

The Good Word



The Newsletter of Brecksville United Methodist Church, A Reconciling Congregation

October 2015, Issue ~ Published September 24



Open Doors. Honest Worship. Determined Service.



Our Fall Kick Off Event Featured Music by Brent Kirby



World Communion Sunday is October 4

Throughout the month of October, we will be celebrating the incredible connection we share with brothers and sisters in Christ around the world! Each week, we will use music and song to lift up a few of the unique traditions observed in cultures around the world. The awesome truth is that however different our worship practices may be, we are still united in the love of God! It is an amazing family to which we belong!

During the month of October, consider taking on a project or activity that connects you to a community outside Brecksville, outside Ohio, or even outside the United States. Commit to reading a book about a previously unfamiliar culture. Sit down with a great documentary film that opens your eyes to life in another part of the world. Be a part of our 144 envelopes initiative for the refugee crisis. Or consider a mission trip yourself: we have teams going to Russia and Liberia within the next year!

We hope to see you each Sunday of worship in October as we explore what it means to be “in communion” with brothers and sisters all over the world!

Paix! 和平! Frieden! Paz!

Joy Parker, Director of Music and Worship



Riding the Euclid Beach Rocket Car.



The Bounce House was a big hit with the kids—and kids at heart! (More pictures throughout this issue.)



8:45 Contemporary Worship

10 Education Hour

Classes for All Ages!

11:15 Traditional Worship

Bring a friend!

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Don't Forget!

Rev. Clark Stein, Senior Pastor

“Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes.”
- Matthew 6:34

Someone once wrote, “Fear is the wrong use of imagination. It is anticipating the worst, not the best that can happen.”

A salesman, driving on a lonely country road one dark and rainy night, had a flat tire. He opened the trunk. No lug wrench. The light from a farmhouse could be seen dimly up the road. He set out on foot through the driving rain. Surely the farmer would have a lug wrench he could borrow, he thought. Of course, it was late at night. The farmer would be asleep in his warm, dry bed. **Maybe he wouldn't answer the door. And even if he did, he'd be angry at being awakened in the middle of the night.**

The salesman, picking his way blindly in the dark, stumbled on. By now his shoes and clothing were soaked. Even if the farmer did answer his knock, he would probably shout something like, “What's the big idea waking me up at this hour?” This thought made the salesman angry. What right did the farmer have to refuse him the loan of a lug wrench? After all, here he was stranded in the middle of nowhere, soaked to the skin. The farmer was a selfish clod, no doubt about that! The salesman finally reached the house and banged loudly on the door. A light went on inside, and a window opened above. A voice called out, “Who is it?”

His face white with anger, the salesman called out, “You know darn well who it is. It's me! And you can keep your blasted lug wrench. I wouldn't borrow it now if you had the last one on earth!”

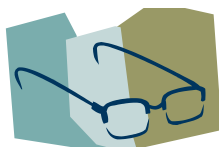
Our fears can own us if we allow them that power. They eat away at all that is good and right about us. Time and again throughout scripture when angels appear their first words are, “Do not be afraid.” It seems to me that fear so often prevents us from receiving what we should in any given situation.

My prayer is for calm minds, open hearts, and attention in the moment for what God is doing right now. In this month of Halloween, grinding campaigning, and many uncertainties, it is enough.

May you know peace.....

Pastor Clark

New Life for Old Glasses



Bring your old glasses to the coat room collection bin (near Fellowship Hall). Our UMW delivers them to eye doctors who recycle them for those in need!



Our October Coffee Hour hosts will be
Council on Education
Thank you, September hosts
Music & Worship Board!



12 Dozen Envelopes for Refugee Crisis

Photo by Mstyslav Chernov (Own work) [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)], via Wikimedia Commons

Too often, we read the world news, or listen to the TV broadcasters, or talk with our co-workers about the refugee crisis on the other side of the globe, and then we move on. Too often, we think to ourselves, “Wow, that’s too bad. I hope they find shelter and food and welcome, and that someone takes care of them,” and then we move on.

Why do we keep moving on? Why shouldn’t we be the ones to offer care and aid to the millions of men, women, and children who are fleeing persecution in search of a better life?

As members of God’s universal church, we’re called to love, serve, and provide for people both near and far. Because of this call, we simply cannot ignore the refugee crisis.

Starting October 4, on World Communion Sunday, Brecksville United Methodist Church will take part in the 12 Dozen Envelopes drive. Together, we can raise over \$10,000 to help provide clothing, food, shelter, and other basic necessities to the world’s refugee population. When you choose an envelope from the display, numbered 1-144, and return it to the offering plate with the minimum pledge amount, you will help us raise over \$10,000 to support our brothers and sisters through UMCOR’s International Disaster Relief Fund.



More Fall Kick Off Pics: Although the day started out gloomy, the clouds parted in time to enjoy the sun on the Square. It was a little chilly on the Rocket Car, though!



Gifts and Memorials

Plant a tree for your great-grandchildren to climb. Consider a gift to the Gifts and Memorials Fund. Learn more in the new Gifts and Memorials brochure, arriving in your mailbox soon. Didn’t get a copy? Pick one up at church, contact the office for a copy, or download a copy from the church website.

Fall Retreat

The Abbey of Genesee is a Roman Catholic community of monks living a life of solitude and silence, prayer and penance in a joyful spirit of faith. Come to the Abbey where you are encouraged to worship six times daily with the monks. When not in worship, you are open to pray, meditate, conference with a monk, hike, eat, and sleep. You will live from Friday afternoon until Sunday afternoon in total silence. Daunting? It is in silence that we can hear the still, small voice of God. Talk to Craig Czarnota to learn more. The Abbey’s website is www.geneseeabbey.org.

The dates are November 13-15. Cost is \$65 per person per night, which includes your private room and all meals. We will car pool the 4 hour trip to the abbey, which is just south of Rochester, NY. To reserve your spot, please submit a \$65 deposit to the church (checks made payable to BUMC, “Abbey” in the memo line.) Your deposit is refundable until October 25. The trip will fill up fast!



Do you have news to share? Contact
Melanie! office@brecksvilleumc.com
or 440-526-8938

Here's a big thank you from Al Harper to all of the folks who were so kind to call, visit and send cards as he rehabilitates after his recent surgery.

Olive Priest is so thankful for all of the cards, calls and prayers she and Fred have received from the church family since their move. They're doing well, but they miss everyone here at the church.

Congratulations to Gretchen Mates who welcomed her FIFTH great-grandchild to the world on Monday, September 14!

Wedding Bells have been ringing! In the month of September, three people who grew up in our church were married here.

Bill Hurder & Kimmie Huaun

Brian Pasek & Rachel D'Agostino

Allison Memmer & Jonathan Donze
Congratulations to each of you and to your families. May the Lord bless your marriages with happiness and love!

Our faith, lives and ministries take on new life when they are shared. Help us tell God's story as it unfolds in our church and community. Send news items and story ideas to the church office!

Melanie Smith
office@brecksvilleumc.com
440-528-8938



Melissa AuWerter	Oct. 1	Michelle Blatnik	Oct. 15
Heather Dean	Oct. 2	Josh Kwiatkowski	Oct. 15
Lorrie Stratis	Oct. 2	Thuy Ai Nguyen	Oct. 15
Donald Butler	Oct. 3	Bob Suazo	Oct. 15
Lois Giesel	Oct. 3	Karen Thielman	Oct. 15
Cynthia Hubert	Oct. 4	Lucy Shijo	Oct. 16
Mitchell Madaus	Oct. 4	Cathy Walden	Oct. 16
Alex Vastartis	Oct. 4	Megan Culley	Oct. 18
Patricia Butler	Oct. 5	Carly Kubek	Oct. 18
Robin Raybuck	Oct. 5	Andy Batcheller	Oct. 20
Bryan Agostine	Oct. 6	Ruth Bondra	Oct. 21
Dick Burroughs	Oct. 6	Mark Hubert	Oct. 21
Madison Hart	Oct. 6	Dan Hurder	Oct. 21
Anthony Karn	Oct. 6	Hazel Gear	Oct. 22
Tim McDonel	Oct. 6	Garth Olszko	Oct. 22
Kay AuWerter	Oct. 7	Olivia Klipfell	Oct. 23
Herb Einheit	Oct. 7	Sara Kwiatkowski	Oct. 24
Jean Hlay	Oct. 7	Emily Shijo	Oct. 24
Bailey Archacki	Oct. 8	Carol Herzing Dobos	Oct. 25
Savannah Jacob	Oct. 8	Gerry Beaver	Oct. 26
Michael Jaszczak	Oct. 9	Gretchen Mates	Oct. 26
Nancy Manaska	Oct. 9	Chris Nguyen	Oct. 26
Cec Podolny	Oct. 9	Nate Rosenthal	Oct. 26
Mark Spencer	Oct. 9	Arthur Wise	Oct. 26
Lauren Cheney	Oct. 10	Bev Dubin	Oct. 27
Jack Manaska	Oct. 10	Beth Hogan	Oct. 28
Amy Myers	Oct. 10	Kim Meyer	Oct. 28
Matthew Sendrey	Oct. 10	Dean Rybak	Oct. 28
Evan Jatsek	Oct. 11	Jason Bell	Oct. 29
Jane Petrie	Oct. 11	Brittany Hotaling	Oct. 29
Nick Telischak	Oct. 11	Ben Magistro	Oct. 29
Julianna Tait	Oct. 12	Anet Smith	Oct. 29
Thelma Loeffler	Oct. 13	Ric Lesinski	Oct. 31
Ryan Rybak	Oct. 13	Brenden Meyer	Oct. 31
Lawry Kardos	Oct. 14	Leslie Selig	Oct. 31



As people of faith, we find God's presence in those who have been blessings to us. At our weekly Staff Meetings, we recently lifted up the following people in prayer, thanking God for them and the way they touch the lives of others. People like Wally Kudlaty, whose skill and knowledge of bicycles is making our bike ministry possible; Bob Bloch, whose work with the Trustees Committee and as a Communion Steward is so appreciated; Dave Brown, whose willing service as a church closer and with our music ministry is such a gift; Karen Thielman, who makes sure we have ushers every Sunday; and YOU!



Brecksville United Methodist Women

"Have a Laugh for the Health of It" with the UMW on Thursday, October 1. Jan Lovelace, RN with Hospice of the Western Reserve and a certified dementia practitioner will talk about the benefits of laughter in our daily life and how to find the humorous side of things that are serious. Continental breakfast begins at 9:30 followed by the 10:00 program. You don't have to be a member of the UMW to attend. Everyone is welcome!

Flat Rock Homes Quilt Auction will be at the Strongsville United Methodist Church on Sunday, October 4. There will be a quilt preview / silent auction at 1:30 followed by a live quilt auction at 3:00.



Evening Circle will meet Wednesday, October 7 @ 7pm. The first Wednesday of each month will be our regular meeting date. This will be an organizational/social meeting so please bring any ideas for future meeting topics. Jenny will present a video on *Becoming a Good Samaritan* which focuses on service, as our evening group is service oriented. Everyone is welcome!

Soul Keeping with the ladies of Asbury Bremeth. Come enjoy a time of fellowship, faith building and lots of laughs on October 8. This fall we will explore the care and keeping of our souls with John Ortberg's video study *Soul Keeping*. Ortberg takes us to a very deep and personal place as he shares the story of his struggle to care for his own soul. Asbury Bremeth meets on the second Thursday of each month at 9:30 am beginning September 10.



Cash Back from Acme. Support the UMW Missions Fund by saving your receipts from ACME. Receipts dated August 20 through January 6 will earn 5% cash back for the fund. Start collecting now and bring your receipts to the bin in the first floor coat room. Such a simple way to make a difference! Thank you!



More Fall Kick Off Pictures: Donna and Jim Houston enjoying the potluck. With the Mr. iSee Ice Cream Truck, we raised over \$100 for the foundation to fight blindness.



Calling All Knitters!

The gift of a shawl or lap robe helps remind our friends who are in the hospital or home-bound that they are loved and wrapped in prayer. We have yarn, we have knitting needles, and we even have a pattern to share. All we need are more knitters! Can you help? Contact the church office for a pattern (or visit this link: craftyarncouncil.com/patterns2.html)

Please wash your finished product and bring it to the church office when finished.

Pastor Barbara and the Caring Committee will deliver your handiwork with this prayer:

May you feel God's grace with this shawl, warming, comforting, enfolding and embracing. May this mantle be a safe haven, a sacred place of security and well-being, sustaining and embracing in good times as well as difficult ones. May you be cradled in hope, kept in joy, graced with peace, wrapped in love and surrounded by our prayers.

*Knitted just for you
with love and prayers—
Your Friends at Brecksville United Methodist Church*

Lunch & Listen Concert

Sunday, November 1

Lunch following

11:15 worship*

Concert at 1:00pm

Michelle Abraham, violin &
Shuai Wang, piano

Playing works by Mozart,
Dvorak, and Franck

*You are invited to bring
your own brown bag lunch
and beverage.

Coffee and desserts will be
provided following the
concert.



*Dancing to the music of Brent Kirby
at the Kick Off Picnic!*

YOUTH NEWS

HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

High School Youth Group – This group is open to all high school students, and is all about simply doing life together! Each week, we use a video, question, or current event to spark conversation, and we think about how our walks with Jesus should influence and guide our decisions, opinions, and entire lives. If you're a high school student and haven't been to Sunday night youth group in a while, you don't know what you're missing! We'd love to have you join us.

YSP (Youth Service Project) 2016 – Make sure to schedule your Summer 2016 family vacations around our annual Youth Service Project trip! This year, we'll be traveling south to Somerville, TN, from June 25-July 2. Somerville is a small town outside of Memphis, TN, and we'll spend our first night of the trip in Nashville! You won't want to miss this incredible week of #lifechange.

ADULTS WANTED

Adults, are you interested in getting to know some of our youth a little better? We have plenty of short-term opportunities for you to get involved. Help chaperone a Confirmation or high school weekend retreat, substitute or teach Sunday school classes, or volunteer to cook for (and share in) our monthly Sunday night dinner! Contact Courtney at youth@brecksvilleumc.com today if you're interested in getting involved with our young people.

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Middle School Youth Group – Are you in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade? If you answered yes, then we want to see you after school! Join us Wednesday afternoons from 3-4:30pm in the Youth Room (rm. 406), as we explore some of the scariest, grossest, and outright weirdest stories from the Bible. We'll play disgusting and daring games, enjoy lots of snacks, and learn about why these crazy and sometimes unbelievable stories are in the Bible to begin with!

Confirmation Students – Don't forget, our monthly special outing begins in November, with our first church visit on November 15. Also, please plan your first mentor meeting for some time this month!

SAVE THE DATES!

October 11
YSP Information Meeting
(12:15pm, Youth Room)

November 15
Confirmation church visit

June 25-July 2
YSP 2016!



In this month's Frequently Asked Questions Column, we look at the sacrament of Communion.

How often do we celebrate communion at Brecksville United Methodist Church? The first Sunday of each month is Communion Sunday. Communion may also be celebrated on special days of the year, such as Christmas and Easter.

I am not a member of The United Methodist Church. Can I still receive communion? The table of Holy Communion is Christ's table, not the table of The United Methodist Church or of the local congregation. The table is open to anyone who seeks to respond to Christ's love and to lead a new life of peace and love, as the invitation to the table says.

Do United Methodists believe the communion elements actually become the body and blood of Christ? "No, we believe that the change is spiritual. They signify the body and blood of Christ for us, helping us to be Christ's body in the world today, redeemed by Christ's blood. We pray over the bread and cup that they may make us one with Christ, 'one with each other, and one in service to all the world.'" (*Communion and United Methodists* brochure)

Why do most Methodist churches serve grape juice instead of wine for Holy Communion? *The United Methodist Book of Worship* says, "Although the historic and ecumenical Christian practice has been to use wine, the use of unfermented grape juice by The United Methodist Church and its predecessors since the late nineteenth century expresses pastoral concern for recovering alcoholics, enables the participation of children and youth, and supports the church's witness of abstinence." (*The United Methodist Book of Worship*. Copyright © 1992 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.)

Do you have other questions about communion? Ask Pastor Clark!
Learn more about what Methodists believe online: www.umc.org

Third Grade Bible Sunday



This year we were thrilled to have third graders (l to r) Michael Patrick, Stosh Skoczen and Ben Eberhardt received their very own Bible on Sunday, September 20. We invited the congregation to celebrate with the boys after worship with cake and coffee in the Fellowship Hall. As a church family we brought our own family Bibles and third grade Bibles to show and tell stories about. Hopefully we all recognize the impact adults in the congregation have when they share their faith with the younger members of our church family. The Thursday evening men's group has agreed to act as 'Bible Buddies' for our third grade Bible

recipients this year. They will write to them throughout the year to share verses that are meaningful to them and encourage the boys to develop a lifelong habit of Bible reading.



It's October! Time for Halloween on the Heights!

Come visit our booth at the fun, family friendly annual event in Broadview Heights.

We'll be in the Broadview Heights Rec Center from 1-4pm on Saturday, October 17.

Want to help? We would love to have additional table volunteers to hand out treats and take pictures! Contact Joy Parker at music@brecksvilleumc.com to get involved!



Support our hunger ministry—recycle your paper at BUMC! We have three paper pick ups in the month of October (on the first, fifteenth and twenty-ninth.) Help us fill the bins to the brim! Your unwanted newspaper, catalogs, books, notebooks, wrapping paper—anything paper—will be converted to dollars for our hunger ministry. Please breakdown any cardboard boxes. What we earn is determined by weight!

OCTOBER 2015

BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH www.brecksvilleumc.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p>Communion Stewards, Amy, Maddie & Emma Piorkowski</p>				<p>1 9:30 UMW 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir 8:30 Men's Ensemble</p> 	2	3 9:30 Zumba
<p>4 <i>World Communion Sunday</i> 8:45 Worship 10 Education Hr 11:15 Worship 4 Open Table 6:30 FPU 7 HS Youth Grp</p>	<p>5 4:15 CC Children's Chorus 5 Youth Chorus 7 FPU 7 Community Chorus</p>	<p>6 10 Staff Mtg 5 BUMC Children's Choir 6 SPRC Meeting with DS 7 Evangelism 7 AGO Mtg 7:30 Zumba</p>	<p>7 6:30 Dawnbrkr 3 MS Youth Grp 7 Evening Circle 7:15 Infant Loss Support Group</p>	<p>8 9:30 Asbury Bremeth</p>	9	<p>10 9:30 Zumba 10 GCFS Rehearsal</p>
<p>11 <i>Santora Baptism</i> 8:45 Worship 10 Education Hr 11:15 Worship 12:15 YSP Info Meeting 6:30 FPU 7 HS Youth Grp</p>	<p>12 4:15 CC Children's Chorus 5 Youth Chorus 7 FPU 7 Community Chorus</p>	<p>13 11 Staff Mtg 5 BUMC Children's Choir 7 Administrative Board Meeting 7:30 Zumba 8 Council on Education</p>	<p>14 6:30 Dawnbrkr 3 MS Youth Grp</p>	<p>15 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir</p> 	<p>16  UMW Food Delivery to Brookside</p>	<p>17 9:30 Zumba 1-4 Halloween in the Heights 6:15 Ecumenical Chapel Service at Chippewa Place</p>
<p>18 <i>Laity Sunday</i> 8:45 Worship 10 Education Hr 11:15 Worship 6:30 FPU 7 HS Youth Grp</p>	<p>19 4:15 CC Children's Chorus 5 Youth Chorus 7 FPU 7 Community Chorus 7 SPRC</p>	<p>20 10 Staff Mtg 10 Stitch'n'Time 5 BUMC Children's Choir 7 Missions 7 Gifts & Mem 7:30 Trustees 7:30 Zumba</p>	<p>21 6:30 Dawnbrkr 3 MS Youth Grp 6:15 Bells 7:15 Infant Loss Support Group</p>	<p>22 9:30 UMW</p>	<p>23  Fridays@5 Choir</p>	<p>24 9:30 Zumba</p>
<p>25 8:45 Worship 10 Education Hr 11:15 Worship 6:30 FPU</p>	<p>26 4:15 CC Children's Chorus 5 Youth Chorus 7 FPU 7 Community Chorus</p>	<p>27 10 Staff Mtg 5 BUMC Children's Choir 7 Finance 7:30 Zumba</p>	<p>28 6:30 Dawnbrkr 3 MS Youth Grp</p>	<p>29 6:15 Bells 7:30 Choir 8:30 Men's Ensemble</p> 	<p>30 9:30 UMW Board Meeting</p>	<p>31 9:30 Zumba</p>

When we join The United Methodist Church, we vow to support it with our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. But sometimes, our good intentions get lost in the day-to-day hustle and bustle of life. As a church, how are we doing with our promises? Can you help fill in the blanks?

PRAYERS

Consider adding the following to your prayer list...

This month, let's pray for our community:

- ▶ Your next door neighbors.
- ▶ The lady at the deli counter.
- ▶ Your postal delivery person.
- ▶ The cashier at the gas station.
- ▶ The server who brought you a meal at the restaurant.
- ▶ Our first responders.

Do you know that Brecksville United Methodist Church has an active e-mail Prayer Chain? To be added to the e-mail list, or to submit a prayer request, please contact Elrowan33@aol.com.

PRESENCE

Date	First Service	Education Hour	Second Service	Goal of 300
Aug. 30	66	N/A	126	-108
Sept. 6	77	N/A	95	-128
Sept. 13	N/A	N/A	178	-122
Sept. 20	114	N/A	66	-120

We've set a goal of bringing 300 people together for worship on Sunday mornings. Think we can hit that goal before Christmas? We can, if you are making meaningful worship a priority in your life!

GIFTS

If you have made a pledge or a contribution, you will receive a giving statement (either electronically or on the other side of this page with your mailed Good Word) which outlines your gifts to date this year. If you need additional information, or if you have not received your statement, please contact the church office.

Date	Offering
Aug. 30	\$7,695
Sept. 6	\$9,206
Sept. 13	\$5,530
Sept. 20	\$10,410

This table outlines the offering received each Sunday since the publication of the last *Good Word*.

SERVICE

Some ways you can be of service to others this month (look for details in this issue of *The Good Word!*)

- ▶ Volunteer to work on one of the BUMC mission teams serving the Cleveland Food Bank or Pearl Road Kitchen. Contact the church office for details!
- ▶ Help man the "Halloween on the Heights" table at the Broadview Heights Recreation Center on October 17.
- ▶ Collect your old papers, catalogs, books, magazines, etc. and bring them to the green recycling bins in our parking lot. We earn money for our hunger ministries by recycling your old paper!
- ▶ Have any old glasses sitting around? Bring them to the bin in the coat room and the UMW will donate them to a local eye doctor who gives them to people who can't afford them.

Thank you! Other opportunities are listed on the church website!

The people of The United Methodist Church are putting our faith in action by making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, which is our church's mission. Through the power of our connection, we are making a positive difference in more than 125 countries.

United Methodist News

Welcoming refugees as ‘fellow pilgrims’ in Europe

By Linda Bloom. September 15, 2015. New York (UMNS)

[As refugees continue to trek across Europe](#), Methodist leaders are recognizing that church members there may “experience and interpret” the effects of that migration in different ways.

But European church leaders said that those who play on people’s fears must be challenged and encouraged support to those in need.

God calls the church “to welcome those who arrive as our fellow pilgrims,” the [European Methodist Council](#) said in a pastoral letter to the Methodist, Wesleyan and united churches in Europe, as well as the European public.

“We commit ourselves to immediate actions and the long-term perspectives that the issues raised by migration require,” the letter declared. “With a united voice, the European Methodist Council calls on our fellow citizens across the continent to join us in reflection and action.”

Thomas Kemper, top executive of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries and a German citizen, [has issued a statement](#) noting the difficult yet necessary work of welcoming “the thousands of displaced persons pouring out of Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and various parts of Africa into Europe.”

Other European churches and ecumenical organizations [also are offering vocal support and taking action](#).

Recognize and reaffirm

The European Methodist Council’s letter was released after the group concluded a meeting in Ruse, Bulgaria, on Sept. 15. The consultative body brings together United Methodist and Methodist leaders to share information,

 [facebook.com/BrecksvilleUMC](https://www.facebook.com/BrecksvilleUMC)

 twitter.com/BrecksvilleUMC

 [pinterest.com/brecksvilleumc](https://www.pinterest.com/brecksvilleumc)

discuss common issues and support the work of the Fund for Mission in Europe.

Council co-chairs are the Rev. Donald Ker of Ireland and United Methodist Bishop Christian Alsted, leader of the denomination’s Nordic and Baltic Area.

As a matter of general principles, the letter asks the European churches to:

- Renew our understanding and practice of the obligation to radical Christian hospitality to all, recognizing the practical implications for congregations and individuals.
- Acknowledge that migration has and always will be a part of the human story.
- Recognize that we experience and interpret the reality of migration to and within Europe in different ways, depending on our context.
- Resist false narratives, generalizations and negative stereotyping and challenge those who would play on people’s fears.
- Reaffirm our Christian commitment to honor Christ in the face of the stranger regardless of religious background or the prevailing political situation.
- Encourage and support those who dare to open their doors and offer hospitality to those in need.
- Pledge both our continuing solidarity with those parts of world from which migrants and refugees come and our active engagement to achieve a just and peaceful world.

‘Radical hospitality’

“[Methodists across Europe are doing what they can](#) to extend radical hospitality both in countries of entry, countries of transit and in countries where refugees will be living for a foreseeable time,” Alsted told United Methodist News Service.

Council members said they found strength and inspiration in the fellowship with the Methodist family. “We have drawn hope and inspiration from stories of Methodists working in many places to assist migrants and refugees,” the letter noted.