

PHOTO BY ALAN BARBOUR

# Rectortown Reporter

April 2020

## From the Pastor

### Grace Upon Grace



*Greetings in the name of our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ!*

The Gospel of John says that John the Baptist testified about the “Word who became flesh” saying, “This is the one of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is greater than me because he existed before me.’” The Gospel then says, “from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace...” (from John 1:14-16).

In our Wesleyan tradition, grace is defined as “the undeserved, unmerited, and loving action of God in human existence through the ever-present Holy Spirit.” (www.umc.org) The Merriam-Webster dictionary adds that the purpose of God’s “loving action” is our *regeneration or sanctification*. Putting the two together, I believe grace is God’s love at work in us to restore us to the full image of God in which, and for which, we are created. Essentially, while sin harms our relationships with God and with others; it is grace that heals those relationships and allows love to flourish.

United Methodists understand grace to be God’s active presence in our lives whether or not we know or respond to it. God’s grace is a divine gift that is always available to us, but never forced upon us. While there is only one grace, we understand grace at work in our lives in three distinctive ways. First, there is prevenient grace — the grace that comes before we’re aware of God. God extends grace into our unknowing so that we can come to know. I like to think of this as a divine invitation into relationship! Then there is justifying grace — the grace that redeems us and restores our relationship with God. In this grace we’re regenerated in new life in Christ and made “just-as-if” we’d never sinned. Finally, there is sanctifying grace — the grace in which we grow and mature as we learn to live and to love more like Christ lived and loved.

We cannot earn or buy grace — but we are expected to accept and respond to it. The forty days of our Lenten reflection on — and the repentance of — the obstacles in our spiritual lives that keep us from the fullness of God’s grace will soon end, but it’s not too late to ask ourselves the hard question: what are the obstacles in my spiritual life? Why not ask God to help you overcome your obstacles so you can live more grace-fully!

Grace and peace to each and everyone of you!

*Pastor Steve*

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## Scripture of the month

### John 5:31-34, 46-47, CEB

“If I testify about myself, my testimony isn’t true. There is someone else who testifies about me, and I know his testimony about me is true. You sent a delegation to John, and he testified to the truth. Although I don’t accept human testimony, I say these things so that you can be saved... If you believed Moses, you would believe me, because Moses wrote about me. If you don’t believe the writings of Moses, how will you believe my words?”

# Notes from the Board of Trustees

## Thanks for your patience

The White House Education Building outside repair and maintenance work has been completed. The prep work was done during nice late winter days. Cleaning and repairing the walls, windows, shutters, doors and entry ways was much needed for safety and general use. The next big project being considered for the White House is installing a whole house air-conditioning system.

Thanks,

*Your Board of Trustees*

## Snapshots from RUMC Shrove Tuesday Supper



Thanks to the Fellowship Committee for providing a delicious pancake supper and many smiles!



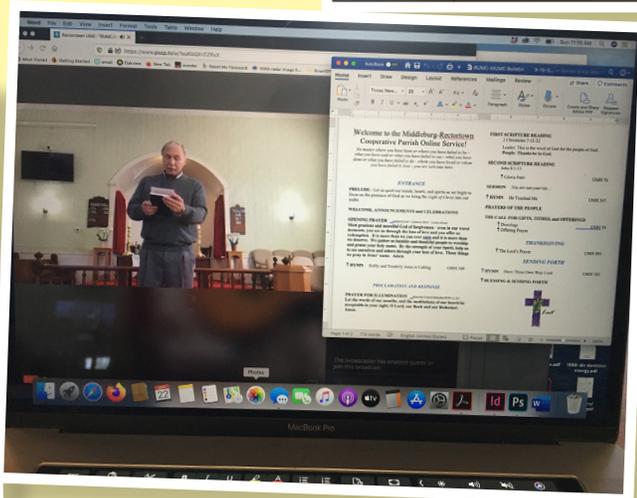
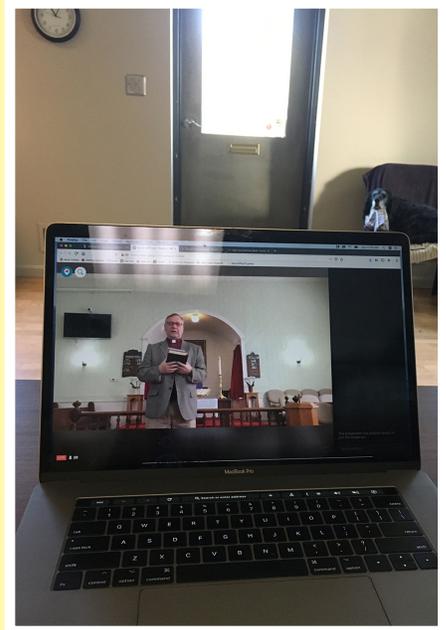
# Making History RUMC Livestreams Worship

Who knew this past winter, when RUMC became the hub for high-speed internet in the area, that it would provide a much-needed moment to lift our spirits in a time of uncertainty? On Sunday, March 22, I received a link through email, clicked on it, registered, then saw the familiar light green walls and the red carpeting of RUMC on my computer. Guitar and piano music filled the air.

As a guitarist from MUMC went offscreen, in came Pastor Steve welcoming us all. I'd forgotten to download the bulletin but then opened it up from the email attachment I'd seen the day before and had that window open next to the streaming window (paperless worship too!).

Sure, I had to leave my home which is on a mountain with terrible internet service but my office is only 10 minutes away. If I hadn't had that, maybe I could've sat in my car at RUMC or even the library parking lot and watched it on my laptop. It was wonderful to have this as an option. Hopefully we won't need it for much longer but it's nice to know it's here. Thanks to everyone who made it possible!

-Laura Symanski, RUMC SPPRC member



## Welcome New RUMC Office Secretary

Although things around RUMC have slowed down, we still have business to conduct. Amy Riggio has agreed to help by filling in as Church Secretary. *Many thanks to our past Secretary, Vicki Willis for her many years and countless hours behind the scenes.*

Please be patient as we fine-tune the office hours. With the current COVID-19 situation, things are in an unusually unstable state. To contact us:

- Office phone: 540-364-1066
- Email: RectortownSecretary@gmail.com
- For general information you can always check our website: RectortownUMC.org



## April Birthdays

- Ben Pisarcik . . . . .4/12
- Henry Symanski . . . .4/17
- Eileen Miller . . . . .4/18
- Linda Rose . . . . .4/20
- Judy Scheuble . . . . .4/25

## Anniversary

- Gary & Joann Garrett . .4/10

# Lenten Schedule

<b>Sunday, April 5</b>		<b>Palm/Passion Sunday</b>
<b>Thursday, April 9</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday</b> <i>(at MUMC)</i>
<b>Friday, April 10</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>	<b>Good Friday Service</b>
<b>Sunday, April 12</b>	<b>6:30am</b>	<b>Sunrise Service</b> <b>Easter Breakfast following</b> <b>Sunrise Service</b>
	<b>10:00am</b>	<b>Easter Sunday Service</b>
	<b>11:30am</b>	<b>Easter Sunday Service</b> <i>(at MUMC)</i>

Note, things could change as we continue to address COVID 19 concerns in the days ahead. We will update you with any necessary changes as they happen.

*All events take place at Rectortown unless specified.  
MUMC=Middleburg UMC*

## Every Week at RUMC

### Sunday Worship

10:00 a.m.

Worship for Adults and Children.  
Nursery provided.

### Sunday School

Adults: 8:45-9:45 a.m.

### RUMC wants to know...

**If you have any photos from our events, news or recipes you'd like to share, please e-mail [Laura@NatsukoGraphicDesign.com](mailto:Laura@NatsukoGraphicDesign.com). Please send by the 15th of the month.**



### Our Mission Statement

Serving God through Prayer, Action, and Love through Service.