



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

Dedicated to building a strong Christian family for all of God's children, working together for the purpose of putting our faith and love into practice.

October 2015

FROM THE DESK OF THE PASTOR

Amazing Things Are Happening

Amazing things are happening here at Grace United Methodist Church. While there are always things that could be better, that doesn't change the fact that amazing, exciting, life-changing things are happening right now, right here at Grace.

During this past month so many amazing things... I have seen individuals reaffirm their commitment to being part of the body of Christ, the Church; and to support it with their presence, time, talents, and finances. I have witnessed individuals discover radical hospitality and support from Friends Around the Fireplace. It is no exaggeration that for some Grace has been a source of support that has enabled them to face issues that seemed catastrophic. Requests for prayer to our Prayer Chain and for Prayer Blankets are multiplying as individuals hear of this ministry of Grace. On Homecoming Sunday we blessed five Prayer Blankets. Our Sunday School is off to a great start; it was great to see so many children in church and to share a time with them during our worship service. You have approved going from a half-time pastor to a three-quarter time position to support increased efforts to make disciples for Jesus Christ. We have secured the services of John Vasto to fill the position of organist and choir director. Our receipts from Sunday offering and the Book Nook continue to exceed what was included in our 2015 budget. Most of all there is a spirit of optimism about the future of Grace. Thanks to the efforts of so many there is much indeed to celebrate; amazing things are indeed happening.

If you haven't been here recently, come and check us out, I am confident that you will be blessed and that God can use you as a source of blessing for others and the ministry of Grace.

In addition to our 10:30am Sunday services, beginning November 29th we will be adding an early Sunday service from 8-8:30am and a more contemporary Thursday evening service from 7-7:30pm. There is also the Sunday morning Adult Bible Study at 9:00am and during Advent there will be a Monday evening study at 7:00pm. Finally for those who are free during the day, give our Friends Around the Fireplace a try on Tuesday from 9:00am-noon. Friends Around the Fireplace is a time for fellowship and refreshments; no structured programs.

If you have questions or concerns, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss them with you at a time and place that is convenient for you.

Yours in Christ's Service,



David E. Smith

David E. Smith, Pastor



OCTOBER WORSHIP SERVICES

10/04 – World Communion Sunday

Scripture I Corinthians 13:1–13; Mark 10:2–16

Responsive

Reading 408 – Canticle of Love

Theme Beyond rules to love based on decisions

Sermon Closer to the Truth

Hymns 349 Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

643 When Love is Found

666 Shalom to You

10/11 – Bread for the World Sunday

Scripture Psalm 22:1–15

Responsive

Reading 752

Scripture Hebrews 4:12–16; Mark 10:17–31

Theme Following Jesus requires choices on how we use our resources

Sermon Choices

Hymns 2236 Gather Us In

399 Take My Life and Let It Be

671 Lord Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing

10/18 – Laity Sunday

Planned and led by Laity

10/25 – 22nd Sunday after Pentecost – Proper 25

Scripture Hebrews 7:23–28; Mark 10:46–52

Theme In Jesus God offers forgiveness that is not limited by time or human limitations

Sermon Once for All

Affirmation 884 Korean Creed

Hymns 67 We Thy People Praise Thee

2146 His Eye is on the Sparrow

367 He Touched Me

BARGAIN SHED NEWS

The volunteers of the Shed are busy at this writing, preparing for the Fall Fair on the 26th.

It's always a great day – greeting old and new friends. As always, the dedicated workers have spent many hours organizing, decorating and making everything look special.

Our last day for accepting donations is Saturday, **October 24th**. Please remember we do not accept tv's, computers or exercise equipment. And we request that all items be clean and in good working condition.

Our last day for this year will be Saturday, **November 21st**.

Thank you for your donations and patronage.

Year-to-date sales for the Bargain Shed through September 19th are *over* **\$3,822!** (The *exact* figure was not available at this writing.)

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

To everyone celebrating an anniversary or a birthday in October...
Congratulations!

Pass along good wishes to these folks:

3 Dashanna Siebold
5 Blake & Christine Frazee
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 Sam Robertson

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY

Sunday, **November 1st** is All Saints Day and we will be remembering those who have passed away since November 1st of last year. If you have a loved one who has passed away since November 1, 2015, we would like to remember them during the All Saints Day Sunday service. We ask that you contact the church office by phone or email with their name and the date of their death by Wednesday, **October 28th** so we can be sure they are remembered during the service and their name is included in the bulletin.

FALL BOOK SALE!

We will be having our **12th annual HUGE Fall Book Sale** in early November (**Thurs., Fri. and Sat.;** **November 5th – 7th**).

We will be **setting up Sunday - Wednesday (November 1st – 4th)**.

Since the ham dinner is the following week, we especially need help in taking down and **clearing** the Fellowship Hall on **Sat. and Sun. (November 7th & 8th)**. Needless to say...any help you can give will be greatly appreciated!

The Book Nook YTD total sales figure is **\$12,129**. That's terrific!



About 60 people joined us for our second annual Back to School Backpack Blessing on August 26th. We had a beautiful night and the children were once again able to run around and enjoy the evening outdoors. Many

thanks to all those who helped cook and serve food for dinner and to Pastor David for individually blessing each child's backpack. We received donations from Walmart, Hannaford, Price Chopper, Dick's Sporting Goods and Stewarts. Four backpacks along with supplies were donated to a family experiencing financial difficulty.

Thanks to the generous donations from our church members, a large tub filled with school supplies with three additional backpacks was donated to the Food Pantry and two boxes of supplies were also donated to the middle school to assist students who are unable to provide their own school supplies. Thank you to everyone for your help in making this event a success!







FALL FAIR

Our annual Fall Fair is in the making at the writing of this edition. I'm sure that we will get a full report during the announcements right before church service on Sunday, September 27th. Be sure to listen for it!

EVANGELISM NEWS

With big smiles and free gifts, our church was represented at the annual Friendship Festival at Mosher Park.

We gave away children's books, bottled water and Bibles courtesy of Grace UMC. Many people gratefully accepted the cold bottled water on such a hot day...but, some had trouble accepting the free gift. Isn't that a lot like people's reaction to the Good News of Jesus Christ? We are bound to draw a similar response. Some will gratefully accept an invitation to come to church with you while others may feel like there must be a catch.

Pray that we may be bold enough to offer the free gift of God's Love to our friends and neighbors without fear of rejection.

Invite someone to church next Sunday and pray for an open heart to receive your invitation.

NOTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

We have a wonderfully active season coming up this Fall! Pastor David will be attending two "Vital" workshops offered by Rev. Jorge Acevedo, author of a well-received book chronicling his remarkable revitalization of churches. VBS planning is already in its early stages (anyone is welcome to join in) and there will be two alternative church services beginning in November! Confirmation class is also coming up – watch for more information.

Our financial report was one to be thankful for. We are in a good place, and with upcoming events we pray that this good news continues. Our roof is troublesome however; a structural engineer will soon meet with the Trustees to discuss options. It is imperative that we address this issue once and for all.

The parsonage is coming along nicely, but Jay needs a little more time to complete the renovations. All good things are worth waiting for! We are pleased to have a shiny new refrigerator which is a blessing. Finally, a new "hard stop" at 9pm for our Administrative Council meetings has

been enacted. We hope this will encourage greater attendance.

Our next meeting is **October 13th**. All are welcome.



MOVING UP DAY: Annual Church Conference November 22

In some education circles, the celebration of promotion from one grade to another was called “Moving Up Day”. I think that is a great description of what our Annual Church Conference is; a time for making plans and celebrating how we are going to step into the next year to make disciples for Jesus Christ.

Our Annual Church Conference will be on Sunday, **November 22nd** with Rev. Alan Rhodes presiding. We will start with a potluck dinner after church, followed by our meeting to discuss, approve, and celebrate our plans for 2016. We plan to be finished by 2:30pm. Watch for copies of material relating to the Conference in your email or mail box at the beginning of November. We are doing this to avoid spending time at the meeting reading documents and to facilitate discussion. We welcome your comments not only

at the meeting but prior to it so we can be better prepared to address your concerns and ideas.

THE BEAUTY OF GROWING OLD

“How beautifully leaves grow old,” wrote 19th-century essayist John Burroughs. “How full of light and color are their last days.”

Society doesn’t think highly of old age. Beauty products tout the supposed virtues of maintaining a youthful appearance. Older adults’ wisdom, born of much life experience, is often disparaged, ignored or not sought. But God says this about the righteous, whose lives are rooted in him: “In old age they still produce fruit; they are always green and full of sap, showing that the LORD is upright” (Psalm 92:14–15, NRSV).

The aging leaves of autumn can prompt us to look for beauty in the seniors among us, to notice the light and color that still abound. From all the fruit they still produce – service, prayer, love – may we learn about living faithfully until our own “last days.”

–Heidi Mann





GIVING IT ALL

A meager but meaningful donation recently made news at a church in Charlotte, North Carolina. In the collection plate one Sunday was an envelope with 18 cents and this message: “Please don’t be mad. I don’t have much. I’m homeless. God bless.”

Pastor Patrick Hamrick was able to locate the donor to thank him in person. But the man wanted to stay anonymous, saying the gift was between him, the church and God.

The pastor praised the donor’s bravery, saying, “We gratefully acknowledge that this individual, out of his poverty, has given all he had to live on.” Like the widow’s mite in the New Testament (see Mark 12:41–44), the 18 cents was truly a sacrificial gift.



“I’m so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers.”

—*L.M. Montgomery,*
in Anne of Green Gables

BLESSING BAGS



Make these practical gifts to share blessings with homeless people and others in need.

What you need:

- Gallon-size zippered baggies
- Clothing (socks, mittens, scarves, rain ponchos)
- Travel-size toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, sunscreen, lip balm, lotion, tissues, bandages)
- Snacks
- Water bottles
- Paper
- Pencil

What you do:

1. Pack baggies with supplies listed above (and more, if desired).
2. Write encouraging notes (including Bible verses), and add them to the baggies.
3. Keep the gifts in your car, and give them to people who are homeless or asking for help.



meeting needs

The Bible emphasizes the importance of giving to people in need. In Matthew 6:1-4, Jesus describes the proper attitude for giving.

*Directions: Starting at the *B and going counterclockwise, write every other letter on the lines below. Continue until you've completed Matthew 6:3, NIV.*



"B _____

_____ ,

_____ g."

MATTHEW 6:3, NIV

Answer: "But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." Matthew 6:3, 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 **December** issue of *The Messenger* is **October 18th**. Please e-mail or fax articles to Barb Bullock at:

bbullock812@gmail.com

or

fax to: **731-8994**