton in 1969.

She graduated from UConn with a Master's Degree in Education. She worked at the Gibson Card Company in Guilford for several years. Janice also leaves two children, John and Sharon and two grandchildren Kyle and Erin Gonzales.

Services were held Thursday afternoon, March 28 in Clinton.

## Spring cleaning

Spring is a great time to get your house in order, and that includes your estate plan.

As spring approaches, take some time to check your estate planning documents to make sure they reflect your current wishes. Laws change, your assets change, your situation changes. Have you moved? Has your marital status changed? Have you provided care for your young children? Changes such as these require a refreshing of your estate plans.

I chose the cover illustration for April after we got the news about those Methodists who do not believe in welcoming, loving or reasoning.

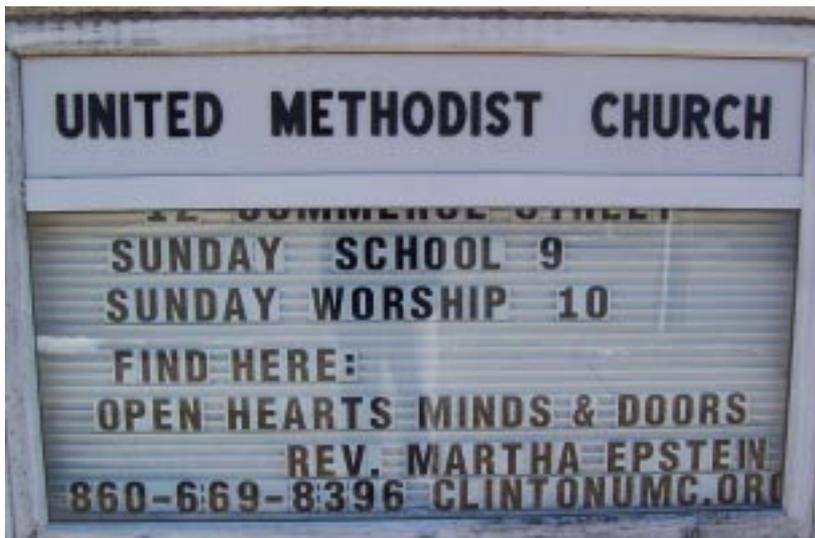
*Editor's Corner*

What great harm will come to the church that “advertises” through a General Conference vote that we do not love or trust those who are not just like us?

It is now left to us as individuals and as one local church to spread the word that all are welcome to worship here.

Some thoughts of the Office Staff - can we block out “Methodist” on our street signs? Shall we drape the sign on the front lawn with black crepe as the fire company does when someone dies? The Milford UMC used a rainbow-colored drape! Everything is now being considered by the Judicial Council since the approved plan is more restrictive than even the Discipline before.

I am reasonably confident that the New York Conference will continue to allow pastors and weddings for those of differing gender persuasions, but I am concerned that our friends and neighbors won't know that.



What each of us can do is welcome all who come to worship here. No matter how you feel about persons of a different age, nationality, race or gender — all are God's children and therefore our brothers and sisters.

Open hearts...Open minds...Open doors — spread the word.

*SAA*

## The information page

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860-669-8396 or churchoffice@clintonumc.org  
Lay Leaders: Bob Hale and Mickey Brown  
Council Chair: Ray Silvernale  
Trustee President: Barbara Cubberly  
Treasurer: Carol Bell  
Financial Secretary: Jackie Blomberg



*Find us on Facebook*

<i>Worship service</i>	<i>10 AM Sunday</i>
<i>Classes</i>	<i>9 AM Sunday, September to June</i>
<i>Crafters</i>	<i>10 am - 2 PM Monday</i>
<i>Soup kitchen</i>	<i>5:00 PM Wednesday</i>
<i>Boy Scout Troop 55</i>	<i>7:00 PM Thursday</i>

If you have a smart phone scan this code for electronic contributions. You may also go to [www.clintonumc.org](http://www.clintonumc.org) and click on "Donate" to set up one time or recurring electronic giving. It is quick and easy.



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