



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

[www.graceumcravena.org](http://www.graceumcravena.org)  
518-756-6688

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.*

**April 2016**

## **FROM THE DESK OF THE PASTOR**

### **IS IT REALLY TIME FOR EASTER?**

Easter arrives early this year. The branches on the trees are still bare, the ground is brown, the Spring flowers have yet to bloom. But yet when one looks there are signs of Spring and new life, bulbs have begun to sprout shoots, robins have been sighted, the geese are returning. Easter's early appearance speaks of a profound truth about our faith.

We live in a world where there is much that seems to deny the resurrection and its promise of new life. Yet when we look around there are undeniable signs that Jesus Christ has indeed risen from the dead and is at work in this world of ours. In communities large and small we see individuals reaching out to those in need. Food cupboards reach out to the hungry adults and children. The ill find a source of strength and healing through the prayers of people of faith. People of faith on opposite sides of conflicts find common ground and ways to work together. Those struggling with addiction find in Jesus the power to break addiction's chains. Those who struggle with doubts find faith. Individuals in their final moments of life here on earth testify of visions of being

welcomed into God's presence. These signs are very real and present among individuals who live in your community.

If you believe and have seen these signs yourself, come and share your testimony that others may be encouraged. If you don't see these signs, come and hear the Good News from those whose life has been transformed by the risen Christ. Come and be part of the followers of the way of Jesus Christ among the people of Grace United Methodist, come be part of our family.

Yours in Christ's Service,



*David E. Smith*

David E. Smith, Pastor



## APRIL WORSHIP SERVICES

### **4/03 – Second Sunday of Easter – Communion**

Scripture: Acts 5:27-32; John 20:19-31

Responsive

Reading: #862 – Psalm 150

Theme: God reaches out to skeptics and believers alike.

Meditation: Skeptics Welcome

Hymn: 352 It's Me, It's Me, O Lord

2136 Out of the Depths

420 Breathe on Me Breath of God

### **4/10 – Third Sunday of Easter – Native American Awareness**

Scripture: Acts 9:1-20; John 21:1-19

Litany for Native American Sunday

Theme: The trappings of our culture can obscure God's voice.

Meditation: Other Voices

Hymns: 154 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name

344 Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore

548 In Christ There Is No East or West

### **4/17 – Fourth Sunday of Easter**

Scripture: Acts 9:36-43; John 10:22-30

Responsive

Reading: #137 – Psalm 23

Theme: God is with us always.

Meditation: Never Alone

Hymns: 176 Majesty, Worship His Majesty

174 His Name is Wonderful

128 He Leadeth Me

474 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

### **4/24 – Pastor on Vacation**

Lectionary Texts: Acts 11:1-8, Psalm 148 (861), Revelations 21:1-6, John 13:31-35

### **5/01 – Pastor on Vacation**

Lectionary Texts: Acts 16:9-15, Psalm 67 (791), Revelations 21:1-10, 22-22:5, John 14:23-29

## GOOD NEWS GALORE

There is much to celebrate at Grace United Methodist Church. We have reached out to 18 individuals through our **Prayer Blanket Ministry** this year. **Hospitality** is being extended through Fellowship Hour, Friends Around the Fireplace, Book Nook, and the Coffee House Events. We have received **three new members** with two more scheduled to be received into membership.

**Financial Contributions** from the plate and envelopes have exceeded budget projections. **Receipts from the Book Nook's Spring Sale** exceeded all previous sales, \$3,300. **Facility maintenance and improvements** are being addressed. A contract has been awarded to **replace the flat roof** which has been leaking and is beyond repair; construction will have a 30-year warranty. Electric outlets in downstairs classrooms are now working, the church sign and cross are illuminated, overgrown trees and shrubs have been removed, and new shelves are being installed to allow better access to the Book Nook's collection.

Our **music program**, under the direction of our new music director, seems to get better each Sunday. The choir is in great voice, we have added a viola to the musical repertoire,

opportunities for participation in the musical program are being expanded, Sharon Phillips and company are providing inspirational contemporary music to set the atmosphere for Sunday morning worship, and efforts are underway to make the hand bells and children's choir a regular part of our worship schedule.

**Community Outreach** is an active part of our ministry. We are meeting our asking for Ministry Shares in full, supporting programs at the Annual Conference and denominational level. Programs supported by Ministry Share support the ministry of local churches, camping and youth events, missionaries, disaster relief and other outreach ministries. We collect food to support our local food cupboard each Sunday, participate in the annual CROP Walk to fight hunger, and work with the Ravena, Coeymans, and Selkirk Association of Churches to address community needs. We **share the Good News** through community programs by the Evangelism Committee, three weekly worship services (Thursday evening at 7pm, Sunday at 8am and 10:30am), Sunday School classes, three adult study groups (Lent and Advent, Monday Night Bible Study, and Sunday morning Adult Study Group), and invitations and sharing by individuals.

## APPOINTMENT OF A PASTOR

Appointment of a pastor to a United Methodist Church is for one year. This doesn't mean that a pastor moves each year but rather that every year each appointment is reviewed. As part of the appointment process they review recommendations from Staff/Pastor Parish Committees and pastors, church and pastoral profiles, and information provided by the District Superintendents. This process starts in November with the goal of having an appointment in place for each church of the 915 churches that are part of Upper New York Annual Conference when Conference has its annual meeting in June.

When there is a change of appointment the Staff/Pastor Parish Committee is presented with a candidate who the Bishop and District Superintendents believe is the best available person for the church. If the candidate is accepted by the Staff/Pastor Parish Committee the pending appointment will be announced first to the congregation and then to other interested parties.

**There has not been any decision on whether there will be a change of appointment for Grace United Methodist Church. My appointment**

**here in 2014 was made as an interim or short term appointment.**

*-Pastor David*

## SPRING FLING

Sunday, **April 10<sup>th</sup>** after our church service, we will be having a very special dinner celebration. The meal will be a buffet-style Carved Roast Beef Dinner with all the trimmings followed by a special (top secret) thank you recognition.

We need help to set up on Saturday April 9<sup>th</sup> at 6pm and help with the dinner on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Sign-up sheets will be posted in the Fellowship Hall.



I want to thank you all for the tremendously warm welcome these past few weeks. I am honored and excited to be here and be able to work with such amazing, caring people.

At Grace United Methodist Church of Ravena, we offer various opportunities

to worship through the ministry of music. Our current members in music are eager and excited to share with you their gifts each week at worship service.

We are always looking for new volunteer members to join us. Below are the various current offerings at Grace UMC. More details will be outside of the office and posted outside the choir room. Should you find an avenue of music you are interested in whether it be vocal or instrumental (and whether you are an amateur or professional!), please contact me to see how you can become a part of the music ministry along with us. If you wish to join along with a friend or family member, that is also welcome. We would love to have you!

Warmly,  
JoAnna Cochenet-Gallastegui  
*jcochenet@gmail.com*  
Music Director  
402-917-0827

- Grace UMC Choir
- Grace UMC Children's Choir  
"The Nightingales"
- Grace UMC Handbell Choir
- Grace UMC Chamber  
Ensemble



## BARGAIN SHED TO RE-OPEN

The Bargain Shed will be opening for the season on Saturday, **April 9<sup>th</sup>**. We hope you have saved your donations!

Our work days will be:

Monday, April 4	9am to Noon
Tuesday, April 5	12:30 to 3:30
Wednesday, April 6	9am to Noon
Thursday, April 7	9am to Noon
Friday, April 8	9am to ?

Items that are clean and in working order may be dropped off at any time the workers are there. Please remember, we do not take tv's, computers or exercise equipment. Small furniture pieces are welcome. Also, please do not leave donations outside.

See you there!

## MARCH'S ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL MEETING

There is so much going on at Grace! We welcomed Tony Phillips as our new Member-at-Large and look forward to his input in the months ahead. The Sunday School has many projects in the works, and even sent a check to support a mission group in

Uganda. Our new Music Director offered an ambitious report, including new music opportunities! We hope to be adding some additional musicians to our Easter service, and possibly at various times throughout the year. Our roofing contract is in place; and well-deserved thanks go out to the Trustees for their dedication to this project! Alan Whitney will be building shelves downstairs to allow for better viewing of our wonderful Book Nook ministry. Crop Walk will be coming up in May, and Jan Bradshaw would welcome someone to help her continue this fundraising event. Much more was covered, and we closed our meeting at 8:30! We've said it before, and it bears repeating – all are welcome!

## BOOK NOOK UPDATE

The Book Sale was a HUGE success. Our goal was to reach \$1,500 and the final figure came in at \$3,267. We more than doubled the original goal!

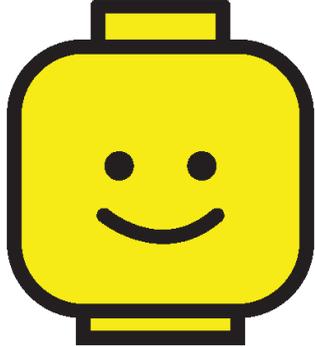
The sale was a success because of our team and all the volunteers who helped doing everything from carrying books, setting up, being cashiers and cleaning up. A BIG thank you also goes to Edna Rominger who ran the food service.

If you notice all the books in the back of the sanctuary, it is because Alan

Whitney has designed and is remodeling the book room downstairs to better accommodate our surplus.

The Book Nook YTD total sales figure as of March 6<sup>th</sup> was **\$4,981!**

GAMES • SNACKS • THE LEGO MOVIE • PRIZES!



**LEGO PARTY!**  
**SATURDAY APRIL 2, 2016**  
**FROM 1PM TO 4PM**

**BRING YOUR BEST LEGO CREATION TO WIN A PRIZE.**  
Prizes awarded for: most detailed, most creative, most realistic, scariest, cutest, silliest and best vehicle.

 **GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
16 Hillcrest Dr, Ravenna, NY 12143 • (518) 756-6688

This year the Sunday School has been learning about the “superheroes” of the bible. To finish our study of these individuals, the students will be creating a LEGO® depiction of their favorite bible hero. To kick start this project, the Sunday School is hosting a LEGO® party on Saturday, **April 2<sup>nd</sup>** from 1-4pm. We will have snacks, games, LEGO®s to build with and plan to watch the LEGO® movie on the big

screen. We are asking kids to bring in their best LEGO® creation to be judged. Prizes will be awarded for the most detailed, most creative, most realistic, scariest, cutest, silliest and best vehicle. Bring your friends for a fun afternoon!

## TAX INFO

One last reminder that if you still need a statement of your donations to Grace UMC for 2015, please ask Harriet Marple and she will be happy to supply that for you.

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations to all those celebrating an April birthday!

- 2 Paul Maurer
- 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

## GRACE'S COFFEE HOUSE

As always, the audience and participants of Grace's Coffee House had a wonderful evening of fun & entertainment! The range of our talented performers went from an 8-year-old girl to well, let's just say...a grey-haired story-teller. The theme was "St. Patty's Day" and our MC, Sharon Philips, had some "corny" Irish jokes to share.

At the end of the evening, the audience showed their appreciation by donating over \$100 to the Prayer Blanket Ministry.



## CROP WALK 2016



The Crop Hunger Walk is part of Church World Vision's ministry to the hungry, both here and abroad. Each spring, folks from several area churches gather at Mosher Park in Ravenna for this important fundraiser. Our youth are encouraged to participate in this fun event, walking with our neighbors to help serve the hungry.

If you can walk the 1- or 3-mile course, please see Jan Bradshaw for registration forms, and begin seeking donors to sponsor you.

If you cannot walk, you can participate by sponsoring a walker.

Last year we had about 50 walkers. We would like even more this year! Shirts are provided. Bottled water and restrooms are provided along the route, and refreshments are served after the walk.

Local food pantries receive 25% of the proceeds. So Save the Date: Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. Further details will be forthcoming.

If you have any questions, please call Jan Bradshaw @ 577-3599.



## EVANGELISM TIP

We draw people to Christ not by loudly discrediting what they believe, by telling them how wrong they are and how right we are, but by showing them a light that is so lovely that they want with all their hearts to know the source of it.

—*Madeleine L'Engle*

## AVOIDING TEMPTATION

Our 10-year-old loves playing on his father's tablet but may use only the touchscreen because he's misused the keyboard and stylus. One day, after receiving permission to play, he detached and handed over the forbidden objects. His dad said, "Just leave them there," but our son replied, "No, I might be tempted to use them."

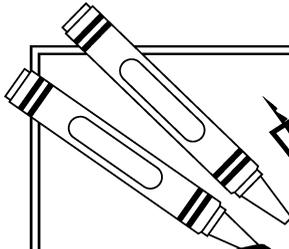
We routinely pray, "Lead us not into temptation," hoping God will almost magically keep us out of trouble even as we stray close to enticements: We buy high-calorie treats while intending

to "eat healthy." We visit big-box stores and spend money we don't have. We gather with gossipy friends, fully aware that such talk is sinful and harmful.

Perhaps we should be more proactive about removing temptations. Perhaps "Lead me not into temptation" means "God, help me keep *myself* away from that which tempts me toward poor choices." Amen!

—*Heidi Mann*





# PUZZLE

## A SPECIAL GIFT

Give thanks to God for this amazing planet, which he filled with people, animals and plants.

*Directions: Following the code below, fill in the blanks to complete the Bible verse. Then color the earth.*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26  
 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



The 5 1 18 20 8 is 20 8 5 12 15 18 4 19, and  
5 22 5 18 25 20 8 9 14 7 9 14 9 20, the  
23 15 18 12 4, and 1 12 12 23 8 15 12 9 22 5  
9 14 9 20. 16 19 1 12 13 24:1, NIV

Answer: The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1, 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](http://www.graceumcravena.org)**



Deadline for articles for the **May** issue of *The Messenger* is **April 17<sup>th</sup>**. Please e-mail or fax articles to Barb Bullock at:

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

or

fax to: **731-8994**