



The Messenger
Grace United Methodist Church
16 Hillcrest Drive
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Rev. David E. Smith
Pastor

February 2015

FROM THE DESK OF THE PASTOR

Lent – Don’t Subtract, Add

This Lenten season instead of thinking about giving up something I would suggest we focus on adding something. I would ask you to join me in making a commitment to spend at least 15 minutes twice a day in some form of devotional activity. A regular commitment to devotional activity can be a life-changing experience. It can be reading from a book of daily devotions, listening to religious music, journaling, reciting a prayer, praying for those who are in need, or reading and reflecting on a passage of Scripture.

Resources to help you in this task include:

- obtaining a copy of the daily devotional *The Upper Room* from the church or online;
- the use of breathe prayers with one phrase being uttered while taking a deep breathe in and another while exhaling such as “Jesus” / “Loves Me”;
- repeating a short memorized prayer such as, “All things work together for good for those who love the Lord”;
- listening to religious music that can be purchased on CD, online through iTunes or Amazon, to name just two sites for \$.99 a song or listened to free of charge on YouTube or on Sportive or Pandora;
- joining the prayer chain by contacting the church office; joining the Sunday class on prayer and meditation from 12:30–1pm; or

- attending the Lenten Study entitled “A Disciples Heart: Growing in Love and Grace” on Monday evenings at 7pm beginning February 23rd for six weeks. (If you are interested in the Lenten study, please contact the pastor so we can be sure to have a sufficient quantity of the study books. The Lenten study is designed to not only feed your spirit during the study but also to help you develop a pattern of daily Scripture reading, prayer, and personal reflection.)

Yours in Christ’s Service,



David E. Smith

Pastor David



FEBRUARY SUNDAY SERVICES

February 1 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany – Communion
Affirmation 886 World Methodist Social Affirmation
Scripture I Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 4:21-28
Sermon “Called to Cooperate”
Hymns 2226 “Bind Us Together”
560 “Help Us Accept Each Other”
557 “Best be the Tie”

February 8 Boy Scout Sunday – Anointing for Healing
Psalter 859 Psalm 147
Scripture Isaiah 40:21-31; Mark 1:29-39
Sermon “Heal Me Jesus”
Hymns 578 God of Love and God of Power
262 Heal Me, Hands of Jesus
143 On Eagles Wings

February 15 Transfiguration Sunday
Affirmation #883 Statement of Faith from United Church of Canada
Scripture II Kings 2:1-12; Mark 9:2-9
Sermon Fulfillment not Replacement
Hymns 2273 Jesus, We Are Here
454 Open My Eyes, That I May See
2202 Come Away with Me
Theme God is the God of Old and New Testament.

LENT

February 18 – Ash Wednesday – Imposition of Ashes – 7pm
Scripture Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
Sermon Turn to Jesus
Hymns 2128 Come and Find the Quiet Center
496 Sweet Hour of Prayer
2202 Come Away with Me

682 All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night

Theme Jesus calls us to turn from evil, for our faith to be more than a show.

February 22 – First Sunday Lent

Psalter #756 Psalm 25

Scripture Genesis 9:8-17; Mark 1:9-15

Sermon Temptation not Weakness

Hymns 347 Spirit Song

2107 Wade in the Water

488 Jesus, Remember Me

Theme Temptation is not a sign of weakness; all experience it, we need to be prepared for it.

ACOUSTIC DOORWAYS CONCERT

Once again, we will have the privilege of enjoying the music of Acoustic Doorways (John and Orion Kribs with Brian Melick) at 7:30 on **Friday, January 30th**. We would very much appreciate donations of finger foods to be offered at intermission. If you can help out, please deliver your food between 6-6:30pm so it can be set up on the tables prior to the concert's start. Thank you and please join us to support this event.



February 1st will be our annual Souper Bowl Sunday! We're looking for folks to offer to bring in a crock pot of their soup of choice. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall, but even if you forget to sign up, you can still bring one on the 1st.

This will be a free-will offering event. We'll have two pots in which you can donate either money or two cans of any flavor soup (both if you choose to do

so). Beverages, bread, and brownies will be supplied.

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations to all those who will be celebrating anniversaries and birthdays in February:

5 Linda Sherman
7 John Robertson
14 Kathy Porterfield
16 Casey Sherman
17 Amy Devine-Young
19 Meaghan Houk
20 Sharon Phillips
24 Amy & Mark Young



VALENTINE'S DAY SPAGHETTI DINNER

This year, we will actually be serving our Valentine's Day Spaghetti Dinner on Valentine's Day, **February 14th**. **Take-outs** will be available starting at **4:30pm** and **sit-down dinners** will be held from **5-7:30pm**.

We are trying something new this year and dinners will be available for a free-

will offering. We are asking the congregation to donate jars of their favorite (meatless) sauces as we have in the past and brownie mixes will be made available to those who can volunteer to bake them for the dinner.

We will be offering our normal sauce with meatballs, gluten-free meatballs and a vegetarian version in a separate sauce. There will be a variety of drinks available, rolls, and brownies for dessert. Some gluten-free brownies will be available, as well. Please support this event in any way possible.

BROWN BAG-IT

Grace United Methodist Church is again going to be participating in the Brown Bag-It Program. This program provides meals for our local students who would normally receive a free lunch during a school vacation.

A Brown Bag-It Lunch consists of:

- A canned pasta product (like Ravioli or canned soup)
- A fruit product (raisins, applesauce or fruit cup)
- A snack (cookies, crackers or pudding)
- A juice drink (juice boxes)

Please bring products in and put them near the office by **March 15th** and we

will assemble them on **March 22nd**. If you'd like to help but don't want to shop, please give your monetary donation to Jay or Christine Ingraham. Thank you for helping us help our community!

MID-WINTER HUGE BOOK SALE

Our Mid-Winter HUGE Book Sale is fast approaching. Needless to say, we NEED your help! We will be setting up **Monday (February 23rd) and Tuesday (February 24th)**. The times are **9am-3pm and 6-8pm**. We will have sign-up sheets posted but drop-ins will also be welcome. If you can spend a few hours or the day or evening, your help will be appreciated. The Mid-Winter Book Sale will span from **February 25th – 28th**. Times will be: **Wednesday-Friday (Feb. 25-27): 9am-3pm & 6-8pm** and **Saturday (Feb. 28): 9am-3pm**.

We will also be having a mini-rummage sale to for the ads. If you find any books or rummage sale items you can bear to part with, we would welcome your donation.



FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Movie Night!

On **Friday, February 20th at 6:30pm**, the Sunday School will be hosting a movie night in Fellowship Hall. Please come join us to see the movie “Heaven is for Real”, based on the book by Lynn Vincent and Todd Burpo. *Heaven is for Real* is the true story of the four-year-old son of a small-town Nebraska pastor who during emergency surgery slips from consciousness and enters heaven. He survives and begins talking about being able to look down and see the doctor operating and his dad praying in the waiting room. The family didn’t know what to believe but soon the evidence was clear as he shares other impossible-to-know details. Drinks and snacks will be provided. Please invite a friend to join you!

It’s that time of year again! This month the Sunday School is collecting goodies to send to our college students. A box will be outside the main office to collect prepackaged snacks and goodies. Please consider writing a note to include as well to let our hardworking students know we’re thinking about them. If your child is in college now, please touch base with Kate Robertson to provide an updated

address and let us know of any food allergies or treats your child would love to have. We’d like to individualize each box as much as possible.

Save the date!

Our second annual game night will be held **on Saturday, March 14th at 5:30pm**. Come join us for a potluck dinner followed by a fun night of board games.

LENTEN STUDY

Our Lenten Study is entitled “A Disciples Heart: Growing in Love and Grace”. It is a study which seeks to help us to grow in our ability to be followers of Jesus. It studies United Methodist beliefs and helps participants develop a pattern of daily Scripture reading, prayer, and personal reflection. The study will be offered on **Monday evenings at 7pm** for a period of six weeks beginning on **February 23rd**.

PARSONAGE WORK UPDATE

The Trustees have two parallel tracks underway: awarding a contract to have the work done in the parsonage and

determining the best way to finance the project.

Six contractors were approached about doing the work. Three have showed interest in putting in a bid. Bids are due Monday, January 26th and the contract will be awarded no later than Friday, January 30th.

After several meetings and phone calls with local financial institutions, it has come to light that taking out a mortgage may not be the best way to finance this project. If we move around some existing funds, there will be enough money in CD's and Passbook Savings accounts that we can borrow against. We can do this at a lower interest rate and without at least \$500 in fees that would come with a mortgage.

Also, because the church, parsonage, and land would no longer be used as collateral, approval of the loan would no longer be needed from Conference. Acquiring the loan can also be done much quicker, which could be important to keep this project on schedule. A final decision hasn't been made, but we want everyone to know that we are doing all we can to make the best decision on behalf of the congregation.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (CONDENSED MINUTES)

In the spirit of keeping the congregation informed, the following is a brief overview of the minutes from the January 13th meeting of the Administrative Council.

Pastor David Smith and Jay Ingraham presided over the meeting. It was reported that a large donation has been made to the Trustees Fund. Also reported was that prices for our weekly ad in the News Herald have been raised significantly, but the ad will also be run in the Greene County News to help make the increase more palatable.

Changes in Conference insurance policies – local churches are now able to make decisions as to coverage provided. Pastor David reported that special holiday envelope giving has increased. Bargain Shed hours and the upcoming February Book Nook sale were discussed. Both venues continue to contribute greatly to our church income.

The Sunday School would like to have a movie night in February and possibly a game night in the near future. Souper Bowl Sunday to return – always enjoyed by many! The Sons of Redemption have expressed an interest



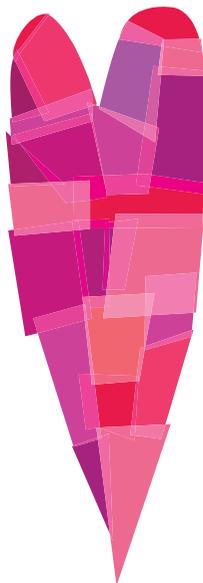
in returning to perform for us – everyone enjoyed them immensely.

Attendees of the Lay Servant course look forward to even more training led by Pastor David – a good number of people continue to be interested. Lenten study and possible confirmation courses also discussed.

Safe Sanctuary policies continue to be put in place. Ongoing heating issues were discussed. The Valentine’s Day Dinner, Acoustic Doorways concert, 50th Anniversary preparations – so much is happening that there is not room to list it all! We are also looking for a Family Events coordinator (or co-coordinators).

Finally, we have voted on a mission statement for our church, and have chosen one submitted by Mike Mattick. It reads as follows: Grace United Methodist Church is dedicated to building a strong Christian family for all God’s children; working together for the purpose of putting our faith and love into practice.

Administrative Council meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month and are open for anyone to attend.



I PRAY
THAT YOU
MAY... KNOW
THE LOVE
OF CHRIST
THAT
SURPASSES
KNOWLEDGE.
EPHESIANS 3:18-19, NRSV

LENTEN LIVING

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18 this year. Christians have observed this season of the church year since the fourth century. It’s traditionally a time of reflection, penitence and spiritual renewal before Easter.

During Lent, some Christians give up something that hinders their relationship with God. Others do something extra for their spiritual growth or make a special sacrifice. The key is to make Lent a memorable season of sincere spiritual growth — a time that can set the tone for the rest of the year.

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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 **March** issue of *The Messenger* is **February 15th**. Please e-mail or fax articles to Barb Bullock at:

bbullock812@gmail.com

or

fax to: **731-8994**