Dear Clinton United Methodist Church Family and Friends,

I am delighted to share with you the following Lead Pastor’s report, which I presented at our Church Conference. Praise God for all the blessings!

“Building Bridges”

Greetings! I am off to a great start at Clinton! It has been a wonder-full journey since I began my pastoral ministry at CUMC. Thank you to all of you for your enthusiastic and warm welcome with a beautifully renovated parsonage; delicious meals; heartwarming welcome messages, gifts and cards; many “meet and greet” gatherings; one-on-one conversations; and a memorable installation service and celebration. My heartfelt thanks to SPRC, Transition Team, Trustees, Staff, volunteers for the parsonage renovation project, and church leaders.

Our signature greetings are “Happy Sunday!” and “Happy Church!” We are a church which delights in sharing the joy of the Lord with everyone.

What is unique about CUMC? We are “sent for others” by growing as a relational, vital and missional body of Christ!

• We are a relational church deeply rooted in the love of God in Jesus Christ. Relationships matter!
• We are a vital congregation with effective and committed lay servant leaders who live out their faith every day. Faith is everyday!
• We are a missional church ready to touch lives, serve others, and change communities and the world. We serve!
For this year, I celebrate several signs of vitality and grow in our ministry, including:

- Baptism of 14 young children and two adults
- 21 active community groups (small groups) and Bible study groups
- Welcoming of 17 adults and 7 children who were added to our church membership in October
- A thriving youth ministry, which is raising up enthusiastic young disciples of Jesus Christ
- An inspiring “Reach 908” local mission and 14 youth at this year's IGNITE gathering
- A dynamic children's ministry
- A joyful "Kids Camp" (VBS) with 60 children and 30+ adult and youth volunteers
- A fruitful praise band and choir with 30 volunteer musicians and singers
- A renewed sense of joy and hope among our leaders and members
- A growing number of our laity eager to volunteer and serve

Surely, God is blessing us to grow as a multi-site church in more expanded areas of ministry in four campuses — namely, Clinton, Raritan, North Hunterdon and Online. This means that we need to think more regionally by connecting the dots among these four campuses. It takes a mission-driven people to grow a vital ministry, and I believe God is calling us to draw a circle of love wide and wider.

So, I invite us to focus on building bridges among ourselves, various ministries, fellowship groups, and committees. At the same time, let us build bridges of friendship and partnership with communities related to our four campuses. Let’s explore effective ways to build relationships and increase our community engagement, witness, and mission.

In the same vein, I am focusing on three goals for my pastoral ministry with you:

1. relationship building
2. financial vitality
3. leadership development

Clinton UMC is a vital, loving and healthy congregation, and I praise God for our dedicated and gifted lay leaders and staff who serve so faithfully. I express my deep thanks to my spouse, Rev. Dr. Jennifer Cho, for her love and indefatigable support for me.

I look forward to a fruitful year of ministry with you in 2020! God bless you all.

Joyfully and Faithfully,
Lead Pastor Brandon Cho
brandon@sentforothers.org • 908-735-7025 Ext. 1

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**Sermon Series**

"The Missional Church" sermon series continues.

How do we lead a dynamic Christian life? How do we develop a vital congregation? The answer lies in our Lord Jesus’ Great Commission: “Go and make disciples of all nations…” (Matthew 28:19). This is our mission as individual disciples and as a church. God is inviting us to be the Missional Church — the Church eager to make disciples for our Lord with joy and love.

During this sermon series, Pastor Brandon will serve as your traveling guide on your missional journey: multiplying disciples and ministries that transform many lives and the world. God is ready to use us and our church to make a big impact in our communities and the world. Join us!

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Scripture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/3</td>
<td>The Missional Church: Engaging Culture</td>
<td>Matthew 13:18-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/10</td>
<td>The Missional Church: Building Bridges</td>
<td>1 Corinthians 9:16-23</td>
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As we plan for 2020, now is a good time to pause and celebrate the mission and ministries of Clinton UMC. We offer spirit-filled worship, vibrant next-generation programs, supportive community groups... and much more.

Your continued generosity and support make all this possible. Throughout the month of November, please consider and pray about how you might plan to take a step forward in your generosity in 2020. This doesn’t mean just in monetary ways. How will you engage in 2020 as a disciple? How will your hands be put to the work of the kingdom? What need do you see in our community that our church can begin to address?

On November 24 we’ll celebrate the ministries of Clinton UMC and consecrate our plans for 2020 giving with a special service.

Please save the date:

Consecration Sunday
Special Guest Speaker
Eric Drew
November 24,
9:30 and 11:00 am

“Go and make disciples.” As Pastor Brandon noted in his cover article, this is our mission at Clinton UMC.

In today’s post-Christian society, “making disciples” often looks different than it used to. For one thing, it’s no longer a given that the majority of a community will show up at church.

If the community doesn’t always come to us, then we need to be more intentional about going to them. We’re a relational church whose people are gifted in connecting with others, and we are making the most of that gift out in the community.

The Main Street Half Marathon and Expo on October 12-13 are examples. We hosted a selfie station at the Expo and a water station at the marathon. One runner asked, “Who are you cheering for?” She could hardly believe we weren’t there for a particular runner, but for everyone! In a world where religion can get a bad rap, we can shine a light. We can serve. We can show others we care. And we can do all of this because you give.

Note of Thanks

Dear CUMC
Our fall Volunteer Training went well. We appreciate Clinton United Methodist Church sharing your Fellowship Hall. The space is very nice and works well for our training. Having a supportive community partner helps us to provide advocacy services to children from our community who are in foster care.

Karen Cassano
Volunteer Trainer
CASA SHaW
Thank you for continuing to pray and support our calling to reach the people of Raritan Township! Over the past month, our Core Team has been working diligently to discern the Spirit’s direction for Raritan Church. We stand firm in our faith that the Lord is providing direction and opportunities for us to meet needs and foster connections in Raritan Township.

As we wrap up this quarter and start looking into the upcoming season, we feel as though we need to zero in on three areas of focus:

1. **Community Groups** - To build up our community and foster connections, we will focus on growing our Raritan-based community groups before expanding to worship services.

2. **Community Engagement** - Through strategic and intentional involvement in community-wide events, we will create opportunities to share about Raritan Church and connect with the people of Raritan Township on a broader scale.

3. **Location** - As we are establishing a baseline of communication and connection through community groups and community-wide events, we will be diligently searching for a space to hold our regular, weekly worship services.

Keeping these focus areas in mind, we are currently in the process of prayer and discernment for this new campus. At this time, you can join us in prayer for Spirit-led direction and community connections!

Thank you for your continued prayers and support during this season of discernment and momentum building. We are confident in God’s call on us as a church to reach more people with his love. Please stay tuned for further updates, opportunities to serve, and ways to pray!

Blessings,

~ Mecan Payne
Interim Raritan Lead

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**Hanging of the Greens**

Please join us on **Saturday, November 30 at 9 am.**

We will be beautifying our church, inside and out. This is a fun, fellowship time where the joy of the Christmas season is shared by all! Come and enjoy hot coffee and baked goods while making new friends and helping to make our church ready for the holiday.
This quarter, our youth are stepping into a season of mission! We will be doing one mission project a month as well as participating in other outreach opportunities as we study what it means and looks like to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Our October mission was to create “tie blankets” for children in our local hospital. 22 youth created 9 blankets in one hour!

Our November mission will be creating “blessing bags” for the homeless in our region. In December, we will be shopping for Christmas gifts that will be given to local families. Additionally, the youth will be participating in IGNITE Community Day, an initiative by the Next Generation Ministries of the Greater NJ Conference. At this event, our youth will be facilitating and participating in a large-scale worship night. The goal is to create a positive, Spirit-filled experience for students who are new to church or youth group!

~ Mecan Payne, Director of Youth Ministries
mecan@sentforothers.org 908-735-7025

November Events

- Sunday, 11/3 Mission Activity
- Sunday, 11/10 Youth Progressive Dinner
- Sunday, 11/17 IGNITE Community Day
- Sunday, 11/24 No Youth Group
Children’s Ministry

Our Sunday School children have been learning about the life of Moses. Our theme has been courage—being brave enough to do what you should do, even when you are afraid. We talked about the courage that Moses’ mother had when she put her baby in a basket in the river and trusted that God would keep him safe. We talked about the courage that God gave Moses to allow him to stand up to the Pharaoh. We discussed the different ways that we can rely on God to give us courage when we feel afraid.

We have also been working with rhythm sticks, something that the children have particularly loved. Rhythm sticks teach rhythm and coordination skills and also give the kids the opportunity to have a lot of fun “drumming” along to worship music. At October’s combined service, the children performed with the rhythm sticks to “Word of Life” by Jeremy Camp.

We had many of our children volunteer at the Main Street Half Marathon Clinton UMC’s water station, cheering and passing out water and Gatorade to the runners! Liam Case was our youngest volunteer and did a very impressive job!

During October we began collecting shoeboxes for our Operation Christmas Child campaign. We will continue to collect boxes through the first week of November.

Faith Evers, Director of Children’s Ministry
faith@sentforothers.org

Moms’ Group

Our Moms’ Group meets one Saturday a month from 9:00 am - 11:00 am.

Next Gathering:
Saturday, November 16

Babysitting is available but must be reserved in advance.
All moms are welcome!

Want to learn more? Contact Jill Puleo at 908-455-0706 or jillpuleo@comcast.net.
One of the key items that the Trustees have been focused on is to increase the ease of access to our worship areas. High on the list is to add a lift/elevator option. Our original plan was to be able to start this project in August of this year after Kids Camp.

We started our effort in November of 2018 by sitting down with our building architect to discuss types, location, regulatory requirements, costs, etc. It turns out that it is not as simple as just going out and installing a lift/elevator. There is a maze of local and state regulatory requirements that must be met. While there is not enough space here to share with you all of the hoops we have been required to jump through, suffice it to say it took a land use attorney and a professional engineering firm to help us navigate the process and provide all the required documentation. Trustee Bill Engisch has been invaluable in leading this project.

We filed all our paperwork in February of this year and after two public hearings, in July we were granted preliminary approval of our plans, with some conditions attached, of course. For example, we had to prove we had a NJ EPA permit to disturb the wetland on which parts of the social hall sits.

We have spent the last several months fulfilling the conditions; however, the extended process has caused us to miss our original August target start date. With winter approaching, the Trustees have now decided to delay the start until late next spring when weather conditions will be more suitable for outside work.

Let me share with you what is planned:

- At the rear of the social hall, the current basement door area will be demolished to make room for a new external structure housing the lift/elevator.
- The new lift/elevator will be accessed from the rear parking lot. It will be a “3 stop” lift: parking lot level, basement level and/or social hall level.
- To the left of the lift access area, there will be a new set of steps and a door to the social hall basement area.
- Lift/elevator access to the upper social hall area will be located on the back wall of the social hall in the area between the two bathrooms.
- Some minor rearranging of the spaces adjacent to the new elevator/lift will also be required.

All of the above will be paid for with existing capital funds so no new fundraising effort will be required. And that, my friends, closes out another very busy year for your Trustees.

~Dick Peete, Trustee President

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**Help for Hurting People**

Are you or someone you love going through a tough time? Our trained Stephen Ministers provide Christ-centered, confidential care to people who are hurting. They meet weekly with individuals and walk with them through difficult life situations, including grief, divorce, job loss, and illness. Stephen Ministers provide emotional support; they are not a substitute for professional counseling.

If you think you might need a Stephen Minister or want to learn more about Stephen Ministry, contact [beth@sentforothers.org](mailto:beth@sentforothers.org).
Mission Possible

Being Good Stewards

Being a missional church as opposed to a church in mission means that mission — being the hands and feet of Jesus Christ — is a 24/7 proposition.

It can be as simple as holding the door for someone, offering a word of encouragement to a friend, or something bigger like spending a few hours visiting people at Rolling Hills or sorting groceries at Norwescap. Or yes, taking a week’s vacation to spend on Appalachia Service Project, Discovery Service Projects, or Habitat for Humanity.

But another critical and crucial component of a missional church is being good stewards of funds that are designated to missions. In fact, one of the guiding principles of our missions team is to be sure that the missions line in the budget is close to $0 as frequently as possible.

To that end, the team recently designated the following disbursements:

- CUMAC 600
- Friendship Center for New Beginnings 600
- Good News Home for Women 600
- Raritan Valley Habitat for Humanity 600
- Harvest Family Success Center 600
- Life Choices 600
- Market Street Mission 600
- Norwescap 600
- Pastor’s Discretionary Fund 850
- LAMM Institute 850
- LCC International/Hannah Schundler 850
- Family Promise of Hunterdon County 850

That’s a total of $8,200 and cleans out the missions budget. But every week, 10% of everything that is collected on Sunday goes into the mission budget. So in a short time, we’ll be ready to send some more critical funds to the organizations we support.

And remember, if you support an organization with your service and your resources, and would like CUMC to support it as well, please let us know!

NH Thrift Shop

NH Thrift Shop going to Safe Harbor Easton

We are planning to visit the Safe Harbor in Easton, Pennsylvania, on November 7; you are invited to be a part of this mission. We will meet at the thrift shop at 10 am, returning in the afternoon. We will be working alongside Safe Harbor’s team, distributing clothes to those who are homeless. We are looking for at least eight volunteers; however, more are welcome! Email Danielle Banes, NH Thrift Shop Manager at danielle@sentforothers.org to sign up. We are collecting new packages of men’s and women’s socks and underwear and backpacks to donate to this mission.

Men’s Ministry

Hey guys! We pride our church on being a place to have fun as well as to worship. Being a fun-loving guy, I’ve been asked to be the Chairman of the Men’s Ministry Committee. Since we have a Tuesday night men’s group, they naturally became my committee. At our first meeting, we put together an outline of proposed activities, many of which require warm weather, such as a fishing trip, a golf outing, backyard Olympics (bocce, horseshoes, frisbee golf, cornhole), skeet shooting, and sporting clays. The indoor activities include bowling and shuffleboard.

We currently meet at 7:30 pm on Tuesdays at my home and all are welcome. There are seven regulars and occasional visitors. Four of us are or have been Stephen Ministers, so if you want to air something out, we can act as a support group. We do insist on confidential conversations, so we can speak freely.

Our first publicized activity is a men’s breakfast to be held Saturday, November 2, at 7:30 am at Gronsky’s Milk House, 125 W. Main St., High Bridge. All are welcome. From past experience, the cost is usually about $12 each.

We are looking for other ideas for fun activities. If you have suggestions or want more information, please contact me at alex.vasilantone@gmail.com or text me at 908-500-0220.

Alex Vasilantone
Chair, Men’s Ministry
**Flower Dedications**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Message</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/3</td>
<td>Nancy &amp; Bob Smith</td>
<td>in celebration of their son Aleck’s promotion to Colonel in the US Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/10</td>
<td>Debbi Clewell</td>
<td>in memory of her parents, Robert &amp; Elfie Mitzel</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/17</td>
<td>Eleanor Irons</td>
<td>in memory her husband, William Irons</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/24</td>
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Sign-up for altar flower dedications is located in the hallway. Feel free to write your dedication in the spaces provided for the week of your choice. The cost of the flowers each week is $35, which you can place in the offering plate with a note designating altar flowers.

**Show You Care: Share Coffee!**

Our weekly Sunday morning fellowship time held between services, enjoyed by so many, is staffed each week by those in our congregation. We are in need of hosts for Coffee Time in December. **Sign-ups are on the bulletin board in the social hall.** We encourage any who would like to share in this vital ministry to participate. Thank you!

Every Sunday, ShopRite cards are available for sale in the social hall. Five percent of all sales go toward our church mission. In the past, we have used these funds to provide the beautiful pew cushions in the sanctuary and to help pay for the air conditioning in the social hall. Please support us and come prepared with cash or check to purchase your grocery gift cards.

**Contact:** Nancy Smith  
**Email:** nsbestemor@embarqmail.com  
**Phone:** 908-735-7276

**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 trial. You may also join us in the sanctuary each Thursday at noon to pray for our friends and loved ones. Prayers may be sent to the church office through our app or email. Prayer is a treasure that is never exhausted.
CUMC Photo Gallery
CUMC 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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