



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

April 2015

FROM THE DESK OF THE PASTOR

“Holy Week – The Heart of the Gospel”

During the week of March 30th – April 5th we have the opportunity to experience the heart of the message contained in what we call “The New Testament”. In the events of this week known as Holy Week we can experience the life changing Good News that lies at the heart of Jesus’ ministry and the Christian faith. On Maundy Thursday we find Jesus taking on the role of a servant washing the feet of the disciples as opposed to that of a powerful leader who would lead the Hebrew people in a rebellion against Roman rule. On that same night we also hear Jesus proclaiming that we are so loved that his body would be broken and his blood shed for us. On Good Friday we see a Jesus who was willing not only to die for us but to suffer humiliation, abuse and an agonizing death that we might know beyond all doubt that God forgives and reaches out in love to us. On Easter Sunday Jesus rises from the dead and demonstrates that not even death is stronger than God’s love and that we no longer need fear it.

The message of Holy Week is a glorious one that if accepted can be life transforming. It is a message which I invite you not just to read or hear but to experience by participating in the services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday.

Holy Week is an ideal time to invite those who are seeking something to feed their spirit to join us in worship. Invite them not because they may become part of Grace United Methodist but because of what being touched by Jesus can mean for them. We are called

not to recruit members for Grace but to make disciples of Jesus for the transformation of the world.

As followers of Jesus Christ we dare to believe that we have a message that can transform the lives of individuals, nations, and even all of creation.

Shalom,



David E. Smith

Pastor David



APRIL WORSHIP SERVICES

April 2 – Maundy Thursday – Foot Washing & Communion – 7pm

Psalter 837 Psalm 116
Scripture I Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Sermon In Christ's Footsteps
Hymns 641 Fill My Cup, Lord
432 Jesu, Jesu
614 For the Bread Which You Have Broken
Theme Called to sacrificial Love.

April 3 – Good Friday Service – Jesus on the Cross – Noon – 3pm

Psalter 782 Psalm 22
Scripture John 18:1-19:42
Sermon Love Beyond Measure
Hymns 282 Were You There?
290 Go to Dark Gethsemane
286 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
297 Beneath the Cross of Jesus
Theme Christ's love was so great he endured incredible suffering for us.

April 3 – Good Friday Service – 7pm

Scripture Hebrews 40:16-25
Sermon A Path to God
Hymns 2111 We Sang Our Glad Hosannas
2110 Why Has God Forsaken Me
298 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
Theme Christ has provided a path to the very presence of God.

EASTER

April 5 – Easter Sunrise Service – 7am

Scripture Mark 16:1-8
Sermon Dare to Believe
Hymns 302 Christ the Lord is Risen Today (v 1-2)
310 He Lives
Theme Belief unleashes the power of the resurrection.

EASTER – Communion – 10:30am

Scripture Acts 10:34-43; John 20:1-18
Sermon It's All True
Hymns 302 Christ the Lord is Risen (v 1-4)
2088 Lord, I Lift Your Name on High
304 Easter People, Raise Your Voices
Theme The Resurrection affirms the divinity of Jesus and the truth of his teachings.

April 12 - Second Sunday of Easter – 10:30am

Scripture I John 1:1-22; John 20:19-31
Sermon Welcome Doubters
Hymns 454 Open My Eyes, That I May See
474 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
496 Sweet Hour of Prayer
Affirmation 880 The Nicene Creed
Theme God responds to our doubts.

April 19 – Native American Awareness Sunday – 10:30am

Psalter 746 Psalm 4
Scripture Acts 3:12-19; Luke 24:36b-48
Sermon More Than Me
Hymns 304 Easter People Raise Your Voices
367 He Touched Me
349 Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus
Theme Jesus promises the power of the Holy Spirit.

April 26 – Fourth Sunday of Easter – 10:30am

Scripture I John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18
Sermon Love in Action
Hymns 419 I Am Thine, O Lord
408 The Gift of Love
405 Seek Ye First
Affirmation 881 The Apostles' Creed
Theme Our actions can open or close our hearts to God.

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday will feature an invitation to experience foot washing as a religious ritual and to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion at **7pm**. Your participation in the ritual of foot washing is voluntary and we hope that you will still attend and participate in the rest of the service if you choose not participate in the foot-washing ritual.

Good Friday will feature **two services**. One will be a three-hour service from **Noon – 3pm** remembering the three hours Jesus suffered upon the cross. There will be breaks in the service at the end of each hour to allow those who are unable to attend the whole service to come and go. A second service remembering Jesus' sacrifice and exploring its meaning for us will be held at **7pm**.

Easter Sunday will feature a sunrise service at **7am** followed by breakfast at 7:45am. The **10:30am** service will feature special music and the celebration of Communion.

Details on Scripture readings, hymns, sermon title and theme for Holy Week services can be found in the April Worship Services article on the previous pages.



SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY Protecting Our Children and Vulnerable Adults

Grace Church reaffirmed its commitment to conduct the ministry of Jesus Christ in ways that ensure the physical and emotional safety of all. On March 10, 2015 the Administrative Council voted to pass a Safe Sanctuary policy that meets or exceeds the Upper New York Conference standards. This policy is not based on a lack of trust in workers, but is intended to protect our children, youth, vulnerable adults, employees, volunteers, and the entire church body. Any employee or adult volunteer interested in a ministry position with children, youth, and vulnerable adults will need to be familiar with the Safe Sanctuary policy, sign a code of ethics, and be subject to a national background check. This is just one more way that shows the commitment and love our staff here at Grace has. Policy Procedures for a Safe Sanctuary include; reporting shall be required by any staff or volunteer, and the “Two-Adult Rule” which requires that there will always be two adults present regardless of the size of the group.

A hard copy or PDF of the Safe Sanctuary Policy can be emailed to you upon request, a printed copy picked up at the church office or mailed to you. Questions concerning the policy and

procedures can be addressed by contacting the Pastor or the chair of Staff Pastor Parish Relation Committee, Mike Mattick.

BOOK SALE RESULTS

Our goal was \$1500, taking into consideration last year's sale and this year's weather. The outcome...\$3,090! This wouldn't have happened without the Book Nook Team and our church family working together. 21 volunteers showed up to help set up and take down. We THANK YOU for the help and the wonderful feeling of comradery that we all felt.

The Book Nook is offering a spring special. For the month of April, buy a book by an author whose last name begins with the letter *C* and you may Choose a second book by any author for free. Be sure you "*C*" it now; for at the end of April you might not be able to "*C*" it. VBG*

P.S. If you happen to go into the storage room (pantry) off of the kitchen, you will notice how neat, clean and well organized it is. Kudos for this go to Wanda Whitney and Anne Frauenberger. Thank you ladies!

-Joy Mayo

**Editor's Note:* In JoySpeak, VBG means "very big grin."

BARGAIN SHED TO OPEN

The shed will be opening for business on **Saturday, April 11th**. During the week prior to opening, items may be dropped off any time when the volunteers are there working. **Dates and times for donations** will be:

Mon. April 6th – 9–Noon
Tues. April 7th – 12:30–3:30pm
Wed. April 8th – 9–Noon
Thurs. April 9th – 9–Noon
Fri. April 10th – 9–?

We request that donations be clean and in working order. Also, we cannot accept TVs, computers or exercise equipment. We gladly accept small furniture pieces. [Larger pieces would be most welcome at the Fall Fair.]

Our **regular hours** starting on April 11th will be:

Tuesdays 9am–Noon
Thursdays 6–8pm
Saturdays 9am–Noon

We look forward to seeing previous and new customers on April 11th and beyond.



BROWN BAG SUCCESS

God truly does provide!

On Sunday afternoon Chris and Jay Ingraham decided to purchase as much as they could (for the Brown Bag Program) with the accumulated cash donations of \$395. They went to the church and took inventory of the items that were already donated, headed to BJ's and loaded up. Then they ran off to WalMart (they had a better price on the canned goods). Chris had their cash card in hand, expecting it to be a little more than the remaining donations would cover. Instead of needing the card, they got three cents back!

I have it on good authority that Jay's lovely wife actually got a little emotional having God's hand so obvious in our church's work.

The Ingraham's would like to thank you all for the work and donations. Coming up with 400 lunches instead of the goal of 300 is truly awesome.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations to all those who will be celebrating a birthday in April:

5 Blake Frazee
7 Victoria Youmans

8 Logan Lambert
9 Matt Baumbach
10 Caelin Gordon-Stacey
14 Abigail Kennedy
17 Aaron June
19 Grace Buckley-Crist
26 Katie Beswick
27 Ann Coryell
30 Barbara Lisa
30 Sidney Young

WHAT THE EVANGELISM COMMITTEE HAS COMING UP

On March 8th, the Evangelism Committee met to discuss plans for Spring. Since the first of May is National Friendship Day, we are hosting our Annual Friendship Sunday on **May 3rd**. As in past years, everyone is encouraged to invite one person to church on that Sunday. All guests will receive a special gift. Let's put the power of invitation into action by taking the Great Commission seriously. Please start thinking and praying about who you'd like to invite. Let's see if we can fill the pews! Remember, our success relies upon your commitment.

Thursday, **May 7th** is National Prayer Day – a day when Christians across our nation join together in prayer for our government leaders, military, education, family, community and our

churches. We would like to promote this event by opening our sanctuary at 7pm for guided prayer. Please contact Phyllis Shook for more details.

On Friday, **May 15th** at **7pm**, we will host our first talent show at "Grace's Coffee House" With the enthusiasm of Sharon Phillips and the committee, we plan to host three events over the next several months. The tentative scheduled dates are: May 15th, August 21st and November 20th. We'd love to "book" your act! A sign-up sheet for the May 15th event will be available in April. For more information, please contact Sharon.



We had a very successful game night on March 14th! About 50 people joined us for dinner, games and fun. Thank you to all for attending and bringing the delicious food! A special thank you goes out to Curtis Canham and Sharon Phillips for the entertainment.



FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

On Friday, February 20th, the Sunday School hosted a movie night to see "Heaven is for Real". 19 adults and kids joined us for the movie in fellowship hall. They snacked on popcorn and yummy warm cookies (courtesy of Christine Frazee). A special thanks to the Mattick's for arranging and setting up the big screen TV. The kids enjoyed setting up their blankets and pillows in front of the screen and are already planning another movie in the future.





On March 8th, Don Tallman, a veteran from Afghanistan came to church to talk to the Sunday School about the Wounded Warriors Project. Tallman, a

former Marine and Army Sergeant, was injured during his deployment in Afghanistan in 2007. After returning home, Tallman founded an Albany-area chapter of the Wounded Warrior Project to help raise awareness and assist veterans. He has since resigned his position due to time constraints, but graciously made time to come to talk to the students. Tallman also talked about STRIDE Adaptive Sports, which has developed rehabilitative sports and mentorship programs in conjunction with the Wounded Warrior Project. STRIDE hosts numerous sporting events during the year for Wounded Warriors in our area. Our Outreach project for the remainder of the school year will be to raise money for the STRIDE Adaptive Sports Wounded Warrior Project in order to ensure that whatever funds we raise, will be used locally to assist our area veterans. Stay tuned to see how our kids will be raising money!



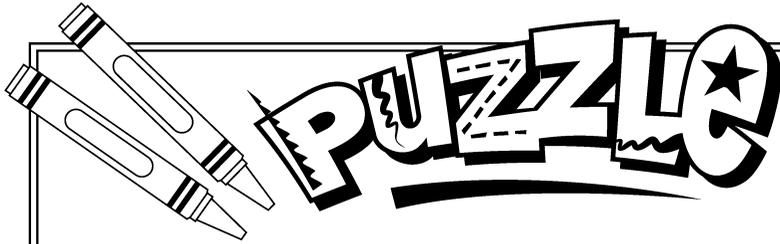
FOUR LESSONS OF GOOD FRIDAY

The Rev. James Martin, S.J., author of *Jesus: A Pilgrimage* (HarperOne), writes that Jesus’ suffering and death almost 2,000 years ago are very relevant to our 21st-century lives. He says Good Friday teaches us that:

1. physical and emotional suffering are part of life;
2. suffering isn’t always the result of sin;
3. Jesus was fully human — and thus understands our humanity; and
4. suffering isn’t the last word.

“The message of Good Friday is incomplete without Easter,” Martin writes. “The story of the Passion is not simply of a man being brutally tortured, nailed to a cross and executed by the Romans. It’s the story of a man who turns himself fully over to the Father’s will, trusts that something new will come out of this offering and receives the astonishing gift of new life.”





OUR HOPE

Romans 8:34 tells about our risen Lord, who gives us hope.

Directions: Write the phrases on the correct numbered lines below. Then, on the final row of blanks, write the bold capital letters in order from top to bottom, left to right, to spell the word that sums up this verse.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 5 who was R aised | 8 R ight hand | 6 T o life |
| 3 d iEd | 4 m o R e than that | 7 I s at the |
| 2 J e S us who | 11 i nt E rceding | 9 O f God |
| 12 f or U s | 1 C hrist | 10 a nd is also |

... 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____

4 _____ , 5 _____

_____ 6 _____ 7 _____

_____ 8 _____

6 _____ 10 _____

11 _____ 12 _____ . *Romans 8:34, NIV*

RESURRECTION

Answers: ... Christ Jesus who died — more than that who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Romans 8:34, NIV

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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 **May** issue of *The Messenger* is **April 19th**. Please e-mail or fax articles to Barb Bullock at:

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or

fax to: **731-8994**