THE GOOD WORD



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The Deep Soul Work of Connecting with God

Beginning on April 17th of this year, I will be taking a 6-week Spiritual Renewal. I will step away from the everyday to-dos and responsibilities of ministry and focus on connecting myself with God. I will not "stop working," but will transition to fully focusing on the deep soul-work of attuning myself to God.

I moved to Brecksville UMC in July of 2019; I had 8 months with this church community before the COVID-19 pandemic changed everything. Since then, we—myself, the church staff, leadership, and all of us—have been creating, recreating, and adjusting to different ways to be the church in this ever-evolving world.

It has been some of the most rewarding a fruitful ministry of my career. And at the same time, I find myself tired on a soul-level. I've found myself dreaming of a "slow" or "quiet" time in the life of the church so that I can rest.

Then, my spiritual director pointed out to me that Jesus didn't wait for a slow point in his ministry to rest: But the news about him spread even more, and large crowds would come together to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. Yet he often withdrew to deserted places and prayed. (Luke 5:15-16)

Jesus knew that his "to-do list" was never going to be done: there would always be another person to heal or another crowd to speak to. And yet, he took time away for the expressed purpose of nurturing his relationship with God... so that he could be better equipped to heal and speak God's Truth in Love.

I'm grateful that The United Methodist Church recognizes the need for spiritual leaders to take this time with God, both in ongoing ways (like a weekly sabbath) as well as longer periods of time every few years. I'm also exceedingly grateful that when I approached our Staff Parish Relations Committee with this request, that they unanimously approved my time of spiritual renewal; and for the unanimous support of our Church Council.

In choosing when I would take time away, I tried to find a time on the church calendar that would be the "least annoying" for me to be away. And I'm already working with the staff, leadership, and other volunteers to assure that the people of Brecksville United Methodist Church will be well cared for in my absence. I've lined up some great preachers, and my in-laws (Revs. Ash & Peg Welch) are excited to attend to any pastoral care needs that arise.

In the months to come, I will be sharing details of how I will spend my time away from the day-to-day of leading a church, as well as encouraging you to take your own time away with God.

But for now, I leave you with these words from the Gospel of Mark, and pray that you know that Jesus is speaking these words to you, too: *The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest."* (Mark 6:30-31)

Pastar Heidi

Rev. Heidi Welch, Senior Pastor



Lenten Study

Sundays at 9:30 am in the Chapel Willing to lead a small group at a different time? Reach out to Jenny Gee! 440-526-8938 ext 230

The Psalms are such treasured scripture. They are to be read as poetry and song and just like poetry and song of today they give voice to the deep emotions of human life - joy, anger, despair, frustration... They have it all. And they help us to understand that it is more than okay to go to God with all our feelings. The Psalms were written long before Jesus walked the earth, but he knew them. Join us for this awesome Lenten study where we will look at the Psalms and see how Jesus' words and stories often reflected them. The study moves through Psalm 23 and the imagery of the Good Shepherd to Psalm 22 and the painful cries that Jesus uttered on the cross. Make a plan to join us throughout Lent for this meaningful encounter with the Psalms. Meet Jenny in the Chapel at 9:30 on Sunday mornings. Sign up for updates at BUMCLinks.com

'The Psalms provide a perfect framework for experiencing Lent through the verses that were Jesus's own scriptures, offering both him and us strength and wisdom in a painful and redemptive season. The Book of Psalms hums with the heartbeat of our humanity with divinely inspired words that find purchase in the tenderest places in our hearts when our human words or wisdom fails us." Barb Roose



Fourth Sunday Hymn Sing Feb 26 at 11:30 am We sing out, accompanied by our fabulous pipe organ! Join Sean Brown, Machala Comenschek, and Sue Ellenberger to sing your favorite hymns and discover the stories behind them. We meet on the fourth Sunday of each month at 11:30 (after the second service). Can't join us in person? We're streaming live our website at www.brecksvilleumc.com/streaming, Facebook & YouTube!



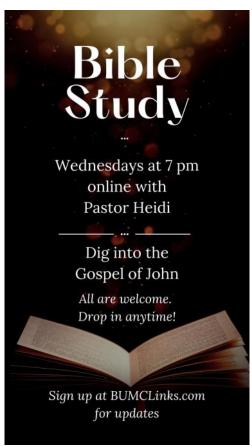
Let's Talk Podcasts Sundays at 9:30 in Room 301 We're exploring podcasts that encourage us to "Get Off Our Donkey". Be part of the discussion. Drop in and join the discussion on Sunday mornings—in the classroom or online via Zoom. Email us for the link!

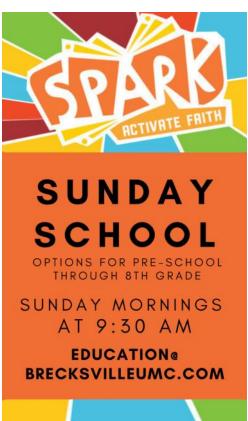
Lectio Divina

Mondays at 10:30 am or Tuesdays at 7 pm in the Chapel

A slow, meditative reading and praying of a Scripture passage.

All are welcome. There is no homework. Drop in anytime!







What is Church Membership All About?

If everyone is welcome here, why does church membership matter? Come learn the answer to this and other questions with **Basic Beliefs** (begins 3/5) a class about what it means to be United Methodist and the

Membership Class (begins 2/5) a class that explores our gifts and the mission and ministries of Brecksville United Methodist Church. ALL are welcome to attend—if you've been attending here a few times or for decades, in person or online. Reach out to Pastor Heidi or sign up at BUMCLinks.com

Palm Sunday is April 2

Mark your calendar for a very special Sprouts on Palm Sunday, April 2. After the traditional Palm Parade that kicks off the 10:30 worship service and our Children's Moment the kids will take a walk through Holy Week up on the 4th floor. Sign up to receive some emails from Jenny the week prior to help you answer any questions your child may come home with. The events of Holy Week are very difficult but are also so important to know so that we may have a fuller understanding of Jesus and the significance of Easter. The content will be handled with great sensitivity and be very age appropriate. Reach out to Jenny for more information, if you have any questions or would like to help.

education@brecksvilleumc.com



Embracing Sabbath with Your Teens and Children

Winter is a great time to look for ways to add moments of rest in our schedules. Intentional moments of rest are referred to as "sabbath" in the Bible and God reminds us that they are more important than we give them credit for. Sabbath isn't simply resting in the way you take a nap or

put away your work at the end of the day. Finding sabbath is a "coming back to self" or a "returning to center." It is not resting in order to be more productive because sabbath shows us that the "doing" in life isn't more important than the "being." When was the last time your family simply took time to "be" together? It can be challenging to be intentional about planning restful, slow times into our families' schedules.

Here are a few things you are probably already doing that can be turned into intentional sabbath in your family's life:

- Family Meal Time It is probably a treat when your entire family gets to sit down around the dinner table and enjoy a meal together. Cherish that time by making it an intentional sabbath moment. Put away phones, turn off the TV, and set your intention that this meal will be a simple time of "being" for your family. At the end of your meal say a quick prayer thanking God for your time together and for the opportunity to simply "be."
- **Bedtime** Sabbath time often incorporates sleep because it forces our bodies to stop and rest. Our priority in sleep is stillness. Talk to your kids before bedtime about how they want to "center" themselves before sleeping. How do they want to use this time to come back to themselves after a long day? You could even write down this intention as a family and meditate on it while you brush your teeth before bed. Enjoy that connection your family will feel when bedtime becomes intentional sabbath.
- "Chill Out Time" Right After Work/School Give your family 30 minutes to an hour to be home and be together after the hustle and bustle of the day. Take a walk around the block or at a park. Venture out into the backyard to notice new things in close-to-home nature. Watch a show or read your books together. Whatever "chill out" time looks like for your family, it can be an intentional time to make it special and bring you back to your center.

For more resources about connecting with your teen and family, reach out to our Youth Ministry Director, Dana Schwendeman.

Dana Schwendeman, Director of Youth Ministry

E-mail <u>youth@brecksvilleumc.com</u> Voicemail 440-526-8938 x 237 www.instagram.com/bumcyouthmin



Faith, Hope and Love, in Action



About United Women in Faith

The focus of Brecksville's United Women in Faith (formerly UMW) is fostering spiritual growth, giving to mission, developing leaders, advocating for justice, and living out our faith. Members raise money each year for programs and projects related to women, children and youth in our neighborhoods and around the world.

A speaker is invited in to address the group on the first Thursday of each month. Check the church calendar for details of each month's meeting. They start at 9:30 am with continental breakfast and fellowship. The program begins at 10 am. Everyone is welcome!

Upcoming Events

- February 2: Suzanne Carle, Stepstone Academy
- March 2: Judy Kidder, President of UWF East Ohio Conference
- April 6: Sylvia Fowler, President of Brecksville Historical Association
- May 4: Peg Bobel, author and avid birder will talk about the Herons in Cuyahoga Valley National Park

All of our events and groups are open to everyone! You do not need to be a member of Brecksville UMC



Faith, Hope and Love, in Action



Giving Doll, Chippewa Garden Club, Ohio Guidestone, Stepstone Academy, Flat Rock, Henderson Settlement, Nehemiah Mission (Cleveland), Greater Cleveland Food Bank, BUMC Bicycle Mission, BUMC gift cards for office use, Emergency Assistance Center, Royal Redeemer Food Pantry (North Royalton), South Hills Lend-a-Hand, Yuletide Hunger, Brecksville Human Services Food Pantry, Journey Center for Safety and Healing, RAHAB, Greater Cleveland Flute Society, Project Save, West Side Community House Sisterhood, USO, Womankind



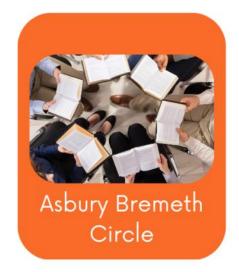
Busy during the day? Come to Eve Circle! We meet on the first Wednesday of February, March and May. Connect with other women of faith as we learn and grow together.

Our next meeting is February 1 at 6:30 pm

Join us in the church kitchen.
Our project will be baking cookies for the USO Lounge at the airport. Bring cookie dough already mixed and ready to bake. If you can't attend, but want to help, there will be a box labeled "USO cookies" in the freezer in the church kitchen. Package your cookies 6 per bag.

Questions? Contact Lynn Hobzek - kezboh@aol.com

In March, our project will be creating "tender loving care" gift bags for folks who need a little TLC.



Join Asbury Bremeth Circle on the second Thursday of each month in the parlor at 9:30 am.

Our meetings include an opening thought and prayer, approximately thirty minutes of good talk and fellowship, and a lesson that combines our real lives with God's plans for us.

Our wonderful Christian
Education Director,
Jenny Gee, is our
facilitator, so look
forward to exciting
lessons!

For more information call Gretchen Mates at 440-526-6481.

👫 HONEST WORSHIP



Scout Sunday February 12

The penultimate week of our *Get Off Your Donkey* worship series will include an opportunity for joyful gathering! Scout Troop 175, which has been meeting at our church since 1942, will be preparing a pancake breakfast as a "thank you" the congregation. Make plans to enjoy this delicious hot meal at 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall. As always, all are welcome!

Work-Ship Sunday, February 19

Our *Get Off Your Donkey* worship series concludes with Work-Ship, an opportunity to back 35,000 meals with Rise Against Hunger! During the 10:30 worship hour, people of all ages will gather in Fellowship Hall to pack nutritious meal packets, which will then be sent to hungry people around the world. This is an all ages event. Everyone can lend a hand! If you are unable to participate in person, join us for a special online worship service at 10:30 am.

Ash Wednesday February 22

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. Join us for worship at 7 pm in the Sanctuary and live online. As we practice *seeking* this Lent, how will you live the questions of your faith? What kind of fast will you choose? This reflective worship experience will include the sacrament of Holy Communion and the imposition of ashes. If you worship with us online, "At Home Lent" kits are available, which include a small vial of ashes, Lenten Devotional Cards, and more. Sign up at BUMCLinks.com. (Request by February 13 if you would like to receive your kit by mail!)

Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper

A new worship series begins on February 26. This
Lent, we invite you to engage in the spiritual practice of
seeking. We encourage you to stay curious, open and nimble.
We hope you will soften your assumptions and expand your
perspectives. We pray that the questions will create a safe space
to explore—to be drawn more deeply into the fullness of life,
into the heart of God.

Thank You Bob Tschannen!

In November, Brecksville UMC was blessed to receive a special monetary gift from Bob Tschannen's estate. This was on top of even larger gifts Bob gave our Church during his lifetime. Bob passed away in August, just 13 days shy of his 100th Birthday!

Bob and June Tschannen (married for 66 years) deeply loved this Church. They were loyal members for many decades, raising both their daughter Laurel and son Bob here in our church.

Involved in so many different groups and programs, the Tschannens made a huge impact on our Church's history and family life. June was deeply involved in United Methodist Women and many church life activities. They created a Living Memorial with our Gifts & Memorials Committee. They were also strong supporters of our Music and our Youth Programs.

Bob served as Administrative Board Chair (now known as Church Council) for years, leading us through a challenging financial time. Bob served on many, many committees, including the very first Long Range Planning Committee. Bob's insightful comments, action orientation, and quick smile helped all of us accomplish many goals that otherwise might not have occurred.

One of Bob's most important contributions was leading the effort to raise the money to purchase the property just west of old City hall, and to construct a badly needed new parking lot there. Bob's foresight gives our landlocked property access (particularly important during the construction project this past summer) and opportunity as our church continues to respond to our ever-changing community and world.

Bob and June so loved this Church that Bob named us in his estate plan. His generous gift is cherished. It comes at a special time to provide crucial support to our operations, especially as we grow our online presence and our church membership. - Submitted by Alan Scheufler

T DETERMINED SERVICE

Congregational Care Team

The church was created by God to be a family of siblings in Christ who encourage and support one another to live and love like Jesus. An integral part of showing Christ's love to one another is coming alongside each other in times of need.

With that in mind, Pastor Heidi is creating a Congregational Care Team, which will provide prayer, care, and support for individuals and families within our congregation at various stages and circumstances of life.

The first focus of this Team will be to ensure that those who are sick, homebound, or in a home facility are shown the love of their siblings in Christ through visits, calls, and sending cards. They will deliver prayer shawls that our Knitting Group lovingly provides, and take Holy Communion that has been blessed by Pastor Heidi. Most of all, this group will provide the ministry of presence to our siblings whom we don't get to see each Sunday.

As a few of the Congregational Care Team members met, they brainstormed ways this ministry could expand to reach out to those we haven't seen in a while, support those who are newer to our church, and those celebrating baptisms and the birth of new babies. The possibilities for caring for our congregation are endless!

If you would like to be part of this ministry, please reach out to Pastor Heidi (pastor@brecksvilleumc.com) or 440-526-8938, ex. 224. As we are each part of God's family—the Church—we are each called to care for our siblings in Christ. Don't feel qualified? Pastor Heidi will give you guidance, training, and encouragement! This is just one way you can "get off your donkey" in 2023!

On Sunday, January 22, we had a fantastic first Mission & Community Engagement meeting of the year! We moved our meetings to Sundays after worship to enable people to join us—to ask questions, learn about what we're doing, and share ways they want to "get off their donkeys!"

While yes, "we have a committee for that," it's not The Mission & Community Engagement Committee's job to do all that is "mission" and "community engagement." Our work is three-fold:

- We intentionally create opportunities for BUMC to be the hands and feet of Jesus throughout the year. Opportunities like our upcoming Work-ship with Rise Against Hunger, collecting items for community Food Pantries, Pearl Road Dinners, Habitat for Humanity, and lots more!
- 2. We equip people who have a passion for reaching out in a specific way, like Matt, who wants to get a group together to volunteer at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.
- 3. We look for ways to engage with the community, ensuring Brecksville UMC is an active neighbor both in Brecksville and the surrounding communities. These are things like volunteering at Kiwanis' Trick-or-Trot, and Brecksville Home Days.

Essentially, our work is to create opportunities for you to "get off your donkey" and support you in ways you're already off and showing God's love to others.

We'd love for you to join us for one of our upcoming meetings, Sundays at 11:30: February 12, March 12 and April 16.

Here are some of the upcoming opportunities to be like the Good Samaritan and "get off. Your donkey" for Jesus. We look forward to partnering with you in 2023!



We're collecting boxes of cereal, peanut butter and jelly for students served by the Bedford Schools Community Food Pantry. Add food for school kids to your weekly grocery list in February! Bring donations to the bin in the first floor coat room.



Bike Fix-It Day is Saturday, February 19. Come help get spokes to folks in need!



Habitat for Humanity Faith Build work dates are coming soon. Sign up for updates at BUMCLinks.com

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

1 Doris Cipolla 1 Grant Kardos 2 Douglas Hubert 2 Gail Meyer 3 Colin Johnson 3 Brooke Toman 4 Barbara Soltis 5 Faith McAllister 5 Lynn Spencer 6 Paul Olszko 7 Chloe Boldt 7 Greg Spencer 8 Becky Chen 8 Nancy Knowlton 9 Chad Boldt 9 Sarah Nurre 10 Pam Johnson 11 Doug Bender 12 Marla Hocutt

13 Christian Bloch 13 Leslie Hoffman 13 Bill Hurder 13 Monica Kotnik 13 Andrew Kubek 13 Mallory McCrodden 14 Lucy Fesler 14 Dorothy Jordan 15 Olive Barnum 15 Nathaniel Robusto 15 Abby Smith 16 Matthew Miller 17 Stephanie Fisher 17 Grace Ford 17 Christine Hudacek 17 Danny Lynch 17 Emma Piorkowski 18 Scott Campbell 18 Jack Kenney 19 Allie Kenney

20 Matthew Ling 20 Dahlia Schadler 21 Emily Gardner 21 Janet Narduzzi 22 Dan Rajkovich 22 Steve Warth 23 Erin Gee 23 Pastor Heidi Welch 24 Paul Botzman 24 Janet Kleckner 24 Eric Louttit 25 Ruth Hazlett 25 Nancy Wygonski 26 Matt Botzman 26 Leo Patterson 27 Angela Harper 27 Emily Hastings 27 Darcie Richardson 27 Taylor Whitton



FEBRUARY

Care and Prayer!

A wonderful gift? A card or note letting someone know you said a prayer for them!

Week of February 5

Janet James

3824 Faith Ln Richfield, OH 44286-9121

Week of February 12

Robert Butler

Robert is sight impaired 77 Plains Rd Apt 223 Milford, CT 06461-2590

Week of February 19

Al Hahn

8400 S Bedford Rd Apt 323 Macedonia, OH 44056-4004

Week of February 26

Ruth Holmes

4036 Brookside Rd Clarkston, MI 48346-1168

Contact the office to nominate someone for next month's list!



Each week at Staff Meeting we celebrate "God Moments" and lift up prayers of thanks to God for the way lives are touched when we reach out to one another in service. Our thanks to all of the people who helped with Christmas Eve services continues because of people like Rebecca Burgstahler, who was inspired to teach the children to play a

Christmas piece on the handbells and the Burgstahler family, who portrayed the Holy Family at the Family Christmas Eve Service this year; Doug Holmes, one of the folks who help keet our sidewalks clear of snow on Christmas Eve; Alan Scheufler who served as a member of the welcome team at *three* services and the Krolikowskis who served as our Christmas morning welcome team. Sarah Pribble and Jim Smith, who stepped up to help get things done with Taking Down the Greens when our original plans were unexpectedly changed due to illness, and all of the people who made Austin "Skip" Smith's reception possible, including the Dawnbreakers Group. This list could be pages long! We're thankful for each of you, named and unnamed!



FIVE GOOD THINGS ABOUT ELECTRONIC GIVING

- 1. Electronic giving is secure, quick and easy!
- You can give from anywhere using a computer, tablet, or smartphone.
- 3. There's no need to find a check or visit the ATM.
- 4. Give using your Checking / Savings Account or your Debit / Credit Card.
- 5. You can even schedule recurring gifts, making gift planning easier.



"GiveBUMC" to 73256



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HAVE QUESTIONS? WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

440-5236-8938 OR INFO@ BRECKSVILLEUMC.COM Finance Committee Update

A Look Back and a Look Forward

At the beginning of 2022, Church Council approved an operating budget that showed a deficit of just over \$45k. In other words, our budgeted expenses exceeded the amount that we expected to receive in giving and other income by \$45K. So, how did 2022 end up? Our number of pledging units in 2022 was 133, which was up 11% from 2021 and the highest number since 2018. The dollar amount of pledged gifts was up 9% from 2021.

With this, our revenues exceeded budget by almost 3%. We collected 96.5% of the amounts pledged in 2022 and were fortunate to receive a gift at the end of the year from Bob Tschannen which put giving slightly ahead of budget.

Our expenses in 2022 were 1% above budget, due almost entirely to increased utility expense. We ended the year \$12k ahead of budget reducing the year-end deficit from 45k to \$33k. Overall, that is pretty good.

On January 10 the Finance Committee presented the 2023 budget to Church Council. For the 4th year in a row, it is a budget with a deficit at years end. In a troubling trend, for the 4th year in a row the budgeted deficit is larger than the year preceding. This year's budget shows a deficit of \$59k at year's end.

We have been fortunate to have had COVID relief funds and unexpected gifts that have helped to cover the deficits in 2021 and 2022. The remaining COVID relief funds will only cover about 1/3rd of this year's deficit and then they are gone.

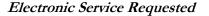
What's at the root of this trend? Well, since 2017 our expenses have increased 13%, or an average of a modest 2% per year. Giving, on the other hand, has been flat. And while the number of pledging units hovered between 120 and 135 between 2018 and 2022, this year we have received 108 pledges, which is down 19% from last year.

But not is all gloom and doom. Our church is growing. And we are making a difference, both locally and more broadly, in little ways and big. Every month, The Good Word shares stories of how we are making an impact in our community. We are spreading the joy and love and compassion that is God's kingdom. Like Reggie McNeal says in "Get Off Your Donkey", helping others is what aligns us with God's primary mission on earth. Brecksville UMC is just a piece of that. It is a place where we can come together and work with others that also want to spread God's mission. Our church is a place that we can gather to breathe in the word of God through worship and fellowship. And then when we leave we are fortified with the energy and tools and confidence necessary to spread God's love in the world. And your giving makes this possible. If you see the benefit in what God is doing through BUMC, we would really appreciate if you would consider making a pledge, no matter the amount. And of course, a big thank you to all of you that have already submitted a pledge for 2023.

Looking forward to a great and impactful 2023. - The Finance Committee

February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6:30 Breakfast 6:30 pm Eve Circle 7 Online Bible Study	9:30 UWF 9:30 FB Live 2 Communion at Chippewa 6:30 Choir 8 Band	3 12 God In Nature on Facebook Live	4 ReachOut Camp Winter Retreat Weekend!
5 8:30 Worship 9:30 Joyful Gathering 10:30 Worship 12 SS Recap online Youth at Retreat this weekend!	6 10:30 Lectio Divina	7 10 Worship & Staff Meeting 7 Lectio	8 6:30 Breakfast 7 Online Bible Study	9 9:30 Asbury Bremeth Study 9:30 FB Live 6:30 Choir 8 Band	10 12 God In Nature on Facebook Live	11
12 8:30 Worship 9:30 Joyful Gathering 10:30 Worship 11:30 Pancakes! 12 SS Recap online 5 Youth Group	13 10:30 Lectio Divina	14 Happy Valentine's Day 10 Worship & Staff Meeting 7 Lectio	15 6:30 Breakfast 7 Online Bible Study	16 9:30 FB Live 6:30 Choir 8 Band	17 12 God In Nature on Facebook Live	18
19 9:30 Joyful Gathering 10:30 WORK-SHIP We're packing meals today! 10:30 Online Worship 12 SS Recap online 5 Youth Group	20 No School Today 10:30 Lectio Divina	21 10 Worship & Staff Meeting 10:30 Stitch 7 Inclusion Task Force 7 Lectio 7 Trustees	22 Lent Begins 6:30 Breakfast 7 Ash Wednesday Worship Service	23 9:30 FB Live 6:30 Choir 8 Band Happy Birthday Pastor Heidi!	24 9:30 UWF Board Meeting 12 God In Nature on Facebook Live	25
26 1st Sunday of Lent 8:30 Worship 9:30 Joyful Gathering 10:30 Worship 11:30 Hymn Sing 12 SS Recap online 5 Youth Group	27 10:30 Lectio Divina	28 10 Worship & Staff Meeting 7 Lectio 7 Finance				





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Church Office Hours

Monday—Friday 9:15 am — 2:15 pm 440-526-8938 info@brecksvilleumc.com







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.