

The Good Word

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WHAT'S INSIDE...



#SundaySelfies



Connection Circles Form



Adopt a Flowerbed

GOD IS STILL AMONG US

As I write this, we've had two Sundays of exclusively online worship. We've had 10 days to figure out Facebook Live, Zoom, how to get the best sound and audio, and all the other technology things needed to make online worship happen. (You can tell how tech savvy I am by the technical use of the word "things.") I have to admit, while I see the value in and need for online worship, I never thought going fully online was a great idea: we need to see each other and feed off one another's energy! How can the Spirit flow online??

But if I've learned anything over the past 10 days, it's that I was wrong. I was limiting the Spirit. I was limiting God's ability to what I've always known to be "right."

This past week, I was reminded of the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000+ near Bethsaida. As evening neared, Jesus' disciples became nervous about feeding such a large crowd, and they encouraged Jesus to send the people away to get food and lodging for themselves. But Jesus responded, "You give them something to eat" (Luke 9:13). The disciples told Jesus,

"But we only have five loaves of bread and two fish!" Jesus took what they had, blessed it, and gave it to the disciples to distribute to the crowd. Everyone ate until they were full, and the disciples filled twelve baskets with the leftovers.

That word *only* will limit us every time.

Here we are saying, "We *only* have new & different ways to connect with one another! We can't possibly be the church like this, Jesus!"

Continues on next page.



**LIVE at 9 am on [Facebook Live](#)
and at 1 pm on [YouTube Live](#)**

And anytime after that on our channels

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Help us tell God's story as it unfolds in our church and community. Send us your news!

...continued from front page.

And Jesus said, "Watch this."

We've had over 500 views of Sunday's service on Facebook (which was just 24 hours ago, and doesn't count those who watched on Zoom). Friends and family who don't normally join us—because of physical distance or other limitations—have been able to "be" with us on Sundays. At least a dozen (probably closer to 20) of you have reached out to ask, "How can I help care for our shut-ins and at-risk members?" AND we're discovering new and fun ways to stay connected throughout the week than we EVER have before!

We told God our limitations: "We can't gather together physically!"

And God showed us our possibilities. God has reminded us *what* church is and *who* we are!

I am in awe.

This month, our newsletter is filled with all the ways we can stay connected as a church family while we're physically distant. If you have an idea that's not included here, let us know! This is the time to try new things and we'd love to have your help!

God is continuing to do amazing things through Brecksville UMC, even (especially?) during this unique time in our history. I don't know about you, but I'm excited! Love to you all,

Pastor Heidi

Rev. Heidi Welch, Senior Pastor



On 3.22, Pastor Heidi asked everyone to share a Sunday Selfie. See more on our Facebook Page www.facebook.com/brecksvilleumc



OPPORTUNITIES TO WORSHIP On Sunday mornings, you can participate in live worship services. We are broadcasting LIVE at 9 am on Facebook and at 1 pm on YouTube. At those times, you will be able to participate in live chat. Subscribe to our weekly electronic news letter for up-to-the-minute information about how to tune in. (E-mail office@brecksvilleumc.com.) Don't have a computer? That's OK! Listen in LIVE at 9 am by calling 646-558-8656.



TECHNOLOGY has come a long way and there are lots of options for online meetings, bible studies, and small groups. Our weekly staff meetings have moved online and we are finding it meaningful to be able to see each other, hear one another's voices, and laugh together. As we learn the technology, we are rolling out opportunities to meet online for studies and just to say hello. Join us for [Sunday Coffee Hour](#) at 10 am on Sunday and try it out! You can join by video and/or audio (<https://zoom.us/j/649597799>) or call in to 646-558-8656.



CONNECTION GROUPS help us stay connected. We make calls, check in, request help and run errands as needed and as we're able. Sign up for a group today! If you want to be a "gopher" and run errands for folks, let us know. (See information about gophers on another page.) If you need help, let us know. If you're willing to make calls, let us know! As we move through this time of physical isolation, we do not need to do it alone. Join a connection group today. [Complete this form](#), email office@brecksvilleumc.com or call 440-526-8938



CONNECT AND BE BLESSED! We share inspiration, activities, prayer prompts, photos, articles, jokes and more through our social media platforms. There's even a private group where we can connect and interact with one another on Facebook. Connect with us! We are @BrecksvilleUMC on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Search "Brecksville United Methodist Church" on YouTube.



In the 1500s, when the "Black Plague" was ravaging the land, Martin Luther wrote the following as to how to live and act:

"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me, and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me however I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."

Luther's Works Volume 43 page 132 the letter "Whether one may flee from a Deadly Plague" written to Rev. Dr. John Hess

THINGS THAT HELP

We're putting together a list of practical ideas to help get us through. Deanne started us off with her ideas.

- I listen to podcast sermons at night before I go to sleep, not that they put me to sleep (!), I need something calming and comforting, and feel connection to my church family.
- Scripture. Ephesians 6:10-18, it is sooo specific right now.
- Exercise/healthy foods
- Pray, pray, pray!

Share your ideas! Email Melanie at office@brecksvilleumc.com



United
Methodist
Women
FAITH • HOPE • LOVE IN ACTION



Francis Asbury - NPG.90.82 - National Portrait Gallery

Our April meetings and events have been postponed. Until we meet again, let's learn something new! One of our groups is called Asbury Bremeth Circle.

Asbury Bremeth—Where does the name originate?

Asbury: Francis Asbury was one of the first two Methodist Bishops in the United States. He spread Methodism throughout the British colonies as an early circuit rider--traveling thousands of miles on horseback, preaching the Gospel.

Bremeth: Can you guess what this means? Break it down: "Bre" is for Brecksville; "meth" is short for Methodist. How clever is that? Thank you, Jenny Gee, for educating us again! - Sharon Judson

CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER



Given the present situation of physical distancing, we remember that we are still connected socially and by our faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. Knowing we have members who are home-bound or in care facilities, Pastor Barbara will be in phone contact with these members and sending cards. The caring team will also be calling and sending out cards to them as well on a regular basis.

As difficult as all this is for us who are mobile and active to slow down and stay put, many of our care facility members already know what that is like and look forward to a visit. Now they don't have that visit from the church and it has to be through phone calls and cards.

Please also remember, that if a loved one is coming to the close of their life here on earth, to contact Pastor Heidi or myself as we will be allowed in at the end of life situations.

Please continue to pray for the all who are listed on the church's prayer chain and may that be a way to serve one another and care for one another.

Peace be with you all as we seek new ways to care and show our love to one another and be the church whether gathered or scattered.
- Pastor Barbara, Pastor of Visitation

Is this email *really* from my pastor?

Some members of our congregation have received calls and texts from “Pastor Heidi” saying that she was visiting someone in the hospital and asking for help—even asking for Amazon Gift cards.

Spoiler alert! The messages weren’t from Pastor Heidi. Some nefarious person was trying to trick us. How can you avoid falling into such a trap?

First, know that Pastor Heidi will never email or text you and ask for money or gift cards.

Second, remember these tips from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Suspicious Text Messages

1. **Don’t text back.** Legitimate companies won’t ask you to verify your identity through unsecured channels, like text or email.
2. **Don’t click on any links within the message.** Links can install [malware](#) on your device and take you to spoof sites to try to get your information.
3. **Report the message to your cell phone carrier’s spam text reporting number.** If you’re an AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Sprint, or Bell customer, you can forward the text to 7726 (SPAM) free of charge.

Suspicious E Mail Messages

1. **Look at the address.** (Emails from church staff, including Pastor Heidi, will *always* end with @brecksvilleumc.com.)

The FTC asks that you forward suspicious emails to spam@uce.gov. They also recommend that you cc: the organization impersonated in the email/message -- a step that might give the scammer some pause before going ahead with their scheme.

If at all possible, include the full email header. Header information is typically hidden, but a quick search for “full email header” and the name of your email service (for example, Yahoo) will give you the steps necessary to find that information.

If you ever wonder if an email is really from the church, pick up the phone. Give us a call!

Finance Update Amid Covid-19

In the January Church Council Meeting, a 2020 budget of \$547,000 was approved. This amount is \$31,448 more than what our giving is, but as a church family, we determined that it was not the time to cut back on funding. Instead, we asked our members to give an additional amount of \$5 a week, or \$260 for the year. This is what we need to do God’s work and deliver his message to the greater community. With your help, we have been in the process of closing the gap.

The year started out on a high note with giving in January. February fell short but March has made a nice rebound and we were on pace to meet our monthly goal. And then...Covid-19 happened.

How will this affect us financially as a church? We are not sure yet but are working hard to figure it out. We know that we need roughly \$10,000 a week to operate the basic functions of our building, parsonage and employees. As a staff, we have put a stop on all non-essential spending and will make reductions as needed. We will keep the building utility usage as low as we can. We have put any big expenses on hold until further notice.

We are all facing a massive amount of uncertainty in what the future will hold. What we can tell you, for certain, is that Brecksville UMC will continue to do God’s work in all the ways we know how. Our Staff is working hard to make virtual service happen. Sunday school and Bible studies will continue online. We are putting together task forces to keep people connected and informed. Keeping our family together is paramount and we need your help.

For those of you who bring checks to church service, know that if you drop them in the mail or deliver them to the mailbox at the church, they will be secure and processed. If you are interested in giving online, we have two options:



Text “GiveBUMC” to 73256



Give securely through Realm
onrealm.org/BrecksvilleMethodist/give/now

We will continue to monitor the financial health of our church and keep you informed as we progress through our “new normal.” - *The Finance Committee*

BUMC YOUTH MINISTRY ONLINE

FOR FAMILIES

Looking to connect to your faith and others, all while having fun? Thank God for technology! We have lots of ways for you to log in and share the love. Check out what you might find on our various social media platforms:

Instagram - [@bumcyouthmin](https://www.instagram.com/bumcyouthmin)

Follow us on Instagram for new content each week. Here's just some of what you might find:

- Devotionals every Tuesday and Thursday
- Bible exploration through the Bible Project
- Interactive story elements- let your voice be heard!
- Instagram Live hangouts on Sunday evening with Dana and other special guests



Facebook - [@BrecksvilleUMCYouth](https://www.facebook.com/BrecksvilleUMCYouth) and [@BrecksvilleUMC](https://www.facebook.com/BrecksvilleUMC)

Follow us on Facebook for great parent and family resources. Check it out:

- Worship with us on Sunday morning at 9 am through Facebook Live
- Join our Facebook group [Brecksville United Methodist Church Group](#) to connect with other church members, post if you need anything, and see the latest in church updates



Weekly Newsletter Email

If you currently don't receive the weekly youth ministry newsletter sign up by letting Dana know at youth@brecksvilleumc.com. Our newsletter includes:

- Youth ministry updates
- Resources to help parents of teens on their journey in faith
- Recaps of our weekly devotionals and Bible explorations
- Encouragement for your week!



- Dana Schwendeman, Director of Youth Ministries

These are strange times indeed! Each of us is working to adjust to this new normal - when it seems anything but normal. We can all agree that our isolation from each other is difficult, as we are social creatures, but incredibly important. You are likely being inundated with school materials and free resources that companies are generously making available right now. I sure don't want to overwhelm you but I am also going to be sending you some fun things to do with your kids to keep those faith conversations going during the coming weeks. My communication with you will take on a few different forms.

Some days you will get a video devotion in your email inbox... other days you will get a suggested Bible story to read with activities to do that connect to that story... other days I will send you my version of a virtual children's moment.

It is difficult to have our routines so undone and even more difficult to not have our usual interactions with our friends, coworkers and classmates. I am hoping that our Brecksville UMC Facebook group gives us some sense of continued connection. Each day you will have the chance to share something fun you are doing based on our suggested activities. Please post, post, post and also use the #BrecksvilleUMC to show us your family having fun with faith.

- Jenny Gee, Director of Christian Education

ABOUT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Although we have no idea what to expect in the coming weeks and months, we are keeping VBS registration open with high hopes that we will be able to gather together in July to sing, dance, learn and have fun praising God. For now, please register if you plan on attending but do not send money. This way we will know how to prepare!

**NO
DISTANCE**
by Steve Garnaas-Holmes

*In the one Spirit
we were all baptized into one body.*
— 1 Corinthians 12.13

Our social distancing is an illusion.
We are one.
There is no distance.
No gap.
Isolated in your apartment, you belong.

You breathe and it fills my lungs.
You weep and my heart is broken.
We are one body in many places.

In this time of separation
we open our hearts,
we allow ourselves to flow out from our
bodies in Spirit to one another,
to the strangers

who are part of us. Like the Italians
singing from their balconies with neighbors,
we are all notes of the same song.

Love flows where germs cannot.
Meditate on our amazing unity.
Extend your spirit
to include all it includes: the whole world.

Breathe in this breath (so threatened!),
a gift.
Breathe out this breath (so released!),
a gift.
Let compassion for all beings
flow with it,

in and out, refreshing your whole body,
the Body of Christ,
the whole human family,
the whole Creation.
Let love be our body.

Let your love take flesh. Make calls.
Write letters. And when you come back out
don't stop being one another's body.
It's your life.

~ as posted on *Unfolding Light* (March 16,
2020) Used by permission.

Beryl Burkle	1				
Doug Holmes	1				
Lauren Brinkmann	2				
Leanne Davis	2				
Sherry Klodnick	3				
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Emmalyn Sparks	3				
Matthew Agnew	4	Addie Magee	14	Matt Salisbury	28
Jessica Agostine	4	Vince Marotto	14	Ethan Shah	28
Brad Holmok	4	Maddie Miller	14	Barb Toman	28
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Stella McCrodden	6	Janine Telischak	16	Sheri Z.	29
Claire Palmer	7	Gail Huth	18	Lynn Dorman	30
Lily Seifert	7	Ken Wise	18	Barbara Harper	30
Derek Brinkmann	8	Stephanie Roberts	19	Bob Wuerth	30
Dorothy Pliske	8	Zachary Brachna	20		
Donna Eilbeck	10	Judy Burroughs	21	Connection	
Alan Harper	10	Caitlin Dieringer	21	challenge:	
Avery Petznick	10	Ralph Slifcak	22	<i>Look at the birthday</i>	
Mandy Rozman	10	Ryan Petznick	24	<i>list every day and</i>	
Hannah Johnson	11	John Brachna	25	<i>take a moment to say</i>	
Dale Beaver	12	Tate Fowler	25	<i>a prayer of thanks for</i>	
Joel Bellone	13	Ruth Holmes	25	<i>each birthday.</i>	
Carri Kenney	13	Katie Kiss	25	<i>Consider calling that</i>	
Kathy Louttit	13	John Prominski	25	<i>person, sending a</i>	
Alex McMaster	13	Chase Boldt	26	<i>card, or making a</i>	
Payton Schneider	13	Sara Louttit	26	<i>point to wish them a</i>	
Andrew Fredrick	14	Alison Donze	27	<i>happy birthday on</i>	
Michael Houff	14	Becky Juniper	27	<i>social media.</i>	
Ed Jones	14	Nancy Kroenke	28		



As people of faith, we find God's presence in those who have been blessings to us. At our weekly staff meetings recently, prayers of thanks were lifted to God for the way lives are touched when we reach out to one another in service. People like Stephanie

Holmes who quickly mobilized to help us record audio for our podcasts when our worship services suddenly went online, and all of the folks who are calling and emailing with offers to help others in crisis. We are thankful for each of you and for all of the ways you lift up and support one another. Be kind to yourselves and know that we are loved, cared about and prayed for every single day!



Living With Loss Support Group Announced at Brecksville United Methodist Church

Coming this summer. Dates TBD.

Grieving is one of the most universal of all human conditions. It cuts across all human experiences. The death of a loved one changes our life completely and is considered the most stressful of all life changes. We grieve other losses as well. For example, the loss of tangible things like a home, changes in church affiliation, geographical relocation, financial loss. We can grieve intangibles such as hopes, dreams, beliefs and attitudes. We can grieve the loss of a career, youthfulness, health, marriage, or a friend.

Recovering from grief requires us to take an active role. We cannot keep our feelings inside. Time alone will not make it better. We need to talk about our loss and the problems we face. It's an important part of healing.

Brecksville United Methodist church is offering a six week bereavement education and sharing support group. Church members - and their friends - who are grieving are invited to attend and share their problems, concerns, feelings and questions.

Kendall Lancaster will facilitate this six-week support group. Before his retirements as a hospice chaplain and bereavement coordinator, he was certified by the Association of Professional Chaplains (APC0 and the American Academy of Bereavement as a group facilitator and certified in Thanatology (CT) by the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC).

Contact the office with questions or to register.

Blood Drive, Sunday, April 19

Donating Blood Is More Important Than Ever

In the wake of COVID-19 responses, Vitalant is urging individuals to continue donating blood, unless our public health officials specifically direct otherwise. "Otherwise, we will be in jeopardy of causing another public health crisis—not having enough blood to meet basic patient needs." said Dr. Ralph Vassallo, Vitalant's chief medical and scientific officer. In parts of China and in Seattle, the blood supply is at the "lowest levels" and is in "danger of collapse" as groups have canceled blood drives and individuals have stopped donating blood.

Vitalant urges sick people to stay home, and appropriately seek medical attention, if there was an exposure to COVID-19. Vitalant urges healthy people to stay healthy by following CDC guidelines—to not shake hands and to wash hands frequently. And, Vitalant urges healthy people to help now by giving blood.

"In these difficult times, giving blood is something healthy individuals can do to help the sick. The only source for blood—literally in many hospital procedures, the source of life—is another human being," Dr. Vassallo said. "We need people to donate blood today, while following guidance from the CDC and other agencies."

The blood collection process is safe. In addition to the vigorous FDA-mandated testing of all blood components donated, Vitalant staff follow rigorous safety and disinfection protocols on our bloodmobiles and in our donation centers. Finally, giving blood has no impact on the donor's immune system.

In addition to barring non-healthy individuals from donating, Vitalant is telling individuals not to come in to donate if they have visited a country with sustained widespread COVID-19 outbreaks as defined by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC).

Vitalant is actively monitoring the situation and will quickly implement any necessary changes as new information emerges from the CDC, FDA and AABB (formerly known as the American Association of Blood Banks).

More information about the 2019 Novel Coronavirus and donor eligibility can be found at:

www.vitalant.org/Donate/Donor-Eligibility.aspx

Gopher It!

SERVE OTHERS IN A TIME OF NEED

GO FOR IT! As we start seeing COVID-19 becoming more prevalent in this area, it will be increasingly important that we are mindful of the needs of those around us. Many families will be told, often unexpectedly, that they and their entire household must immediately quarantine for 14 days. This is absolutely necessary, but hugely challenging, especially for large households. We can help without increasing our own exposure (get their groceries when we're getting our own, etc). We have a group of people willing to run these errands for those at risk and in need. Contact the church office to sign up!

SERVE WHILE SOCIAL DISTANCING

Adopt a Flower Bed
As thoughts turn to spring, the Trustees Committee is reaching out to the congregation for help providing love and care to our church gardens/ flower beds. This is a great activity that can get you outdoors while you still maintain good distancing. Adopt a garden or portion of a garden to tend. The sprinklers can water most areas but help is needed with weeding and care. In addition, they are looking for plants to add color, interest and beauty to the church grounds. If anyone has perennials that would be appropriate to the gardens to donate and plant, please contact the office.

Mowing Teams Forming
Every spring and summer, we have teams of two who volunteer one day every 5 weeks or so to mow, trim and edge the church grounds, working in teams of two. Dave Brown has agreed to be the point person for the lawn mowing teams this year. If you would be interested in helping out, please contact the office and they will put you in touch with Dave. Thank you!

- Bob Landholm, Chairperson, Board of Trustees

650 PRAYER

Set your alarm for 6:50 am or pm. When your alarm goes off, join your voice with others in prayer.

"Jesus is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

- Colossians 1:17

Transcendent God, We are separated by physical distance. Yet we realize that no matter where we are, we are connected by your Holy spirit and your boundless love. Lord of us all, you know the anxieties in our hearts and minds. We pray that we might find solace and connection; relief from a chaotic world; and remember that You, God are the firm foundation on which we stand. Amen.



Brecksville UMC

65 Public Square, Brecksville, Ohio 44141

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Socialize with us!

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and
the power and the glory
forever.
Amen.

Just remember: When you're outside a home-controlled environment or when you bring a delivery into your house, wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. Recite the Lord's Prayer while you wash, and you're covered - in more ways than one!



Open Doors.
Welcoming all of God's children.

Brecksville United Methodist Church is called to the ministry of reconciliation. We embrace diversity as a gift. We celebrate our human family's diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, faith history, economic status, marital status, physical and mental ability, and education. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and as beloved children of God, all are worthy of God's love and grace. We welcome the full inclusion of all people in the life and ministries of Brecksville United Methodist Church as we journey toward reconciliation through Christ.