



# The Corner Stone

## Stone Church ~ The Church on the Green

*The purpose of Stone Church is to be an inviting, spiritual community of Christ, engaging in worship that inspires and challenges us to learn and grow as we reach out in caring and service, trusting in the love of God.*

**MAY 2025**

### WORSHIP AT STONE IN MAY

#### **May 4, 2025 – Third Sunday of Easter – The Lord's Supper**

Acts 9:1–6 *The conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus.*

Psalms 30 *God has turned mourning into dancing.*

Revelation 5:11–14 *Angels by the thousands sing praise in heaven.*

John 21:1–19 *The risen Jesus feeds his disciples breakfast beside the sea.*

Sermon: “Just One More Thing” – Pastor Scott Leonard preaching



#### **May 11, 2025 – Fourth Sunday of Easter, Shepherd's Sunday**

Acts 9:36–43 *The raising of Dorcas.*

Psalms 23 *The Lord is my shepherd.*

Revelation 7:9–17 *The worship of the saints in heaven.*

John 10:22–30 *Jesus' sheep hear his voice.*

Sermon: “The Great Ordeal” – Pastor Scott Leonard preaching

#### **May 18, 2025 – Fifth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 11:1–18 *Peter's vision of inclusion changes the church.*

Psalms 148 *Praise the Lord from the heavens.*

Revelation 21:1–6 *John sees the new heaven and new earth.*

John 13:31–35 *Jesus gives a new commandment.*

Guest preacher Helen Tracy



#### **May 25, 2025 – Sixth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 16:9–15 *Paul baptizes Lydia, the first Christian in Europe.*

Psalms 67 *Let the people praise God.*

Revelation 21:10, 22–22:5 *The holy new Jerusalem comes down.*

John 5:1–9 *Jesus heals a paralyzed man.*

Sermon: “What a Wonderful World” – Pastor Scott Leonard preaching

*(A)bide your time.*

“May is the month of expectation, the month of wishes, the month of hope.” – Emily Brontë

Though it doesn't happen all that often, once again, we have a whole month outside of Ordinary Time with no special holidays or observances. Specifically, in May 2025 we have the third through the fifth Sunday of the Eastertide season, but no church holiday; we had Holy Week and Easter last month and Ascension and Pentecost next month, but nothing special this month.

And unlike Holy Week, which about 1/3 of the Gospels devote their content, we have very little about what happened after Jesus' resurrection and before his ascension. Matthew ends with Jesus appearing to the disciples in Galilee, seemingly a short time after the Resurrection, saying “go and make disciples of all peoples.” Mark ends just with an empty tomb and a “young man” telling the women “he is risen” and for the disciples to go to Galilee to see him. Luke ends with the Ascension of Jesus outside of Jerusalem but it reads as if it occurs on the Day of Resurrection or shortly thereafter. John does have Jesus appearing a week after his resurrection to Thomas and the other disciples and then some indeterminate time later with the disciples fishing and Jesus appearing and ending up telling Peter, “Feed my sheep.” It is only in the Acts of the Apostles 1:3-4 where we learn from Luke that “After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.” But no real details during those 40 days. Was Jesus with them the whole time? Periodically? What specifically about “the kingdom of God” did Jesus speak?

The only other mention of Jesus post-resurrection appearance is when Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15:4-8, “that he [Jesus] was buried and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James [Jesus' brother], then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.” When did he appear to the 500 people and where? What did he say? What did the people say? Inquiring minds want to know.

We don't have the answers. We don't have factual accounts narrated by objective reporters that our modern minds would like. We don't even have any first-hand accounts at all of Jesus outside the Bible, let alone his post-Resurrection appearances. Not very satisfying to the “doubting Thomases.”

What we do have are people telling the story of Jesus. They didn't write it down as history to be studied later by people; they shared their experiences and the message for others to share and live in the joy that they had. The disciples could easily have just gone back to just fishing or joined the Zealots in fighting the Romans. But they didn't. Instead, they proclaimed the Good News even at the risk of their own lives. And after his own unique encounter with the Risen Christ, Paul did a complete 180 and went from being the biggest persecutor of Christians to being their biggest apostle (literally, “messenger”). So something happened, something for them to devote (and sacrifice) their lives to spread their controversial message: God loves us so much that his Son gave up his life that we might have eternal life. And in gratitude that we love others as God loves us in word and deed.

Perhaps what was discussed in those 40 days we can find in the gospels and echoed in the rest of the New Testament, so there was no need to document that specific time period. It seems Jesus was more concerned that disciples' hearts and minds were right rather than writing down what was right. Faith is not a recipe. It cannot be reduced to a checklist. We often cluck our tongues at the scribes and Pharisees in the gospels as being too hidebound to the letter of the law and yet so many people today do the same and cite scripture to oppress and suppress others while enriching their own lives. As 1 John 3:17-18 says, “How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love not in word or speech but with actions and truth.”

We are not to just bide our time during these 40 days in remembrance of the resurrected Jesus here on earth; we are to use the time as the disciples did: to abide in the resurrected Jesus through the Holy Spirit that our minds might be more opened to the meaning of the scriptures and how we might, as Paul writes in Ephesians 5:1-2, “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.”

Shalom,

*Scott*

## THE PASTOR'S

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## **Historical Period Revisited---A Glimpse into Stone Church's Past**

### **The Ordination and Career of The Reverend Dr. Brewster (Budge) Gere**

The Gere family lived in Clinton from 1947-1972 where Brewster Jr.'s father was the Chair of the Math Department at Hamilton. Budge, as he was known to all, and his sisters, Judith and Meg, got their start not only in the Clinton School system but the family also attended Stone Presbyterian Church. In fact, Budge felt that the Reverend Howard Adams, who taught his eighth grade Confirmation Class when he joined Stone Presbyterian, had considerable influence upon his decision to ultimately become a minister.

After graduating from Williston Academy in Easthampton, Massachusetts, Budge attended and graduated from Dartmouth College in 1966. The next year he taught high school English in Hamilton, NY. and coached its hockey team along with Colgate's freshman team.

From 1967-1970 he attended Princeton Theological Seminary. Following graduation, on Sunday afternoon, June 14, 1970, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Utica as a Presbyterian minister. Members of the Committee on Ordination included Rev. William Loan, pastor of the Whitesboro Presbyterian Church; the Rev. J. Harold Thompson, pastor emeritus of the Little Falls Presbyterian Church; and the Rev. John Tomlinson. Also participating in the service were Stone Presbyterian Church Elder "Bud" Morgan, a favorite coach and teacher of Budge's; Budge's sister Judith, then a student at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School; and the Rev. Gerald Platz, pastor of Stone Presbyterian Church.

Upon ordination, Budge began his ministry, serving first at the First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Following five years in Michigan, in 1975 he and his wife Anne, whose career was as a professor of English first at the University of Washington and then at the University of Michigan, moved to Seattle, where Budge served the Wedgwood Presbyterian Church. During those years he received a Doctor of Ministry degree from Princeton Seminary. In 1987 it was back to suburban Detroit for 11 years where Budge was pastor of at the Farmington Hills Presbyterian Church. In 1998 he was called to be pastor/head of staff of the First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. His last installed position, from 2006-2013, was back in Ann Arbor at the same church where he began his ministry, the First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor. Since that time, Budge has remained active in ministry, serving several Detroit area churches in an interim pastor capacity and as a guest preacher.

When asked to reflect upon his career and what led him to ministry, Dr. Gere remarked, "Stone Presbyterian was key to my early interest in the church and the possibility of becoming a minister. I will always be thankful for its role in my spiritual growth and development that did in fact ultimately lead to a fulfilling career as a pastor from 1970 until the present. Thank you, Stone Presbyterian Church!"

Midge Bakos



## **MISSION—MAY 2025**

I'm not sure exactly when, but sometime as the last century ended, it became necessary for a visible Mission Statement to be part of an organization to be deemed *real*. This was not a Central N.Y. fad, but a necessity throughout the US and beyond its borders. I can remember having to write one at work as did my daughter who lives on the other side of the world. It also was necessary to make sure the statement's meaning was evident to the world beyond work. Stone Church was not exempt from this: we too have a Mission statement that graces our weekly Sunday bulletins and our monthly Cornerstone.

Our statement states:

The purpose of Stone Church is to be an inviting, spiritual community of Christ, engaging in worship that inspires and challenges us to learn and grow as we reach out in caring and service, trusting in the love of God.

While our Mission statement doesn't hammer us about our responsibility to provide for those less fortunate than we and seems to assume we live by the all-important "Love the Lord, your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" and "Love your neighbor as yourself," it can easily be said that the congregation is expected to work hard to reach out in caring and service in various ways. By loving God, we also accept the grace bestowed upon each of us, deserving or not.

Additionally, it's not a big stretch to say we all should appreciate and be grateful for this gift of grace and, without excuses, do what we can to pass on our grace. One way to use this gift is by sharing our good fortune with all, especially through abundant thoughtfulness and generosity towards others. A major tenet should be "Others do not receive 'leftovers' but what they need to prosper and succeed." This all sounds lovely, but, alas, we easily get caught up in that which is going on around us so we aren't always as thoroughly thoughtful and useful as we should be. We forget, let slide, and share only a little bit of our time and talents and so forth. Our Mission statement is a big umbrella but we aren't always ready to jump under it and fulfill our responsibilities.

Stone Church tries to minimize our human shortcomings by providing reminders. We put notices in Sunday bulletins, we maintain an online Church calendar, announcements are made in church and our thoughtful Church office manager emails us and sends us catchy messages and the Cornerstone is written to thoroughly encourage us towards faithful service following Christ's footsteps. We also have established a system and "schedule" to enable all to participate in sharing and providing help. What follows is a brief summary of this system and notes about "SPECIAL" events in May.

The first Sunday of the month is Deacon's Sunday. Our "loose change" can and should be put in the collection plate to support all the work the Stone Church Deacons do. There is no way for anyone who attends Stone Church to overlook the presence of our incredibly active, thoughtful and caring Deacons. From care of the homebound and ill, to love, concern and service to families who have had a death or other overwhelming issues in their family, the Deacons are there with food, comfort, and help. For all the projects and programs that are part of our Church life, the Deacons provide support. The importance of hospitality after our Sunday services and for special events is always managed by the Deacons. Providing gifts for staff and those most deserving, and remembrance for anniversaries, birthdays and special occasions, the Deacons are there. It seems so very appropriate to start a month thinking of our Deacons who are such a big part of our mission umbrella.

May 2025 will start with a Lunch and Learn after Church on May 4. Kirk Petrie will share his research among Stone Church members regarding the importance of music in worship and in individual's relationships with God and worship at Stone Church. Since music is always chosen as one of the keystones of Stone Church's spiritual offerings, we all should be fascinated as Kirk shares what he learned about our attitudes and reactions to music. A delicious lunch, including coffee, tea, juice and desserts will be offered by the Deacons. Again, their care and attention to each of us will be obvious as we enjoy the Norton Room and each other's company as part of this Lunch and Learn.

## **SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS –APRIL 14, 2025**

- Scott Leonard bought a book “Argue Less and Talk More”, as a result of discussion at the last Presbytery leaders weekly meeting and he’s hoping he could learn from to share with session members.
- Yu Jeang “YJ” Hwang started worshipping with us and would like to become a member. Scott Leonard is arranging a time for them to meet.
- Scott Leonard reported that the Lenten series had been well attended of 30 to 35 folks and the last week there were 45.
- After Christine Menard contacted Sherry Robinson that the carillon was out of music, Sherry was able to contact Emily Massis and who was able to reprogram it April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 which will keep the carillon set for a year.
- Christine Menard e-mailed that the LogMein software license for remote access had to be renewed and the price is higher this year. Chris Menard also gave Ceil Gilbert the materials needed for the audit.
- John Stiefvator reported that light switches and outlets are labeled with markers to match circuit breakers. There are 6 circuit breaker boxes and the church office has a list where each breaker is located as well as the switches and outlet to that circuit breaker.
- The May newsletter will have more about the One Great Hour of Sharing.
- On May 4<sup>th</sup> Kirt Petrie, a Religious Studies major from, Hamilton College will speak at a lunch-and-learn on his research on use of sacred music in churches, including Stone Church.
- Sherry Robinson wrote up some guidelines for the Memorial Committee members who agreed with them. Sherry Robinson printed the guidelines for Emily Hughes to review.
- Linda Rance would like to meet to discuss a memorial garden.
- A request was made for a new sign showing church hours and approved. Emily Hughes to research a portable, lightweight sign that the dates can be easily changed and that follows the town’s guidelines for signage.
- Pat Joseph reported net sales \$5,006 which is up 61%.
- Because of the road construction goods will be sold in front of the church. They are working out details for the Art & Music festival in order to get the cart of goods over to the Park.
- Session agreed deacons could have a bake sale Community Collection Day on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## **HAMILTON COLLEGE RELIGION CLASS VISITS STONE.**



Hamilton College religious studies professor SB Rodriguez-Plate brought his “Imagining Religions” class down the hill on 4/23/25 for their annual tour of the Village of Clinton sacred spaces, including Stone Church. Once again Pastor Scott Leonard, using the 45 minutes of his 30-minute allotment, gave them a tour of Stone Church bolstered by all the research we did last year for our Sacred Sites Open House. The students were very engaged and enjoyed the visit—particularly since it ended up in the “old bowling alley”, now the Fair Trade Shoppe!

**HOPE HOUSE WISH:** Special needs for Hope House this month are gloves, cereal, hot chocolate, shampoo, conditioner, and bar soap. Please bring in donations anytime, but especially on the 4th Sunday of the month that we've dedicated to Hope House donations. Any questions - call Lora Schilder at 315-790-1945.

**THE COUNTRY PANTRY:** The Country Pantry served 827 families last month. Any donations will be appreciated as well as the \$10 donation which will feed one family. Checks can be mailed to the Country Pantry P.O. 76 Clinton, NY.

Remember, the 3rd Sunday of the month is designated for the pantry, however, you can drop them off any time at church or in one of the distribution bins around town.

**THE FAIR TRADE SHOPPE:** Mother's Day is a celebration honoring the mother of the family or individual, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in society. It is a day for acknowledging their contributions to families and society, expressing love and gratitude. Treat Mom to something special!

- Perfect for everyday use or for a trip to the farmer's market, our hand-crafted 100% cotton Sunshine Crochet Market Bag from Nepal in a bright sunshine yellow is sure to become a fashion staple. Each bag is crocheted entirely by hand, embellished along the top with an eye-catching design.
- Hand carved from sustainable and fast-growing mango wood, our beautiful Floral Trinket Box from India features a rich, dark cherry stain and all-over intricate floral details, making it a beautiful way to hide trinkets, necklaces, office supplies and more in plain sight.



These and MANY, MANY MORE uniquely handcrafted gift items from 38 different countries can be found at our **FAIR TRADE SHOP, STONE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 8 SO. PARK ROW, CLINTON**. Our hours are 10am to 4pm every Thursday, **SECOND SATURDAYS**, and by appointment by calling 315-853-1070. Purchasing fair trade items ensures artisans and small farmers fair wages and healthy working conditions, providing dignity, sustainable development and hope for marginalized people. **LET US BE YOUR GO-TO GIFT SHOP!**

Visit us at <https://buildingstonesshoppe.square.site> or [www.facebook.com/buildingstonesfairtradeshoppe](http://www.facebook.com/buildingstonesfairtradeshoppe).



**THE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION** will hold a **DRIVE-THRU PIE SALE** from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at Stone Presbyterian Church. We will have several different kinds of delicious homemade pies available for your shopping pleasure. You can drive up to the curb and purchase a pie without leaving your vehicle. The proceeds from this sale will go to the various mission organizations that we support annually. Come visit us, you won't regret it! For more information, contact Ceil Gilbert (315-853-8289), [ceilgilbert@yahoo.com](mailto:ceilgilbert@yahoo.com) or Donna Goodfriend at 315-749-4085.

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The third Sunday of the month, we support one of our main Mission projects – **the Country Pantry**, the Clark Mills, Westmoreland and Clinton area food bank. Their list of requests has been posted in our previous Sunday bulletins (fair notice for us to buy what they really need not leftovers in our pantry!) and items put in the front of the Sanctuary are brought to the Country Pantry for their distribution day. The Country Pantry also gratefully accepts cash or checks with this money used for the “extras” that are always needed. Money in envelopes marked for the Country Pantry can be put in the Sunday collection plate and will be sent to The Pantry.

Note: Additionally, Stone Church makes sure community events supporting the Country Pantry are well publicized and supported by our church. **Saturday, May 3 is Community Collection Day** with **The Country Pantry** as recipient of money and donations. Mary Chamberlain has organized the community bake sale which will be held at Stone Church and we all are asked to contribute tasty homemade baked treats. Money realized from the sale of breads, pies, cakes, cookies will all be part of the array supporting the Country Pantry.

The last Sunday of the month is the Sunday when Stone Church especially remembers and supports **Hope House**. Hope House offers needy or homeless individuals a daytime opportunity for shelter, a hot nutritious meal, a safe, comfortable place to sit and rest for a while and, if desired, a referral to any human service. As possible Hope House also tries to offer assistance in meeting other basic needs, but its first purpose is feeding all who come in hunger. Once a month, Stone Church volunteers go to Hope House in the afternoon, work as requested and help serve a dinner. The last Sunday of the month, by church members bringing “especially needed” items to the front of the Sanctuary, volunteers are able to take these needed things to Hope House. Hope House also gratefully accepts cash or checks which are used for the “extras” that are always needed by clients. Financial assistance in envelopes marked “Hope House” can be put in the Sunday collection plate and will be sent to Hope House.

The information regarding our Sunday collections as part of Stone Church’s mission to serve others has basically ended. However, a bit more must be said. Of great importance among all of these Missions is the Fair Trade Shoppe which is integral to what Stone Church has chosen as important to its congregation and to how the church fits in the larger world. Each Sunday our Church bulletin contains a paragraph of interest regarding the Fair Trade Shop. Generally the paragraph highlights a product found in the Shoppe and something interesting about it and why it is part of the Shoppe inventory. The expectation is that whether a person volunteers to work in the shop, or simply use the Fair Trade Shoppe as a “go to” place for gift shopping, this knowledge will at least be shared and ultimately the item will be sold, thereby benefitting craftspeople, entrepreneurs and others. Our Fair Trade Shoppe truly fulfills our mission statement by “reach(ing) out in caring and service, trusting in the love of God”. The Fair Trade Shoppe is another way we serve our God.

## **CLINTON AREA MINISTERIUM LENTEN SERIES**

On 4/8/25 we concluded our ecumenical Lenten Study series hosted at Stone Church with our fifth session on spiritual practices with Holy Week Rituals led by Fr. Dan Caruso, the new priest at St. Mary’s Catholic Church. We had our biggest gathering yet of about 45 people. All the sessions were well-attended and we had wonderful soups, bread, and desserts from each of the parishes. Many thanks to moderators we had each week: the Rev. Dr. Joanna Benskin, Pastor Scott Leonard, the Rev. Abel Roy, the Rev. Janet Griffiths, and Fr. Dan Caruso. Also, we are extremely grateful to our deacons for assisting with hosting. We received many compliments on our hospitality!



## PRAYER REQUEST

Richard Raitt & Family  
 Pat Joseph  
 Ewa & Tom Lawrence  
 Phil Conley  
 Nancy & Will Eisenhower  
 Grace & Frank Whittemore  
 Carol Sherman  
 Ruth Hughes  
 Mike Brittan & Family  
 Erik Jones  
 The LaFont Family  
 Patsy Glista & Family  
 Andrew Bering



Stone Church has an online giving tool called **Givelify** that is also available as an app on your smart mobile device. Check it out on our web page.



A BIG thanks to all my church family for my beautiful bouquet of flowers for Administrative Day! I am so blessed to have such great people in my life!

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

6 - Donna Goodfriend  
 9 - Tanya Hamshar  
 10 - Jesse Miller  
 Leanne Miller Hirshfield  
 16 - Sara Coe  
 18 - Paige Pavlot  
 22 - Zachary Blanks  
 26 - Debbie LaFont  
 29 - Dianne Tuttle



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!!

5-13-83 Debbie & Tim LaFont

5-20-67 Pat & Buzz Joseph



**DON'T FORGET:** Mother's day is **Sunday, May 12th**. Let's make her feel appreciated with a hug, flowers and words of encouragement!



**COMMUNITY COLLECTION DAY:** Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, from 9am-12pm on the Clinton Village Green, sponsored by the Clinton Area Ministerium. People are asked to bring non-perishable food items or donations. In exchange for the donations people can drop off items for recycling: electronics, books, jewelry, bottles & cans, hearing aids, eyeglasses, and used socks. In addition, there will be trash pickup around the green, live music, and a bake sale at Stone Church. Spread the word and come support!



**BAKE SALE** on Community Collection Day, May 4th to benefit the Country Pantry. The sale will be held in front of our church from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. (or sold out)



## **MEMORIAL COMMITTEE**

The group is responsible for managing memorial gifts, recommending uses for undesignated funds and ensuring contributions are used in accordance with the wishes of the contributors or family often within a church or organization.

**Managing Memorial Gifts:** Memorial Committee oversees the administration of memorial gifts, keeping records of contributions and ensuring they are used appropriately.

**Recommending Uses for Undesignated fund:** Committee makes recommendations for how undesignated memorial funds should be used, often in consultation with the Pastor or leadership.

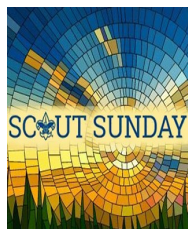
**Recognizing & Distributing Gifts:** The Committee will play a role in recognizing & distributing gifts in memory of members & friends. Ensuring compliance with donor wishes. The Committee works to ensure contributions are used in accordance with the wishes of the contributors or family of the deceased.

**Maintaining Records:** They keep records of gifts and memorials to the church.

**Consulting with families:** They may consult with families about appropriate memorial.

**Planning Memorial Services/Events:** The committee may also be involved in planning memorial services or other memorial or events to honor the deceased.

**Maintaining Memorial Spaces:** Some committee members are responsible for maintaining memorial gardens, labyrinth or other memorial spaces.



## **SCOUT SUNDAY** (Belatedly)



On February 2 we celebrated Scout Sunday as part of our worship service. Scouts from Troops 44 boys and girls in Clark Mills and Cub Scout Pack 9 in Clinton participated in the service. Pastor Scott (an Eagle Scout himself and former Scoutmaster of the troop Stone Church sponsored) included in his sermon a story about his first campout—a cold, wintry Klondike Derby in January 56 years ago! Thanks to adult leaders Howie Schafer, Michael Dodson, John Nasci, Sarah Heitzmann Inserra, and Kristin Lange Reichert for initiating and coordinating the event.



**WANTED: YOUR PER CAPITA!** Please note that per capita payments for the New Year are now being readily accepted!!! The 2025 per capita charge this year is \$46.04 per member, the same as last year. The church is assessed this amount for each member on the membership roll. The per capita is the cost of our representative democracy as a church and supports the meetings and operations of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. Please consider sending your per capita either directly to the church office (P.O. Box 33, Clinton, NY 13323) or enclosing it in with your pledge envelope. It is helpful if you pay the per capita explicitly even if it comes from your overall financial commitment to the church for the year. Thank you in advance for your help.



**MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE:** We enjoyed another wonderful Tenebrae service with beautiful liturgy developed Rob Kolb. Thanks to Lauralyn Kolb and Donna Goodfriend as the liturgists assisting Pastor Scott Leonard.



## **OUR EASTER TOMB**



has been transformed into a realistic-looking stone tomb with a faux stone wall behind it. To begin the process, Lee Kelso, our Sexton, helped Donna Goodfriend build an internal brace in the original cardboard tomb to strengthen it to support the additional weight of the material that would be added to it. Donna found the stone fabric and Trisha Harris, an art teacher, came up with the technique to use it to cover the tomb. Donna and Trisha stuffed the individual stones on the tomb to make it three dimensional and the rest of the stone fabric



became the wall behind the tomb. The result is a beautiful 3-D tomb in a garden that we can all enjoy for the Easter season and in years to come!

## **GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE:**



We celebrated a wonderful ecumenical Good Friday service sponsored again by the Clinton Area Ministerium. Thanks to the Rev. Dr. Joanna Benskin for coordinating the service and wonderful liturgy and St. James Episcopal Church for hosting and providing a very tasty soup lunch! Thanks also to the Rev. Abel Roy (Clinton United Methodist Church), the Rev. Janet Griffiths (LutheranCare), the Rev. Deacon Jean Skinner, and Pastor Scott Leonard (Stone Church) for participating in the service.



## **ECUMENICAL EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE:**



It stayed dry, though cloudy and bit brisk at the village gazebo for our Clinton Area Ministerium sponsored Easter Sunrise Service! We had about 45 people, including about 17 Hamilton College students. Thanks to the Rev. Abel Roy (Clinton United Methodist Church) for coordinating the service and CUMC providing the music (Julia Omelko) and sound system (Bob Turner), Pastor Scott Leonard for preaching the message, and the Rev. Dr. Joanna Benskin (St. James Episcopal Church) and the Rev. Janet Griffiths (LutheranCare) for participating

in the service—and for Utica Coffee being open afterwards, which Pastor Scott and the Hamilton College students took advantage of!



## **EASTER SERVICE:**



We had another wonderful Easter service filled with marvelous music by a full choir led by Rob Kolb, beautiful flowers that adorned the chancel, and the new awe-inspiring empty tomb and garden that replaced the Lenten desert thanks to Donna Goodfriend and Trish Harris!



## **THE DEACON'S CORNER**

“WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW IS LOVE, SWEET LOVE.”

IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT THERE'S JUST TOO LITTLE OF.”

I remember hearing that song when I was in college. It was written by Hal Davis and Burt Bacharach. At that time the US was deeply divided over the Vietnam War. Additionally, the recent assassination of JFK, the specter of nuclear war and the ongoing civil rights movement contributed to a sense of national unease. The song was a call for unity and compassion in a world often divided by conflict. It suggests that love and kindness are the most important things needed for a better world, emphasizing the importance of empathy and understanding.

The song's message remains as relevant today as it was when it was first released, offering a powerful message of hope in a world facing numerous challenges. Being members of the Stone Church family we have all been touched by the love and kindness of so many. The world could take a lesson from all of us!!!!

Love, Your Deacons

**LUNCH & LEARN:** We were fortunate to have Celia Bogan, Director of Operations at Hope House, join us on April 6th as the speaker at our learning lunch. In the 20 minutes or so that Celia spoke, we learned a great deal about Hope House's mission and the good work they are busy doing in the community. But, by focusing on stories, Celia also gave us a clear picture of just who it is that needs and is helped by the services provided by a place like Hope House. Without using names, Celia took us on a journey through the lives of her guests and the many different ways they are served by Hope House and its staff. I think we all learned a lot from hearing Celia speak and came away with a renewed and even deeper appreciation for the work that Hope House does and the need for our congregation's continued support of their very worthy mission.



**CELEBRATION OF LIFE SERVICE FOR SUE RAITT:** After an extended time in hospice, Sue Raitt was joined with the saints at 6 p.m. on Good Friday 4/18/25. She was surrounded by her whole family. Pastor Scott Leonard conducted a memorial service on 4/26/25 at Stone Church with loving memories shared by Sue's daughters Becky and Jennifer and grandchildren Karlee and Gregg with 90 people in attendance. Sue, along with her husband Dick who survives him, was a long-time active member of Stone Church and PEO (Philanthropic Educational Opportunities). Many thanks to the deacons for all their help, including hosting a sumptuous reception after the service. The obituary can be found online:



<https://owenspavlotrogers.com/tribute/details/3487/Sue-Raitt/obituary.html#content-start>

**DON'T FORGET THE DEACONS** on the first Sunday of each month. All of the loose money collected on those Sundays will go to support the ministry of the Deacons.

 **The Corner Stone**  
**Stone Presbyterian Church**  
**P.O. Box 33 (8 S. Park Row)**  
**Clinton, NY 13323**

Non-Profit Org.  
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

**Hello**  
**MAY**

**Scott Leonard, Commissioned Pastor**  
**Cell: 315-723-7420**  
**Email: [srleonard@roadrunner.com](mailto:srleonard@roadrunner.com)**

**Rev. Gerald R. Platz, Pastor Emeritus**

**Director of Music: G. Roberts Kolb**

**Office Manager: Janice LeFrois**

**Sexton: Lee Kelso**

**Office: 315-853-2933**

**[www.stonepres.org](http://www.stonepres.org)**

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**Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. in person, streamed & recorded on Facebook Live**  
**Church Office hours: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. weekdays**

**Newsletter team:**

Many thanks to Mary Chamberlain, Bev Miller, Donna Goodfriend & Barb Greene who have folded, taped and labeled this issue of *The Corner Stone* just for you!



**Please note...**

The deadline for the issue of the June newsletter is May 20th.

**To see a color version of this newsletter in pdf format, visit [stonepres.org](http://stonepres.org).**