



## *The Messenger*

Grace United Methodist Church  
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[www.gumcravena.com](http://www.gumcravena.com)

Rev. Kim Krause, Pastor

***Working together to put our faith and love into action.***

## **February 2021**

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

Dear Family and Friends of Grace,

2021 may not have started the way that we had hoped, but each day can bring us closer to that change that we hoped for. We can be a part of that change, and Lent is the perfect time for us to delve into activities (or ceasing activities) that can bring us, as individuals, and as a congregation to be the change we want to see.

From [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org) – answering the question “What is Lent” :  
“Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on [Ash Wednesday](#) and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, meaning “lengthen” and refers to the lengthening days of spring. The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.

Lent is a time of repentance, [fasting](#) and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by new converts and

then became a time of penance by all Christians. Today, Christians focus on relationship with God, growing as disciples and extending ourselves, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of ourselves for others.

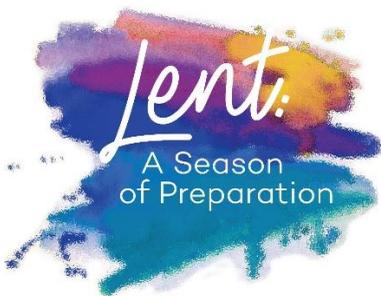
Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter." This is why you will see the designation "Sunday in Lent" rather than "Sunday of Lent" in the naming of these Sundays. On each Lord's Day in Lent, while Lenten fasts continue, the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection."

We often think of giving things up for Lent – soda, snacks, chocolate, TV – but we don't always think of using that time to do something that may bring us closer God. So as we choose things to give up, we may want to consider taking something on to help us grow in our faith. This is an individual choice – and there isn't a "correct" way to do this. I'm listing things below to give up and things to take on during this time of repentance and fasting (which doesn't always mean food). Consider what would be helpful for your own growth.

Whatever you choose, I ask that you continue to pray for one another. We had been using index cards for all who wanted to participate in praying specifically for someone else in the congregation. Since we cannot do that this year, if you are interested in participating in praying for one another in somewhat the same way, please let me know and I'll get a name of someone else in this group to you to pray for...hopefully this will work just as well and we can feel more connected to each other during this time of physically distancing.

Let us continue to work together to put our faith and love into action.

Peace, Pastor Kim



### **Things to give up**

Criticism  
Worry  
Anger  
Unforgiveness  
Gossip  
Complaining  
Negative thought  
Clutter  
Negative/Toxic relationships  
Nagging  
Avoiding difficult conversations  
Hate



### **Things to take on**

Blessing others – handwritten notes, text, phone calls  
Encouraging others  
Doing chores for someone  
Saying Thank you  
Exercise  
Daily prayer  
Study scripture  
Read the Gospels  
Donate – food, time, money  
Smiling  
Quiet time  
Learning about social justice issues  
Taking time for real conversations  
Eating healthier

Christianity isn't meant to simply be believed; it's meant to be lived, shared, eaten, spoken, and enacted in the presence of other people.

Rachel Held Evans

Christianity is a lifestyle - a way of being in the world that is simple, non-violent, shared, and loving. However, we made it into an established "religion" (and all that goes with that) and avoided the lifestyle change itself. One could be warlike, greedy, racist, selfish, and vain in most of Christian history, and still believe that Jesus is one's "personal Lord and Savior" . . . The world has no time for such silliness anymore. The suffering on Earth is too great.

Richard Rohr

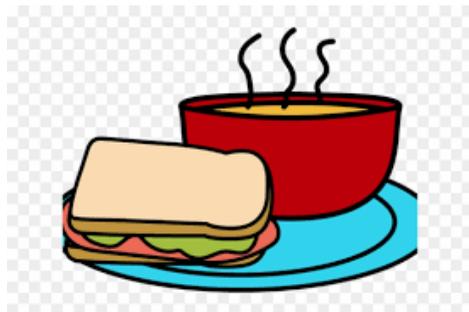


## TAX INFO

If you would like a statement of your donations to Grace UMC for 2020, please contact Harriet Marple at 518-756-6235. She will be glad to provide it to you.

## EVANGELISM NEWS

Our small congregation has been blessed during this pandemic as we continue to worship in new ways. So, in the spirit of nurturing our congregation and staying connected, we are providing a **weekly soup & sandwich lunch ministry**.



In January, we began delivering hot lunches to our church members who are sheltered at home. We intend to continue providing hot lunches **every Monday at noon** through the winter months.

This pandemic has challenged us in many ways but it has not deterred our conviction to stay "united" as a church family. We feel these weekly lunches will serve to strengthen our bonds as a congregation.

The Evangelism Committee would like to extend an invitation to anyone who wishes to help with cooking, packing, or delivering. If you can help out in any way, please contact Sharon & Brian (518-756-3063) or Phyllis (518-961-3461).

### **BOOK NOOK NEWS**

The Book Nook is open (with all NYS health guidelines, including face coverings) only on Tuesday and Saturday mornings from 9:00 until Noon. We will not be open on Thursday evenings.

Also make a note that we are overflowing with cookbooks if you're looking for any. And we will not be taking any new donations of cookbooks for the time being.

### **BARGAIN SHED NEWS**

If all goes well, the Shed will be opening on Saturday, March 20th. This, of course, depends on the status of the Covid virus and also weather. If you have donations of seasonal (spring/summer) items, please hold them until we are near our opening date, it would be appreciated.

We look forward to seeing many friends when we open. Stay well in the meantime.

## **FASTING FROM CRITICALNESS**

Most fasting involves temporarily giving up something you enjoy. When you long for a cookie or a favorite show, you instead turn your attention to God, reorienting yourself to his best.

Catherine Marshall, in *A Closer Walk*, presents a different approach she calls fasting from “criticalness.” God dealt with her judgmental spirit by prompting her to spend 24 hours without criticizing “anyone about anything.” At first, Marshall felt rather empty when she didn’t engage in a heated political debate. But friends and family didn’t seem to miss her comments. Plus, God replaced the energy she’d spent attempting to correct others with energy and creativity to positively influence them.

A critical spirit can make us lose perspective, joy and even relationships. It also can prevent the good work God wants to achieve through us. Consider what could happen as a result of your own “criticalness fast.” Pray for God to do the correcting while you focus on building up others.

—Janna Firestone

## **SPECIAL DAYS**

Some of the special days celebrated in February are:

*Groundhog Day — February 2, 2021*

*Boy Scout Sunday — February 7, 2021*

*Valentine's Day — February 14, 2021*

*Presidents' Day — February 15, 2021*

*Ash Wednesday — February 17, 2021*



4 Anne Frauenberger

5 Linda Sherman

7 John Robertson

14 Kathy Porterfield

24 Mark & Amy Young

16 Casey Sherman

17 Amy Devine-Young

19 Meaghan Houk

20 Sharon Phillips

## STREETSOLDIERS 11 TROY

They are looking for a helping hand for huge project in March.

They would like to offer a bath towel with wash cloth to each person in line.



Could they have enough to offer a set or two for each family in line? Could they have an abundance to be able to offer to each friend and their family members? This is the first time they have ever offered bath towels and wash cloths. These items are a commodity, seldom donated and seldom a set of any kind. Their overall goal would be 80-300 count pending on which option they can accommodate. Any

color you pick will be perfect.

If you can help, please bring towels and wash cloths to the church on

Tuesdays or Saturdays between 9:00 and Noon by February 28 or contact

Michelle Wagner at 518-522-3576 or email [graceumcravena@statetel.com](mailto:graceumcravena@statetel.com) or call 518-756-6688 and leave a message. Thank you.

### BIBLE QUIZ



What was the name of Moses' wife?

- A. Miriam
- B. Jochebed
- C. Zipporah
- D. Leah

Answer: C (See Exodus 2:21.)

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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, including meetings and special events.

**OR VISIT US ON THE WEB: [www.gumcravena.com](http://www.gumcravena.com)**