



# *The Messenger*

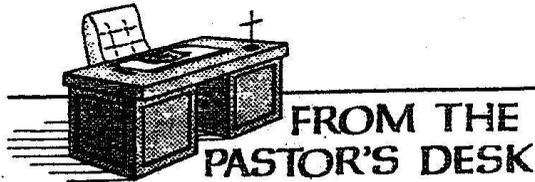
## Grace United Methodist Church

16 Hillcrest Drive

Ravena, NY 12143-1409

Rev. Judith Johnson-Siebold, Ph.D.  
Pastor

Rev. William F. Rogers, S.T.M.  
Pastor Emeritus



**October 2013**

Dear Friends,

It has been said that Fall "is the season that teaches us that beginnings and endings are part of our experiences; though autumn represents the fulfillment of cycles, fulfillment must also bring ending. And it is the season that reminds us that maybe we are not our own; we neither mark nor control all the paths we may take.

And like all the season, autumn teaches that these aspects of our lives are not negotiable - they are part of our experience in this world. School buses, soccer practice, apples, grapes, this is the stuff of our daily life. But our response to changes, renewals, endings, and the confusing mix of day-to-day moments - this is the stuff of our spiritual life.

Perhaps the first lesson of fall is just this: that paradox and rush and routine and change will come, inevitably and inexorably, as suggested in Debra Rienstra's poem...*Autumn*.

now is the wind-time  
the scattering, clattering  
song-on-the-lawn time  
early eves and gray days  
clouds shrouding the traveled ways  
trees spare and cracked bare  
slim fingers in the air

dry grass in the wind-lash  
waving waving as the birds pass  
the sky turns, the wind gusts  
winter sweeps in  
it must it must

Since it must it must, autumn asks us to grapple with this truth that we in North America are often so eager to avoid: that life is uncertain, and that our quest to find the means to live with that knowledge is, at its deepest, a spiritual quest." (Schmidt and Felch, *Autumn. A Spiritual Biography of the Season*, Skylight Paths Publishing, Woodstock, VT., pp xiv-xv)

The world in which we live is not accustomed to looking at life through spiritual lenses. It requires communities of faith, like Grace UMC, to point out the connection between life's events and the spiritual issues beneath them. People are not born understanding religious values and divine intentions; they have to be carefully taught.

As we embark together on a new school year, it is a good time to remember that one of the many crucial functions of the Church is our responsibility to learn and to teach. While worship, mission, evangelism, and fellowship are certainly important, it is imperative that we know Who we worship, the reason for our mission and evangelism, and the One Who leads us into fellowship with others. God calls us to constantly grow in our Christian understanding.

Grace and Peace,  
*Pastor Judi*



## SUNDAY SCHOOL IN OCTOBER

The focus of the lessons for October in the Sunday School is God's workings through David, the shepherd boy, king, defender, and father. The following activities will enhance the lessons:

*October 6* – Baking with Kate  
Robertson

*October 13* – Karate with Ray  
Bradshaw

*October 20* – Making Worship Shakers  
with Cindy Bliss

*October 27* – Temple-building with  
Sue Eccleston

## EVANGELISM COMMITTEE Looking Back and Looking Forward

Because the Ice Cream Sundae fundraiser to benefit The Matthew Project was so successful, the Evangelism Committee has decided to make this an annual event in conjunction with the Huge Book Sale. (See the thank-you card that we received – posted on the bulletin board.)

We also celebrated the success of the Nail Cross Necklace ministry and the Prayer Blanket ministry. Three more blankets were ordered recently. The

Bargain Shed donated several fleece blankets for children (thanks to Jean Lyons) which will have the "red heart" logo embroidered on them and will be offered for only the cost of embroidery ...\$5.00.

Since our committee would rather make deposits to the church account rather than withdrawals (we spent \$190 at Staples for the school supplies donation), we discussed ideas for community distribution of "Holiday Flyers." It was suggested that since we post flyers for fundraising events... why not post an invitation to attend one or more of the holiday events at Grace. If anyone has a creative idea on how we can present this message, please let Pastor Judi or Phyllis Shook know. So far, the message is "Where are you spending Christmas this year?"

We're also tossing around a new idea for hosting a **free** community dinner. There was much discussion about providing transportation for folks who may be shut-in or otherwise unable to attend our holiday events or the community dinner. Many of the larger churches have a van for this purpose. We may not have a big budget but we do have a friendly, welcoming congregation. And so...

"Would you be willing to offer a ride to someone this holiday season?"

We'd like a few people to contact when someone calls the church looking to attend one of our holiday events but cannot without transportation. Please consider stepping out in faith and being a lifeline to someone who may be shut-in without our gracious offer. We invite you to pray about it.

Bible Sunday is November 24<sup>th</sup>. We will once again provide free Bibles at several community locations.

## SYMPATHIES

The congregation expresses deepest sympathy to Edna Kniffen on the passing of her granddaughter, Kristie June Duncan.

Sympathies are also extended to the family of Ronald Rauche on the death of his sister, Josephine Seyler.

## THE LONG & WINDING ROAD

Most people would describe their faith journey as the "long and winding road" (with a few steep hills along the way). But, the Good News is that God will always turn our life experiences into learning lessons as we walk hand in hand with Him.

So, where has God been leading you since 2006?

It's been 7 years since we last took time to evaluate our spiritual growth – both individually and as a congregation. (See last month's newsletter for details.)

We believe God is calling us, as a committee, to offer this spiritual inventory to our members. With the collective results of this inventory, we seek to direct the ministry and mission of Grace United Methodist Church in 2014 and beyond.

Therefore, we respectfully encourage everyone to prayerfully participate in this Spiritual Inventory and to attend the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting as Pastor Judi reveals our God-given gifts. If you cannot attend on the 13<sup>th</sup>, we will have copies of the key available after the meeting.

**Extra copies of the questionnaire are available on the table outside of the church office.**

Please feel free to speak with Pastor Judi or myself, if you have any questions about the process.

*- Phyllis Shook, PPRC Chair*





## **BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

Birthday and anniversary greetings for October go to:

- 3 Dashanna Siebold
- 5 Blake & Christine Frazee
- 8 Jesse Mancini
- 8 Barbara Coryell
- 9 Juliann Banahan
- 9 Ken (Jake) Bliss
- 11 Ken & Heather Meisner
- 12 Donna Newton
- 12 Rick & Kate Robertson
- 13 Don & Eleanor Moon
- 18 Carissa Van Alstyne
- 23 Hazel Lambert
- 25 Austin Bean
- 26 Danielle Lambert
- 27 Eleanor Moon
- 29 Max Johnson
- 29 Sam Robertson

## **BARGAIN SHED SALES**

YTD sales for the Bargain Shed as of mid-September are **\$5,786!**

## **BAPTISM**

Congratulations to Lionel and Tracy Harris on the recent baptism of their daughter, Rhylee.

## **BOOK NOOK SALES**

YTD sales for the Book Nook are **\$9,471**

## **TALENT SHOW SEEKS TALENT**

The Second Annual RCS Association of Churches Talent Show being held at the Congregational Christian Church on October 18<sup>th</sup> is seeking a variety of talent from area churches. Vocal music, instrumental music, dance, story telling, and visual arts are all welcome. October 11<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for submitting an application form which can be found in our church office. See Fran Lobdell or Pastor Judi for more details.

## **GOD'S HIGHLY VALUED INVESTMENT**

Someone once asked IBM founder Thomas Watson if he would fire an employee who made a mistake that cost the company \$60,000. To the questioner's surprise, Watson replied,

“Why would I fire someone in whom I’ve invested \$60,000 in training?”

Neither will God “fire” or in any way dismiss us for our mistakes and failures. He has invested far too much – even his own Son’s life! – in each of us for that.

Don’t hold back for fear of failure. Serve the Lord boldly. Try something new for the sake of the Gospel, and when you make a mistake, bring it honestly to God in prayer. Be open to the Holy Spirit, who provides “continuing education” – in Scripture, through other Christians and by connecting directly with your heart – to improve your skills and gifts every day.

## FROM THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees & Pastor Judi are looking into the possibility of a Church loan, to pay for completion of the parking lot/ driveway paving, sidewalk improvement, and possibly a portico entrance into Fellowship Hall, to make access to the Church more attractive, handi-capped friendly, and safer. This proposal was presented and discussed at the recent Administrative Council meeting. The Trustees are to formulate a projects priority list. They have received an estimate to finish repaving

the parking lot and driveway, as well as fixing manhole. Further research is being done.

If someone knows of a power log-splitter we might borrow for Church use, please let Ken Bliss know. Our fireplace helps take the chill off during the late fall and winter months, and creates a cozier atmosphere in Fellowship Hall. The goal is to get what firewood we have on hand split before the weather turns unfavorable.



## A STRONG HARVEST

Seeds of strength are planted in the soils of weakness. Your most uplifting strength tomorrow may grow from your most debilitating weakness today.

- V. Gilbert Beers



## PACKED WITH PURPOSE

In *Cure for the Common Life* (W Publishing Group), Max Lucado recounts grabbing the wrong suitcase at an airport, not realizing the mistake until he’d reached his hotel room. “No one wants to live out of someone else’s

bag,” he writes, yet that’s what many people do with their career choices.

An estimated 70 percent of people go to work without enthusiasm or passion because they’ve been urged to force themselves into roles that aren’t the right fit. “You cannot be anything you want to be,” Lucado writes, “but you can be everything God wants you to be.”

By living out of the “bag” that God packed specially for you, you’ll experience fulfillment and joy – in your work and in your life.

## FRIENDS AROUND THE FIREPLACE

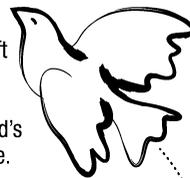
Every Tuesday from 9 to Noon, members and friends of Grace UMC gather together. Won’t you join us?



**Friends Around the Fireplace**

GROW IN  
*Grace*

Make this craft as a reminder to continue growing in God’s amazing grace.



### What you need:

- An adult to help
- Newspaper
- Acrylic paints
- Paper plate
- Paintbrush
- Small terra cotta pot and plate
- Cup of water
- Permanent black marker
- Potting soil
- Small “indoors” plant or packet of seeds

### What you do:

1. Cover your work area with newspaper and squeeze paint onto the paper plate.
2. Paint designs on the pot and plate, cleaning your brush in the water when changing colors. Let dry.
3. With the black marker, write “Growing in God’s Grace” along the top ridge of the pot.
4. Pour in a small amount of soil. Place your plant in the pot and surround it with more soil. (If planting seeds, follow packet instructions.)
5. Water your plant. Check it daily and keep the soil moist.
6. Enjoy watching your plant grow!

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**JOIN US ON FACEBOOK**

If you are on Facebook, please join the church page by *liking us* at Grace United Methodist Church, Ravena, NY. Find out what's happening each week from Sunday's Service sermon title and hymns to meetings and special events.

**OR VISIT US ON THE WEB:**

[www.graceumcravena.org](http://www.graceumcravena.org)



Deadline for articles for the **November** issue of *The Messenger* is **October 20<sup>th</sup>**. Please e-mail or fax articles to Barb Bullock at:

[bbullock812@gmail.com](mailto:bbullock812@gmail.com)

or

fax to: **731-8994**