



Good Samaritan Day

The Rotation Kids (grades 1-5) celebrated Good Samaritan Day on February 19. We gathered in Fellowship Hall to hear the story of the Good Samaritan, play some "Love your Neighbor" games and make blankets to be donated to Project Linus. It was a fun and active morning. What is the Project Linus?

On Christmas Eve, 1995, an article titled "Joy to the World" appeared in *Parade Magazine*. It was written by Pulitzer Prize winning photo-journalist, Eddie Adams. Part of the article featured a petite, downy haired child. She had been going through intensive chemotherapy and stated that her security blanket helped her get through the treatments. After reading the article, Karen Loucks decided to provide homemade security blankets to Denver's Rocky Mountain Children's Cancer Center, and Project Linus was born.

Project Linus is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide love, a sense of security, warmth and comfort to children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need through the gifts of new, handmade blankets and afghans, lovingly created by volunteer "blanketeers."

But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?

- 1 John 3:17



Project Linus National Headquarters is in Bloomington, Illinois but they have chapters in all 50 states. Blankets are collected locally and distributed to children in hospitals, shelters, social service agencies, or anywhere that a child might be in need of a big hug. The blankets made by the children of BUMC will stay in the Cleveland area. Distribution points are the Cleveland Clinic, Rainbow, Child Witnesses to Violence and the Red Cross.

Good Samaritan Involvement Day, also known as Good Samaritan Day, is observed on March 13th in the United States. It takes place on the anniversary of the death of Catherine-Kitty-Genovese, who was killed in New York City while multiple bystanders stood by and did nothing to help her. Good Samaritan Involvement Day is a day for unselfish actions to help those who are in need.



Our rotation Sunday School Students turned Fellowship Hall into "blanket production central" for Project Linus!



8:45 Contemporary Service
 10:00 Education Hour
 11:15 Traditional Service

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 Friday of each month.*



Better Places and Times

Comments from Rev. Clark Stein

“And on that day’, says the Lord God, ‘I will make the sun go down at noon, and darken the earth in broad daylight. I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness on every head; I will make it like the mourning for an only son, and the end of it like a bitter day.’”

- Amos 8:9-10 RSV

March seems like such a “tweener” month to me. Often winter still rages, yet in between sporadic blasts we are privileged to greet promising signs of spring around the corner. On the one hand, I am ready to see winter go, (I am not much for shoveling the driveway, and do not like to be cold ever) but I want spring sprung, not just a day to day maybe. Baseball starts “spring training”, but the real games don’t start until April, still allowing March that “tweener” feel. There’s no way around experiencing times of transition, and that could very well be where March is destined to languish in this not so tropical climate of Northeast Ohio.

One certainty of March is the journey through Lent. Much of our Lenten observance takes place in this month, and in that regard, March holds much promise. The structure of the month takes us right on up to the brink of the passion. When I think of the journey we are called to make as Christians, a yearly pilgrimage through some of the darkest moments in history, I am taken by this prophecy contained in this passage from the book of Amos. In light of the events of Good Friday, this prophecy rings eerily in the middle of a book which contains some wonderful visions of a better place and time.

We all look to better places and times, and can find many such descriptions in scripture. But as March begins to settle in around us, let us not succumb to the temptations to become “tweeners” ourselves. It is only through an intentional time aside, a very deliberate, committed attempt to look at the darkness, that one can come to a deeper understanding of the intensity of the light that eventually will spring from it. As we journey together through this time of contemplation and discovery, may we be brave enough to face the full fledged darkness, that at this “tweener” month’s end will place us on the porch of spring and brand spankin’ new life.

Peace,

Pastor Clark



Coffee Fellowship

fellowship and to learn more about this ministry.

In March the **Evan-gelism Committee** will be hosting coffee each Sunday morning. Come to The Parlor between services for

Pop Tops for Ronald McDonald House:

Why throw them away?

Turn your pop tops into

cash for Ronald McDonald House.

There’s a collection bin in the cloak room. Thank you for your help!



5th Grade Communion Workshop



Did you know that Communion is one of the most basic and fundamental acts of the Christian faith? Receiving the elements of Communion joins us together with Christ and with people around the world who share our faith. What does it mean when we take Communion? Have you thought about this before?

Throughout the season of Lent, our Fifth Graders will explore this wonderful part of our faith and will meet each Sunday to discover the meanings and traditions behind Communion. We will read Bible passages that help make sense of this holy meal while we have discussions, play games and perform short skits. Most importantly we will gather together and learn as a group. This is fitting for a lesson on Communion which is meant to be celebrated in community.

This program starts on February 26 and goes through March 25. The young people who participate will make and serve Communion on April 1, Palm Sunday. The goal is to have all of our 5th graders attend throughout Lent.

Youth Rock-a-Thon-for-John



BUMC Youth will gather in Fellowship Hall on March 30 to rock the night away for a good cause - School for John! John is a young man from Camphor Mission in Liberia who is trying to complete his 8th grade year of school. Our youth have made a commitment to raise the money for his tuition

this year Kids, bring your own rocking chair or recliner, a snack to share and any video games etc. for entertainment. We will have a movie going and will provide beverages. See you there!

Girl Scout Sunday

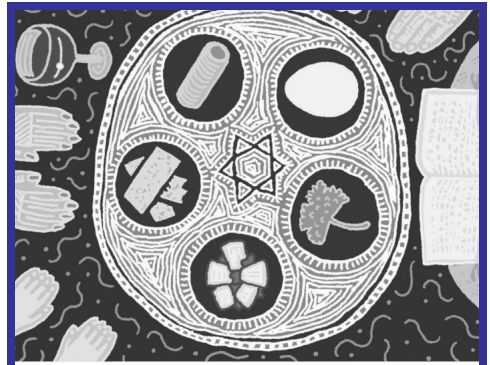


Girl Scout Sunday

On March 11, BUMC will join places of worship across the United States in recognition of Girl Scout Sunday. The day commemorates the founding of the Girl Scouts, 100 years ago!

Scouting is a lighthouse to many kids, a beacon that guides young people to develop leadership skills, build character and values, care for the environment, and become responsible citizens. It is a light to many young people, helping them grow into responsible adults, helping them navigate the experiences life throws at them. It is through scouting that many kids are able to stay the course (or are shown where they need to change course) in order to do their best for God, country, community, and family.

Join us as we celebrate Girl Scout Sunday on March 11!



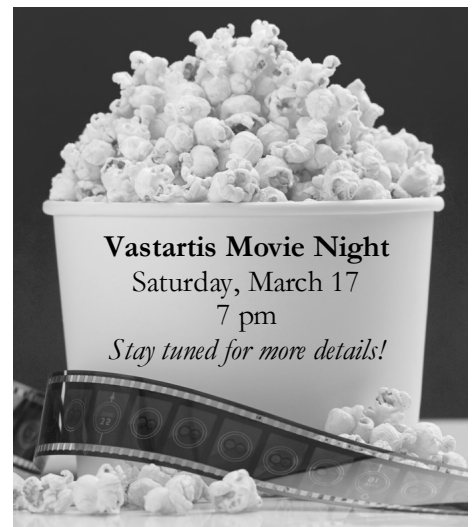
The Annual Interfaith Passover Seder at Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple is **Tuesday, March 20** from 7:00-8:30 pm. The evening will consist of a retelling of the Israelites redemption from Egypt, an explanation of the significance of many of the customs related to Passover and a small sampling of traditional foods used at a Passover Seder.

*Contact Craig Czarnota to sign up:
440-838-1331*

Building Use

The Trustees have updated our building usage charges for members and non-members of BUMC. The facilities use forms are available on the church website and in the office. We appreciate the help and input from many of our staff at BUMC. For funerals, memorials and baptisms involving our members, there are no charges, but we would ask that you consider the time put forth by various BUMC staff members and perhaps consider making a donation to those who may have provided assistance to you or for your activity. Thank you!

- The Trustees



Vastartis Movie Night

Saturday, March 17

7 pm

Stay tuned for more details!



Have news you would like to share?
Please call or e-mail Melanie.

On January 29, we welcomed Olivia Elizabeth Klipfell into God's kingdom and our congregation through Holy Baptism. Olivia was born October 23 to John and Monica Klipfell, and is the little sister of Brandon. We rejoice at Olivia's rebirth through water and the Word!

As most of you know, Brecksville UMC lost a special friend on Valentine's Day. June Tschannen died after a brief illness. A steady presence in the church, June had a big heart for BUMC, which she joined in 1963. She and Bob were married for 65 years. We rejoice that June is now in the presence of God, who says, along with us, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Homer Cotton, our friend from Chippewa Place, died February 12 at the age of 96. A veteran of World War II, Homer participated in the Honor Flight this past fall, traveling to Washington DC to visit the World War II Memorial. Grandfather of 7, great grandfather of 11 and great-great grandfather of 1, Homer was much loved and will be greatly missed.

Patricia Grossmyer, grandmother of Sarah and Hannah Stanley, passed away on February 11. Services were held February 15 with Pastor Stein officiating.

Nine year old Ava McFarlane donated her hair to Wigs for Kids, a local organization that makes wigs for children with hair loss. The organization is unique in that they do not charge for the hairpieces and they help children locally. Ava donated six ponytails measuring about 13 inches each. She said she plans to do it again in three years when her hair grows back! Learn more: wigsforkids.org



Brianna	Diver	03/01	Lisa	Sibits	03/14
John	Falko	03/01	Lindsay	Dorman	03/15
Edith	Coman	03/02	Daniel	Dubin	03/15
Mary	Kotnik	03/02	Lee	Derry	03/16
Eileen	Yates	03/02	Samuel	Eberhardt	03/16
Lillian	Johnson	03/03	Joann	Fox	03/17
Susan	Dietrich	03/04	Carly	Johnson	03/17
Emily	Schultz	03/04	Robert	Hudacek	03/18
Tiffany	Jacob	03/05	David	Sibits	03/18
Phyllis	Phillips	03/05	Jack	Monnin	03/19
Kurt	Campbell	03/06	Seth	Johnson	03/20
Caitlin	Drescher	03/06	Kristen	Kubek	03/20
Donald	Burkle	03/07	David	Podolny	03/24
Megan	White	03/07	Philip	Storey	03/24
Ruth Ann	Bilek	03/08	Liz	Fredrick	03/25
Kaleb	Dumot	03/08	Stacie	Memmer	03/25
Matthew	Auble	03/09	Mallory	Krolikowski	03/26
Clifford	Thielman	03/09	Robin	Wilson	03/26
George	Gee	03/10	Joseph	Holmes	03/27
Michael	Kubek	03/10	Carol	Kubicek	03/27
Robert	Bloch	03/11	Judith	Spraggins	03/28
Janet	James	03/12	Kimberly	Rybak	03/30
Tyler	Hulten	03/13	Hannah	Shively	03/30
Sydney	Hudacek	03/14	Madeline	Piorkowski	03/31

Don't see your birthday listed? We may not know when it is! If you would like to share your special day with the congregation, please email or call the church office to update our records. 440-526-8938 or office@brecksvilleumc.com



As people of faith, we find God's presence in those who have been blessings to us. At our weekly Staff Meetings, we have recently lifted up the following people in prayer, thanking God for them and the way they touch the lives of others: Look around BUMC and you will see **The Phillips Family** organizing a breakfast for our community; **The Dietrich Family** providing a wonderful lunch for staff; **The Music Board** hosting a lovely benefit for the music department which provided an opportunity for an evening of fellowship; and **Monica and Emily Kotnik** lending a hand when it's needed. We are thankful for each of you!

Thank You Notes

- ◆ Yum-Yum (translation thank you). Our church collected @ 70 dozen cookies for the USO. I am sure the men and women of our Armed Forces are enjoying them as you read this missive. Special thanks to the congregant/family who donated 9 1/2 dozen cookies!! Once again BUMC has shown its commitment to sharing.
- ◆ I wish to thank everyone for the wonderful outpouring of prayers and good wishes for my recovery. Thank you, Jeanne Ross

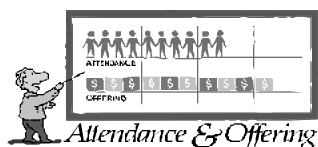
UMW Collects Socks & Underwear for Kids!



During the month of March, UMW will be collecting donations of underwear, bras, and socks for the Westside Community House West Side Sisterhood. The items are for girls age 10 to 18. There will be a box in the coat room for your donations. Need more info? Contact Gretchen Mates.

West Side Sisterhood is an after-school and summer arts program that prepares girls ages 10 - 18 from Cleveland's west side for womanhood and their life beyond. *Sisterhood* fosters a belief in girls' self-worth based on their skills, unique talents, and spirituality rather than on appearance, popularity, sexuality or negative gender and racial stereotypes. *Sisterhood* encourages and challenges young women to be strong and independent, to exercise self-discipline, to respect themselves and one another, to value education, and to know when and how to give help and receive it. Learn more online:

www.wschouse.org



Can we make our numbers grow? Why not bring a friend to church or Sunday School?

Date	1st Service Attendance	Sunday School	2nd Service Attendance	Offering
January 29	159	108	85	\$7,188
February 5	158	98	84	\$11,709
February 12	125	91	74	\$5,468
February 19	146	113	76	\$11,876
Ash Wednesday			79	

Want to read more? Go to www.brecksvilleumc.com



United
Methodist
Women

The UMW meeting is **Thursday, March 1** starting at 9:30 a.m. with a continental breakfast and fellowship. The 10:00 program is an important topic for everywoman in our church.....your heart. Sheree White, a University Hospital clinical research nurse specialist, will discuss factors which affect women regarding a healthy heart. We encourage you to attend.....and wear something red.



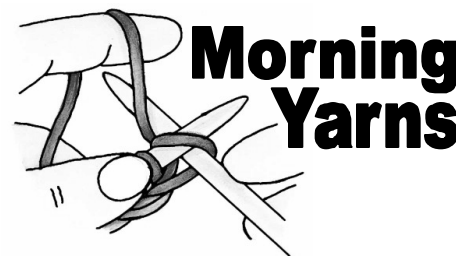
World Day of Prayer Service

Friday, March 2
at 9:30

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church
Brecksville

Hosted by

Parma Southwest District of
Church Women United



Morning Group Forms

Want to learn to knit or crochet? You're in luck. A new interest group is in the works! Sandy Crist is looking for others who might enjoy learning to crochet or knit, and for folks who might want to share their know how. A morning time is desirable, and the group would meet once a month. What day would work for you? What projects would you like to do? Sandy says, "Let's talk!" Call her at 440-526-1494 or e-mail sandracrist@sbcglobal.net



Chorister's Guild

Have you heard of Chorister's Guild? This organization provides support and resources to churches with the specific goal of encouraging young singers and worshippers! Our own Music Director, Joy Fenton, is President of the Northeast Ohio Chapter of Chorister's Guild. Each year, the chapter sponsors a Children's Choral Festival, featuring an outstanding guest clinician. This year, our children will have the opportunity to work with Lee Gwozdz, an incredible youth choral director from Corpus Christi, Texas. On Saturday, March 10, our young singers (grades 2 - 8) will spend a fun day working on six anthems (which they have learned ahead of time) and polishing them for a Festival Concert that afternoon. You are welcome to join us at First Congregational Church of Akron [292 East Market Street] for this exciting concert at 3:00pm. It is free and open to the public. This is a great opportunity to support our young BUMC singers and to encourage the future of choral music in our church!



A Message from WSEM Pantry Needs

Currently our greatest need is for tuna, peanut butter, mac & cheese, juice, one dish meals, toilet paper, toiletries, spray disinfectant cleaner, books & magazines.

We have a bookshelf in the lobby. People are welcome to take books anytime. This has been a huge hit. Interests vary from romance to text books and everything in between.

Please bring your donations to the box in our cloakroom. Be sure to check expiration dates

Music with a Mission

1, 2, 3

Rock!



March 23

We've done colors...

We've done decades...

We've done a beach show...

This year, join us for **1, 2, 3, Rock!!!** with songs like *SIXTEEN Tons*, *You're the ONE that I Want*, *1, 2, 3, 4 (I Love You)*, and many more great NUMBER acts!!

The evening will feature our awesome MC's, great songs and sketches, and a delicious dinner cooked and served by our YSP youth. Come for dinner and a great show that promises to provide you with an evening of smart, numeric entertainment!

There is still room to get involved... contact Catherine Vastartis (cvastartis@gmail.com) if you can help with dinner or Alan Scheufler (ascheufler01@aol.com) to get involved with the silent auction.

Menu: Lasagna, salad, rolls, vegetable, assorted desserts.

\$12 for adults. \$6 children under 12. Children under 5 are free.

Doors open at 6:00 pm, and silent auction baskets will be available.

Dinner will be served at 6:30 pm.

The silent auction will close at 7:00 pm with the show starting shortly thereafter.

Get your tickets before or after church on any Sunday in March, or call the office! 440-526-8938

"Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind."

Psalms 107:8 (NRSV)

GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE

For more than 70 years, UMCOR has brought hope and
solidarity to communities both at home and abroad.



UMCOR • One Great Hour of Sharing
United Methodist Committee on Relief
Be There. Be Hope.
Learn more about One Great Hour of Sharing at www.umcivgiving.org/OGHS.

One Great Hour of Sharing, March 18

Purpose: Lent is the season of repentance, self-examination, and awareness of the hurts of the people of the world. One Great Hour of Sharing calls the Church to share the goodness of life with those who hurt. Gifts provide refuge and relief to some of the world's most vulnerable people during times of distress.

History: In 1946, One Great Hour of Sharing began as a special effort of the Episcopal Church. In 1949, the observance became ecumenical. Originally, during one special worship hour on one date, people of faith contributed over and above their regular offerings. Today different denominations celebrate One Great Hour of Sharing on various dates, but the cooperative spirit remains.

Your generous contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing lay the foundation of all of UMCOR's work by covering the costs of doing business. This means all gifts designated to specific programs can go 100% to those programs because UMCOR's basic expenses are covered. Learn more: <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umcor/>

Messiah Sing

The BUMC Music Department, in conjunction with the Brecksville Center for the Arts, will host a community-wide Messiah Sing on **Sunday, April 22**. This exciting event will be held at 4:00pm in our Sanctuary. Featuring a chamber orchestra, organ, and trumpet, we will present the 2nd and 3rd sections of George Frideric Handel's powerful work, *Messiah*. Here's how **you** can get involved!

- ◆ Open auditions will be held for Soprano, Tenor and Bass soloists (by single movement) on March 5 and 6 in the Sanctuary. Please contact Joy for audition information.
- ◆ Just show up and sing on **Sunday, April 22**. Scores will be available at the door. (You are also welcome to come and listen!)

See Joy for additional details or to help out "behind the scenes"!

Les Buttolph Named Co-Lay Speaker of the Year






A Lay Speaker is...

- *An active, supportive member of a United Methodist church*
- *Eager to serve through the church*
- *Well-informed on Scripture, and on doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of The United Methodist Church*
- *Committed to witnessing through church and community leadership, caregiving ministries, and spoken communication*
- *Willing to improve his/her skills for service*

That sounds like our own Les Buttolph, who has been named co-lay speaker of the year by the North Coast District! Retired from his working life, Les volunteers to be the business manager/treasurer at the church. He keeps regular office hours, pays all of the bills, maintains an active presence with the Finance committee and Trustees, and takes on other tasks when asked. He is a gifted and able Bible study leader and leads a Monday evening class. He regularly teaches Sunday School and is often asked to preach by other pastors. He has led an evening worship experience at Chippewa Place, and of late has taken on our parking lot ministry. Les has long been active in Kairos and in the Emmaus community, offering his skills as a leader and avid supporter of both programs. He regularly asks for contributions of cookies and openly speaks of how meaningful his Kairos weekends are. He ushers regularly and eagerly invites others to be active in the ministry of the church. Les regularly serves as a mentor to confirmands and encourages them to become active in the life of the congregation. He is dearly thought of throughout the congregation, and will be a shining light to draw others to the blessings of Lay Speaking. Congratulations, Les!

Want to read more? Go to www.brecksvilleumc.com

MARCH MARCH

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 Janine and Emily Telischak				1 9:30 UMW 4 Wo Emmaus 6:15 HS Ensem 6:15 Handbells 7:30 Choir	2 World Day of Prayer 7 Em Reunion 9 Men's Bible	3
4 Communion UMW Soup Sun. 8:45 Worship 8:45 Comm. Class 10 Ed. Hour 11:15 Worship 2 Hiking Club	5 7 Bible Study	6 11 Staff Mtg 7 Messiah Sing Auditions 7 Knitting Grp	7 6:30 Dawnbrkrs 3:30 CMAP 7 Messiah Sing Auditions 7 Lenten Study	8 9:30 Asbury Bremeth Circle 4 Wo Emmaus 6:15 HS Ensem 6:15 Handbells 7:30 Choir	9 7 Em Reunion 9 Men's Bible	10 10 Chorister's Guild Festival 3 Concert 6:15 Chapel Service at Chippewa Place
11 <i>Girl Scout Sun</i> 8:45 Worship 8:45 Comm. Class 10 Ed. Hour 11:15 Worship 	12 7 Bible Study	13 11 Staff Mtg 7 COM 8 Super Tuesday Committee Mtgs No Music Board	14 6:30 Dawnbrkrs No CMAP today 7 Lenten Study	15 10 History Club 4 YSP Dinner for Kiwanis 4 Wo Emmaus No HS Ensem 6:15 Handbells 7:30 Choir	16 7 Em Reunion 9 Men's Bible 	17  7 Movie Night at the Vastartis's
18 8:45 Worship 8:45 Comm. Class 10 Ed. Hour 11:15 Worship 4:30 Dinner at Pearl Rd UMC	19 7 Bible Study	20 9:30 Staff Mtg 7 Knitting Grp 7 Interfaith Pass-over Seder 7:30 Finance 7:30 Trustees 8 Music Board?	21 6:30 Dawnbrkrs 3:30 CMAP 7 Lenten Study	22 4 Wo Emmaus 6:15 HS Ensem 6:15 Handbells 7:30 Choir	23 7 Em Reunion 9 Men's Bible 6 Music with a Mission 	24 6:15 Chapel Service at Chippewa Place
25 8:45 Worship 8:45 Comm. Class 10 Ed. Hour 11:15 Worship	26 7 Bible Study	27 9:30 Staff Mtg	28 6:30 Dawnbrkrs 3:30 CMAP 7 Lenten Study 7 SPR	29 4 Wo Emmaus 6:15 HS Ensem 6:15 Handbells 7:30 Choir	30 7 Em Reunion 9 Men's Bible 9:30 UMW Board Meeting 7 Rock-a-thon	31

This Month's Scripture Focus:

Find this month's scriptures on the home page of the church website
www.brecksvilleumc.com

March 2: World Day of Prayer

www.worlddayofprayer.net

March 8: International Women's Day

www.internationalwomensday.com

March 18: One Great Hour of Sharing

<http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/umcor/give/oghs>

March 21: Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

www.un.org/en/events/racialdiscriminationday

March 22: World Water Day

www.worldwaterday.org

Easter Altar Flower Order Form



Easter Altar Flowers

Easter altar flowers may be ordered in honor of or in memory of loved ones or to the glory of God. Five types of plants are available (see list below). The order **deadline is March 30**. All orders must be accompanied with payment in **cash or check payable to: Brecksville UMC**. You may pickup your flowers following worship on Easter (April 8) or direct that your plant be given as a gift to someone with restricted circumstances.

Order with payment due in Office by March 30, 2012

- Lily (\$7.50)
- Blue Hyacinth (\$7.50)
- Blue Hydrangea (\$12.50)
- Pink Hydrangea (\$12.50)
- Pink Tulips (\$7.50)

Donor _____

Phone _____

Circle: *in honor of* *in memory of* *to the glory of God*

Name of person(s) honored/remembered:

Check one: I will pick up
 Give to someone else



Enjoy a seasonal treat. UMW will sell an 8” round pan of Hot Cross Buns for \$8 on Palm Sunday, April 1. You can guarantee having some to take home by pre-ordering by March 27. Simply fill out the bottom of this form and place it in the UMW mail slot in the office. You can pay now or when you pick up the rolls.

Proceeds will go towards funding our commitments to Red Bird, Henderson Settlement and the district pledge. Thank you for your support. Questions call Mary Kotnik 330-467-4834.

Name _____

Phone _____

I would like to order:

- pan(s) of Hot Cross Buns.
- Pick up after 8:45 am service
- Pick up after 11:15 am service

Pans are \$8 each.

Checks can be made payable to BUMW.

Thank you.





World Water Day is March 22; it is a day established by the United Nations to look at water issues around the world.

Did you know that that **one in eight people do not have safe water to drink** and that this, coupled with poor sanitation, results in 4,000 children dying every day?

We are blessed to live in this bountiful region of the world where we have safe, clean drinking water any time we walk up to a faucet. Lately, there's been lots of discussion concerning environmental controls placed on our water ways. Some residents around the Great Lakes feel that this natural resource is boundless. It has not been very long since the health of our River and our Lake were tenuous. Have you ever wondered about the rebound the Cuyahoga River has made since the fire of 1969?

On June 22nd, 1969, a fire started on the Cuyahoga River; a bit of molten steel fell off of a rail car crossing a bridge over the river. The river had a slick of industrial waste floating on its surface and that slick caught fire. It is remarkable all that has happened over the past 43 years to lead to such changes in the water quality of the River and our Lake?

The Cuyahoga River fire lasted just thirty minutes, but it did approximately fifty thousand dollars in damage -- principally to some railroad bridges spanning the river. This was not the first time that the river had caught on fire. Fires occurred on the Cuyahoga River in 1868, 1883, 1887, 1912, 1922, 1936, 1941, 1948, and in 1952. The 1952 fire caused over 1.5 million dollars in damage. The Cleveland Press and the Plain Dealer carried the story but the 1969 fire was not big news.

Then on August 1, 1969, *Time* magazine reported on the fire and on the condition of the Cuyahoga River. The magazine stated,

Some River! Chocolate-brown, oily, bubbling with subsurface gases, it oozes rather than flows. "Anyone who falls into the Cuyahoga does not drown," Cleveland's citizens joke grimly. "He decays"... The Federal Water Pollution Control Administration dryly notes: "The lower Cuyahoga has no visible signs of life, not even low forms such as leeches and sludge worms that usually thrive on wastes." It is also -- literally -- a fire hazard.

Because of this fire, Cleveland businesses became infamous for their pollution, a legacy of the city's booming manufacturing days during the late 1800s and the early 1900s, when few environmental controls existed. Even following World War II, Cleveland businesses, especially steel mills, routinely polluted the river. Cleveland and its river became the source of jokes across the United States. What many people do not know is that one year before the 1969 fire Cleveland had approved a \$100 million plan to improve the Cuyahoga River's water. The fire shined light on the widespread problem of water pollution across the country.

The city began the long process of trying to find the specific sources of the pollution and make changes to help clean the water. Field crews identified discharge pipes along the banks of the river. One by one, facilities (factories and businesses) were tested using a colored dye added to their drains until each was verified at the discharge point along the river. All facilities except the major steel mills were tested. The steel mills were meeting with USEPA to negotiate a reduction of wastes to the river. The owners of these facilities were later notified and asked to attend a meeting with the Water Quality Program office to explain the pollution sources found. Each was asked to remove this source by rerouting their flows into the City of Cleveland sewer system.

This Water Quality Program continued to reduce pollutants from the area streams -- and there was a marked increase in water quality in the river as well as the shore of Lake Erie. The remaining combined sewer overflows were later targeted by what would become the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District.

The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District was formed in 1972 to own and operate the plants and interceptor sewers. This was another recommendation of the city's Master Plan as well as several other studies and, later, a court order. The Regional Sewer District continued to improve the wastewater plants and to construct several interceptors and tunnels to capture and convey wastewater to the plants.

At the state level, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency was formed. At the national level, several departments and agencies were combined to form the USEPA. A memo to President Nixon from the President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization recommended that key anti-pollution programs be merged into an Environmental Protection Agency. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 (PL. 92-500, The Clean Water Act) was passed by Congress which created financial assistance to water quality programs across the country.

- Jenny Gee , Director of Education

THE HOLE IN OUR GOSPEL

SIX-WEEK QUEST

What does the Lord require of You? “To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” Micah 6:8. Our six week quest, a church-wide Lenten study, begins February 26. We’ll be reading and discussing **The Hole in our Gospel** by Richard Stearns. Here are some questions from the study to get you started!



FINDING THE HOLE IN ME

1. Do you have a blind spot? Try this test. Close your left eye and stare at the dollar sign in the diagram above with your right eye. Now slowly move the page toward you. Keep looking at the dollar sign while you move the page. At a particular distance the cross will disappear. We all have physical blind spots. Do you think we also have emotional or spiritual blind spots? If so, what do you think causes us to be blind to certain things?
2. Can you recall a time that something was near you or all around you and you didn’t see it, but when it was pointed out to you, you saw it easily or everywhere?
3. Are there any topics, stories or verses in the Bible that you have seen, but wish weren’t there?

Thomas Jefferson wrote his own version of the Bible known as “The Jefferson Bible.” He took the four gospels and cut out all the verses that contained miracles, angels, prophecy, references to the Trinity and Jesus’ divinity and resurrection. He cut them out because he didn’t believe in them. We may not be so brazen to cut out parts of the Bible, but we may be accomplishing the same thing by ignoring some Scriptures or not taking them seriously.

A TO Z SOLUTIONS. How do you ponder “the hole in my thinking?” Are there any holes? Try this: list ways that you have used your head, heart, hands and feet in service to the poor. (You may think back on this last week, this last month, this last year, or even your last 10 to 20 years.)

Here’s how I have ministered to the poor with my:

- Head: _____
- Heart: _____
- Hands: _____
- Feet: _____

Here’s how I could minister to the poor in the FUTURE:

- Head: _____
- Heart: _____
- Hands: _____
- Feet: _____