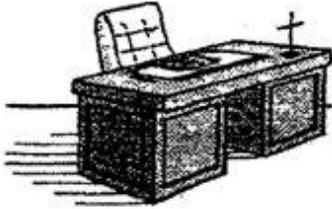




*The Messenger*  
Grace United Methodist Church  
16 Hillcrest Drive  
Ravena, NY 12143-1409

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



**FROM THE  
PASTOR'S  
DESK**

**June 2014**

Dear Friends,

Church members often ask how the United Methodist Church differs from other churches. The following Question/Answer format addresses that question:

**Q:** What are 4 or 5 things that make the United Methodist Church distinctive?

**A:** (1) Each local church is connected to every other United Methodist Church, and is part of a district with a superintendent (DS), and part of a conference with a bishop. Every United Methodist Church is governed by the United Methodist rule book, the Book of Discipline.

(2) Pastors, both female and male, are appointed by the bishop, not hired by the local church. The Pastor is the Administrative Officer of the local church.

(3) Education has always been valued by the Methodist Church which started many colleges and seminaries, and which requires seven years of higher education for its ordained pastors.

(4) Care for the poor, the aged, the sick, and others not often listened to throughout the world has been a hallmark of the Methodist Church since its beginning.

(5) We observe only two Sacraments - Baptism and Holy Communion.

**Q:** What do we have to pay Ministry Shares (Apportionments). Aren't they just a tax on the church?

**A:** Paying Ministry Shares is one of the ways we are connected to all the other United Methodist Churches, joining a portion of our money with theirs to bring the good news of God's love to people around the world whose lives lack evidence of God's love for them.

**Q:** What do United Methodists believe?

**A:** (1) We believe in God's grace that draws us near to Christ, forgives us, and moves us to love others and grow in love.

(2) "We believe in the dignity and responsibility of all persons. God who is like a father and mother has brought each of us to life. Every person is a special child of God."

(*Journey Into Faith With the People of God: The United Methodist Story, 1984.*)

(3) We believe in conversion and the new birth.

(4) We believe faith and good works belong together. Love of Christ must overflow into a love for all people.

(5) We believe in a connectional and an ecumenical church.

(6) We believe there are tragic conflicts of life with life which necessitate the availability of safe and legal abortion.

(7) We believe in the right of collective bargaining.

(8) United Methodists believe that there are many faithful, reasonable, legitimate interpretations of Scripture and we celebrate the importance of diversity so that God, who has created each of us in God's own image, may be glorified.

I hope this is helpful. If you have any questions about the United Methodist Church please email your question to [graceumcravena@statetel.com](mailto:graceumcravena@statetel.com) or call the Church office.

Grace and peace,  
*Pastor Judi*



## GRACE UMC SURVEY

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee has developed a short survey that we are asking the congregation to complete and return to us by June 21<sup>st</sup>. This is part one of the covenant-making process.

Using a book recommended by our District Superintendent, the Committee is seeking to identify the dynamics of our church, community and its members. What is Christ calling you to do? What is He calling our church to be? What is our mission?

We already know that our Book Nook and Bargain Shed meet a need in our community. We also know that people like to gather around the fireplace. Perhaps God is calling us to expand on these outreach opportunities?

Whatever it is that God wants us to be, we must be earnest in our attempt to discern it. So, please do not disregard the survey as one more thing to do. Think of it as your chance to contribute to the goal and mission of Grace United Methodist Church.

The success of this process relies upon your honest responses. Therefore, we ask everyone to give much thought and prayer to your answers.

**A drop box and copies of the survey will be provided on the table in front of the office.** Or, you may print your own copy. For shut-in's and people who are unable to utilize the drop box, we will be glad to provide a printed copy of the survey and a stamped envelope upon request. Please call the church office at 756-6688.

**PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED SURVEY BY JUNE 21. Thank you.**

## BARGAIN SHED

The Bargain Shed has been open since April 5<sup>th</sup>...and we have been blessed with great donations from Church members and the community at large. We are soooooo grateful to everyone.

If you have not visited us, please feel free to stop in during our working hours on Tuesday mornings, Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings.

Latest sales for the Bargain shed stand at **\$1,587!**

## BOOK NOOK UPDATE

In the past year the Book Nook has reached out and been able to share books with two nursing homes and three homebound seniors. We have

donated books that were sent to Africa and South America and given books to schools that have a shortage of reading materials. The Grass Root Givers program receives books for distribution and any teacher is welcome to take 20 books a year for his/her classroom (several have). Books going to soldiers are also free.

This past weekend Wanda Whitney helped the youth group give a birthday party at St. Catherine's home in Albany. Fifteen children received two or three books each.

If you know or hear of a book need, please let us know. We will be HAPPY to help.

Sales for the Book Nook YTD have reached **\$4,483!**

## **JUNE IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL**

As Sunday School comes to another close in June, there will be two "classes" for the children to attend:

*June 1<sup>st</sup>* – Preparation for Children's Day

*June 8<sup>th</sup>* – Children's Day with a potluck lunch following church.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITY**

Thank you to our very generous congregation!!! The Sunday School has been hard at work raising money to donate to Smile Train and we have almost reached our goal. Thank you to all the folks who purchased the homemade chocolate-covered strawberries and cupcakes the first weekend in May during coffee hour. Thank you for bringing your bottles in as well. Those cans really add up. Eric Mattick (and his dad, Mike) get special thanks for spending several hours depositing the bottles they collected. He donated over \$20-that's a lot of cans and bottles!!!





On Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, Gabby Selbe and Devon Whitney helped run a birthday party at the St. Catherine's homeless shelter in Albany, with Jazzy Sun Birthdays. The Senior youth helped organize games and crafts and filled goodie bags that were given to the children. A special thank you goes to Wanda Whitney for going with them and helping with the party as well. A box of toys and books (courtesy of the Bargain Shed and Book Nook) were also donated to the Shelter.

### **Congratulations to Emily Buckley-Crist!!!**

Emily is the valedictorian of the RCS class of 2014. She will graduate in June with an Advanced Regents Diploma with honors and an overall average of 98.68%! She is a member of the National Honor Society, school band and chorus, has participated in jazz band, pit orchestra, NYSSMA solo Festivals, and the Empire State Repertory Orchestra. She will be

majoring in English at SUNY Geneseo in the fall.

Next month we'll be reporting on more of our 2014 graduates, so stay tuned!

There will be a Children's Day church program on June 8<sup>th</sup> and we will be having our usual potluck "picnic" lunch following church (see details below). *Please wear red since it's Pentecost.*

## **ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC & CHILDREN'S DAY Sunday, June 8, 2014**

Everyone is invited to attend this special time honoring our Sunday School and Choir. It will follow the Children's Day program during the morning worship service.

Please bring a potluck dish to share. Hamburgers, hot dogs, beverages and tableware will be provided.

There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall for you to indicate the number of people in your party and your planned potluck dish. We hope you'll plan to stay and join us!





Congratulations to everyone who will be celebrating in June:

- 2 Erin Haslett
- 5 Pam Ginder
- 6 Jim & Peggy Sherman
- 15 Jay & Sue Ruso
- 16 Edna Kniffen
- 17 Janet & Ron Mantynen
- 20 Kristina Mantynen Gish
- 22 Beth Spoor
- 26 Jeffrey Schoenig

## FATHERLY REFLECTION

Renowned actor Sidney Poitier once said, “I decided in my life that I would do nothing that did not reflect positively on my father’s life.” If you’re blessed with a dad you admire and respect, how would it affect your life to make such a decision? Would you be inspired to set sound priorities, live with integrity, be a positive role model to the young people you influence? For all of us – children of the only perfect Father – may our prayer and intent be:

God, while earthly fathers are a mix of strengths and flaws, you give yourself to us as our heavenly Father, wholly loving, kind and passionate about our best interests. May we, in turn, seek to reflect positively on you. May my life spread far and wide your love, kindness and passion for the best interests of all, and may others see you in me. Amen.

## CONGRATULATIONS REBECCA!



Rebecca Shook took 2 Gold medals and 1 Silver at West Point. She took the Gold in the 100-meter backstroke and 25-meter freestyle and Silver in the 50-meter freestyle.

Rebecca will be going to Buffalo on June 6 & 7 for the State Games and from June 14-20 to Princeton, NJ for the USA Games.



VBS is being planned for July 7-11 It is sponsored by the RCS Association of Churches and is to be held at the Congregational Christian Church.

Volunteers are needed! If you can help out, please contact Pastor Judi.

## PENTECOST POWER

Ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit descended onto Jesus' disciples. While they were gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish festival of Pentecost, the disciples saw flames among and on them, heard a rushing wind and began talking in many languages. As a result, the disciples were able to share the good news of Jesus in the native tongues of all the pilgrims assembled in the city.

Even today, the power of the Holy Spirit fuels the "flame" that ignites Christians' outreach efforts. Only by the Spirit's power can we know Christ

and make him known throughout the world.

Poet William Blake (1757-1827), who's been described as a passionate, Pentecost kind of person, wrote this poem about the Spirit's power:

Unless the eye catch fire,  
The God will not be seen.  
Unless the ear catch fire,  
The God will not be heard.  
Unless the tongue catch fire,  
The God will not be named.  
Unless the heart catch fire,  
The God will not be loved.  
Unless the mind catch fire,  
The God will not be known.

## A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Pastor and author T.D. Jakes tells of visiting a community in Africa where a woman from the local church welcomed him into her small home. Proud to have built the structure herself, she swept her arm toward the door – a blanket – as if inviting him into a mansion. She offered him a seat – on her bed – and graciously served a meal. As Jakes departed in a small plane, rain began falling. The pastor looked down to see his host dancing in gratitude.

He was struck by the contrast between his African host and many Americans, including himself. How often we let worries about our “small” house, lack of nice furniture or inability to serve gourmet food get in the way of welcoming friends or new acquaintances into our home. How often we view rain as an annoyance, complicating our day and depressing our mood. Meanwhile, this woman was eager to share her humble house and grateful for God’s gift of moisture in her dry homeland.

## POINTS FOR HONESTY

A Sunday school teacher was telling his class the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), in which Jesus describes three individuals’ responses to a man found beaten and in grave need of help along the side of the road. Hoping to bring home the point of the parable, the teacher asked the class, “If you saw a person lying on the roadside, all wounded and bleeding, what would you do?”

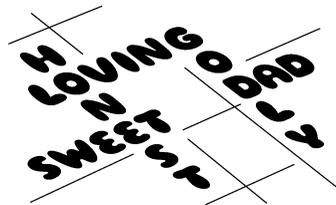
A hushed silence followed, broken after a moment by a thoughtful little girl: “I think I’d throw up.”

“When a father gives to his son, both laugh; when a son gives to his father, both cry.”

- William Shakespeare

## A WORD COLLAGE FOR Dad

Create this artwork to express your love and appreciation for your dad or another special man this Father’s Day.



### What you need:

- A white painting canvas, foam-core board or poster board
- Letter stickers (or foam letters and glue)

### What you do:

1. Using the letters, spell out words that describe your dad’s character (loving, honest, godly, etc.) and/or his titles (protector, provider, mentor, etc.).
2. Arrange words in a crossword style, both horizontally and vertically.
3. When you have a design you like, stick the words onto the blank canvas or board.
4. Present the gift to your dad or another special man on Father’s Day. He’ll enjoy this reminder of your love and appreciation.



# A FATHER'S LOVE

Psalm 103:13 (NIV) describes what God the Father feels toward us:  
 “As a father has \_\_\_\_\_ on his children, so the  
 LORD has \_\_\_\_\_ on those who fear him.”

**Directions:** Match the biblical children to their father, using the clues by the father's name. Then write the corresponding letter on the line to complete the Bible verse above.

- |                             |                         |   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| • Shem, Ham and Japheth = M | • Rachel and Leah = S   | • Cain, Abel and Seth = O   |
| • Solomon = O               | • Isaac and Ishmael = P | • Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Gad, Naphtali, Asher and Dinah = S |
| • Jonathan = I              | • John the Baptist = N  |   |
| • Jesus = C                 | • Jacob and Esau = A    |   |

- God:** “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”   C
- Adam:** God gave him another son because his older killed the younger.
- Noah:** His sons were blessed and told to multiply and replenish the earth.
- Abraham:** God promised he would be a father of many nations. The Jews and Arabs descended from these two sons.
- Isaac:** His older son sold his birthright, and his younger son tricked Isaac and received the blessings for the firstborn.
- Laban:** He had two daughters; the older was tender-eyed and the younger very beautiful. Both married Jacob.
- Jacob:** Two wives and two handmaids gave him 12 sons and a daughter.
- Saul:** His son was David's best friend.
- David:** He had many children, but one was known for his wisdom, for having many wives and for building God's temple.
- Zechariah:** His son, a cousin to Jesus, was born to be a messenger of repentance.

Answer: compassion

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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 **July** issue of *The Messenger* is **June 22<sup>nd</sup>**. Please e-mail or fax articles to Barb Bullock at:

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

or

fax to: **731-8994**