



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

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Rev. David E. Smith
Pastor

January 2015

FROM THE DESK OF THE PASTOR

The Star

Once upon a time, long, long ago a star appeared in the evening sky. It was an unusually large star, a very bright star.

Some who saw this star looked upon it as a thing of great beauty created to bring joy to dreary lives. They told one another how beautiful it was, wrote poems about it, and sang songs in praise of its beauty.

Others saw the star as a symbol of hope. It was a sign sent to encourage the depressed, they said. Some of them even believed that wishes made on this star would come true.

There were a few though, who saw the star as a beacon which beckoned them to come to it. And so it was that three astrologers, wealthy and influential men, chose to set out on a journey; despite the fact that their friends urged them to stay home with them. Some reminding them of the obligations they had. While others pointed out how dangerous such a journey could be.

But the three persisted and set out to find the star's resting place. Of those who set out on the journey, one returned with a strange story of a king who wasn't really a king.

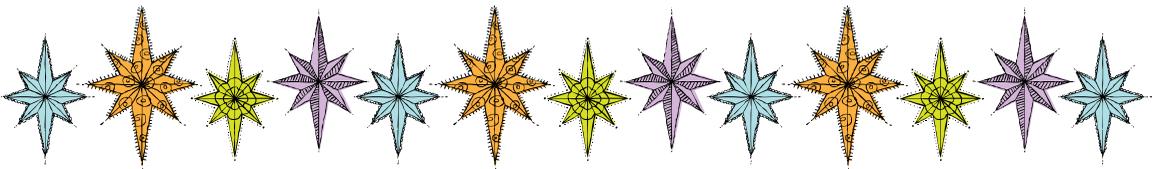
What kind of star do you see?

Yours in Christ's Service,



David E. Smith

Pastor David



JANUARY SUNDAY SERVICES

- January 4** Epiphany Sunday - Communion
Scripture Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 2:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12
Psalter #795 Psalm 72:1-7
Sermon “For the Nations”
Hymns #243 From a Distant Home
#2009 Star Child
#245 The First Noel
- January 11** Baptism of Jesus
Scripture Acts 19:1-7; Mark 4:4-11
Affirmation #884 Affirmation Faith from Korean Methodist
Sermon “Greater than You”
Hymns #347 Spirit Song
#2120 Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness
#2107 Wade in the Water
- January 18** Human Relations Sunday
Affirmation #481 Prayer of Saint Francis
Scripture I Samuel 3:1-10; John 4:43-51
Sermon “Jesus Calls Us”
Hymns #419 I Am Thine O Lord
#584 Lord You Give the Great Commission
#474 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
- January 25** Third Sunday After Epiphany
Psalter #787 Psalm 62:5-12
Scripture I Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20
Sermon “Now is the Time”
Hymns #203 Hail to the Lord’s Anointed
#219 What Child is This?
#671 Lord Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing

THANK YOU FROM THE PASTOR

I want to express my thanks for the generous Christmas gift I received from the congregation. It is gratifying to receive your words and expressions of appreciation.

Please also feel free to express your criticism, comments, and suggestions to me directly or through The Staff Parish Relations Committee. The chair of the committee is Mike Mattick who can be reached by phone at 756-7319 or by email at mikemattick@yahoo.com.

FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

December has been a fun-filled month for the Sunday School. Many of the youth helped decorate the classrooms during the greening of the church and the following Sunday, Pam Ginder inspired the children to make snowflakes to adorn the hallway. We talked about how God makes each snowflake unique, just like each one of us and how if we work together, we can have a much greater impact on the world – just as many snowflakes can make a bigger impact than one alone!

Unlike last year, we had a lovely day for our pageant this year. The kids did a great job and special thanks go to Adrienne Seymour for picking and organizing the pageant and Steph Canham for having such a delicious buffet afterwards.







children on how to make “hot cream cones” to distribute to the elderly members of the congregation. (Hot chocolate mix, marshmallows, chocolate chips and a gumdrop were arranged in a bag to look like an ice cream cone!) Poinsettias, a signed card and the hot chocolate cones were hand-delivered to 10 of our homebound parishioners. Many thanks to George June, Gabby Selbe, Blake Frazee and Joy Mayo for helping make the deliveries!



SELECTING A PASTOR

Contrary to Urban Legend, United Methodist pastors are not selected by throwing darts at a list of names. There is a process involved which seeks to assure that every church in the Upper New York Annual Conference has a pastor that is a good match for their needs.



All appointments are normally made for a year at a time at the Annual Conference session in June, appointments can be made in between sessions if required. Appointments are made by the Bishop after consultation with the congregation and pastor.

On December 21st, Pam Ginder, again, was a huge help by instructing the

By November 1st the Staff-Parish Relations Committee and the pastor of each local church indicate if a change

in appointment is desired. By December 1st each local church submits a profile describing the church, its community, leadership style that works best for them, and the three most important areas of pastoral needed for them. In Grace's case the profile was updated by Staff-Parish Relations based on information from a congregational survey. By December 1st every pastor fills out a profile describing their leadership style, strengths, and areas needing improvement.

The Bishop and the 12 District Superintendents meet beginning in December to begin review of the pastoral needs of the 915 churches that are part of our Conference. Using material submitted by pastors, Staff-Parish Relations Committee, input from District Superintendents and prayerful deliberation, they come up with potential appointments for each church.

In cases where neither the Staff-Parish Relations Committee or pastor have indicated a desire for a change, the pastor will be reappointed for another year unless there is a pressing need for that pastor's skills in another church. In the case of a new appointment, the District Superintendent on behalf of the Bishop will consult with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee and the pastor; if all are in agreement that it is

a good match, the appointment will be made by the Bishop.

In the case of Grace United Methodist my appointment is as an Intentional Interim for the period of September 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015. With Intentional Interim appointments it is understood that the Interim Pastor will not be considered for a regular appointment to that church. The desire in all regular appointments is to select a pastor who is a good match to the local church's needs, and be able to remain there for a significant period of time. The Staff-Parish Relations Committee has requested a half-time appointment due to the projected financial resources. As financial conditions and pastoral needs change the level of appointment can be modified.

BARGAIN SHED NEWS

Though the Bargain Shed is closed for the winter, please remember us when you are cleaning out this coming spring. We welcome your clean (and in good repair) seasonal donations. Also, we are collecting plastic lids (plain white, coffee can size) for use in designating sizes on clothes racks.

On Sunday, January 11th during coffee hour, there will be a brief meeting of the Shed volunteers. Please bring any

ideas you may have for changes in the coming year.

Happy New Year to all!

- Edna Rominger



Congratulations to those celebrating birthdays January:

- 11 Amanda Wolfe
- 16 Lisa D'Arcangelis
- 15 Colin McTigue
- 18 Will Robertson
- 23 Adam Newton
- 24 Karin Beswick
- 29 Sonya Moss
- 31 Jeffrey Haslett

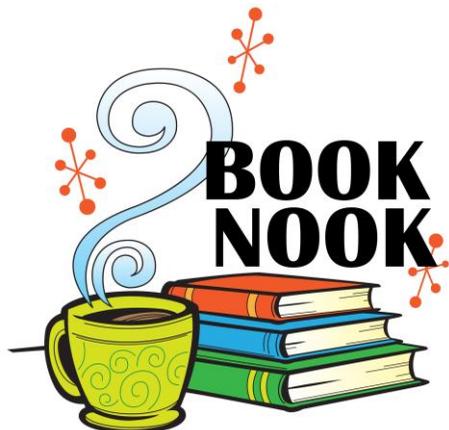
50th ANNIVERSARY REMINDER

Anything you'd like to share for the 50th anniversary celebration of our combined church (items, pictures, stories) can be left or mailed to the

church office by January 31st or can be emailed to:

graceumcravena@statetel.com.

The items will be used in the Anniversary Booklet and other church-related publications. Please fill out and include a submission form (available at the church office or from the December newsletter) with your material granting permission for the use.



The Book Nook finished the year with a total of **\$11,504!** What a great job to everyone who had a hand in this wonderful ministry!

Please mark your "volunteer" calendar from February 19 – 24 for setting up for our Mid-Winter Book Sale. We will be working from 9am-3pm and 6-8pm on those dates. Anytime you can spare will be appreciated. The sale will be Wednesday, February 25th through

Saturday, the 28th. Also, please pray the weather will be accommodating.

EVANGELISM NEWS

As always, our congregation responded with generosity this holiday season. We adopted two families for Christmas, providing gifts of clothing and toys for five children. We had a father with two boys and one girl and a mother with one boy and one girl. We also provided a \$50 grocery gift card to each family for their Christmas dinner.

On Sunday afternoon, there was a last minute request for gifts. Pastor David was still in his office when a woman from the community called to request assistance from the church. Upon hearing of her financial hardships and inability to purchase Christmas gifts for her 7-year-old son, he assured her that Grace could help. It was already too late to enlist help from the congregation, so Pastor David donated from his Christmas purse! With assistance from the Evangelism Committee, we were able to provide Christmas gifts for this single mom and her son.

Thank you Pastor David for your generous spirit and wonderful example of living for Jesus!



Reports **DEADLINE**

A reminder to all committee heads that your annual reports are due by January 31st.



KEEP BREATHING

Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, said many Christians live on a “spiritual roller coaster,” going from one emotional experience to another in a worldly way, feeling “frustrated and fruitless.”

To counteract that, Bright recommended a spiritual breathing exercise as a reminder of God’s love and forgiveness. Simply exhale as you confess your sins and impurities. Then inhale to receive life and forgiveness – and to be filled with the Holy Spirit, who empowers you to resist sin and temptation.

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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



Deadline for articles for the **February** issue of *The Messenger* is **January 18th**. Please e-mail or fax articles to Barb Bullock at:

bbullock812@gmail.com

or

fax to: **731-8994**