



The Good Word

Open Doors.

Honest Worship. Determined Service.

PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 26, 2014
65 Public Square, Brecksville, OH
440-526-8938
www.brecksvilleumc.com



First Sunday in Advent
November 30—HOPE
Brecksville Christmas Parade

Second Sunday in Advent
December 7—LOVE
Communion Sunday

December 11
Advent Worship Service, 7:30 pm

Third Sunday in Advent
December 14—JOY
Community Chorus Concert at 4 pm

Fourth Sunday in Advent
December 21—PEACE
Christmas Music Sunday

Christmas Eve
December 24
5 pm Family Service
8 and 10 pm Candlelight Services

Christmas Carol Sunday
December 28
One worship service at 10 am



Christmas Eve Family Service, 2013

When did Christmas get so complicated?

Maybe it's time to rethink the way we celebrate and focus on others.

Doesn't it seem that each year Christmas Eve is here before we know it? We rush through the days leading up to it, but once it arrives we wonder why we don't feel renewed after this joyous season. This year, choose to enter this season of Advent with intention and awareness. This year, make time to come together in worship at Brecksville United Methodist Church. As you take time to step outside of the frenetic goal of a perfect holiday, you may just find your eyes opening to witness the hope that is already springing up around you. Take time for people. Take time for relationships. Take time for worship!

Christmas Offering: The Missions Committee has again had the joy of designating the Christmas offering, collected on Christmas Eve, in three different ministries, all working to end hunger.

Brookside Food Pantry

Working to fight hunger and provide the resources to allow individuals and families to break out of poverty in Cleveland.

www.thecentersohio.org

City Mission

Since 1910, Cleveland's City Mission has provided help and hope to all people through the transforming power of God's love.

www.thecitymission.org

Bread for the World

Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's leaders to end hunger at home and abroad. We can end hunger in our time.

www.bread.org



8:45 Contemporary Worship

10 Education Hour

11:15 Traditional Worship

Christmas Eve Services

at 5, 8 and 10 pm



December's Promise

Isaiah 11:1-9

An old pioneer traveled westward across the great plains until he came to an abrupt halt at the edge of the Grand Canyon. He gawked at the sight before him: a vast chasm one mile down, eighteen miles across, and more than a hundred miles long! He gasped, "Something musta happened here!"

December holds much promise for us. Many of us will gather with friends and family around the celebration of Christmas and New Year's Eve. All of the gatherings, the reunions, are jam packed with expectations and memories. Some will be met in new and glorious ways, others of us will experience some sort of disappointment as things just don't pan out the way we would wish them to. It seems every time we approach times like this, there is a potential for life changing experience. I can't help but think that it has always been so.

Isaiah reminds us that things happen around us that require some bit of attention. Wolves and lambs romping together, a calf and a lion, cows and bears all living in a peaceable kingdom where neither animal nor human will hurt or kill on my holy mountain, says the Lord. A little child shall tend them.

My life, at this time of year, becomes concerned with big things: worship plans, mission opportunities, year-end reports, and the like. I can easily convince myself of their importance and wind my way through them, feeling a sense of accomplishment as I check opportunities off my list. Those are my Grand Canyon experiences; things so noticeable that even I can see that "something musta happened here" when they are over. I hope to get better at observing the small things. It has been my experience that God works in big and small ways...but the small ones tend to get planted in a place that promotes new growth. Like shoots out of stumps, babies born on silent nights, lambs and lions learning it is ok to lie down together and be quiet. I wish you a holy time, filled with family and friends, big celebrations and quiet starlit nights. I pray you experience new life in small ways.

Joy to the World!

Pastor Clark

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Old Stamps = Tools!

The UMW collects cancelled postage stamps (except the Forever stamp and postcard stamps) for National Church Women United. The stamps help "Tools for Hope" an effort to provide tools in developing countries around the world. Bring your stamps to the box in the cloak room. It's a great way to help!



Special Thanks to the Evangelism Committee for hosting Coffee Hour in November!

Our December hosts will be **Commission on Education.**

We need a committee to step up for January!

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

Your gift to mission that is made online through the Advance on UMC #GivingTuesday will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,000,000!

UMC #GIVINGTUESDAY

www.umcmmission.org/give

When Methodists are united . . . we provide an alternative to the recent US consumer driven shopping traditions of Black Friday, Local Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday. UMC #GivingTuesday offers an opportunity to start off the holiday season by giving instead of getting through supporting organizations and missionaries that have been researched and approved by the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. And 100% of all gifts made through The Advance are given directly to the designated project.

Thanks to United Methodists' participation in last year's UMC #GivingTuesday:

- ministries purchased new land in places like Cambodia and Tanzania.
- an entire community in the Philippines is rebuilding after being devastated by a typhoon.
- families in Guatemala are generating income and improving their diets through gardening.
- youth in the US repaired homes for families in need while being trained to be servant leaders.
- UMCOR responded globally to disasters that weren't in the news spotlight.
- a health care center in Haiti now offers increased access to care.
- a community in Sierra Leone finished digging a well to provide clean safe drinking water.

When Methodists are united . . . and support any one of the 850 United Methodist related Advance projects, together we meet a range of needs, from helping survivors cope with natural or civil disasters to helping communities build churches, feed and educate children, and equip hospitals and clinics.

Since its founding in 1948, The Advance has helped channel more than 3 million gifts totaling more than \$1 billion dollars to thousands of projects and ministries.

While people can give through The Advance any time of year, having one day when Methodists are united in supporting The Advance together, shifts energy away from secular consumerism and back into a spirit of cheerful Christian giving. It shows the world the transformational power that can happen in one day . . . **when Methodists are united.**

This is a great opportunity to build awareness and maximize support for a project or missionary that is meaningful to you.

- See more at: <http://www.umcmmission.org/Giving-Tuesday>

Advent Worship Service & Soup Supper Dec. 11

Join us for a special Advent Worship Service on Thursday, December 11. This is a great opportunity to pause in the middle of your holiday preparations and enjoy the peace of the season.

A community meal of soup and bread (lovingly prepared by church staff) will be served at 6:00 in Fellowship Hall.

Wednesday, December 11

Soup Supper
in Fellowship Hall
at 6 pm

Worship
in the Sanctuary
at 7:30pm

All are welcome! Bring a friend!





YOUTH NEWS

High School Winter Retreat – Join us as we trek north for a weekend full of snow tubing, sledding, high ropes courses, rock climbing, worship, devotion times, and of course, tons of food. We'll be going to Camp Michindoh, Michigan, from January 23-25th. We'll leave BUMC around 3pm on Friday (no school for BBHHS that day), and return by 6pm on Sunday. This retreat will cost \$105 per person (\$5 discount if registered before Jan. 1st), which covers all activities, food, lodging, and transportation for the weekend. Interested? Please contact Courtney ASAP, as registration is on an individual basis and no group reservations can be made!

High School Youth Group – December will mix up our regular youth group times a bit! We'll plan to meet at our regular time (Sundays from 7-9pm) on the 7th and 14th, but December 21st will be our first ever Advent Scavenger Hunt, and there will be NO youth group on the 28th. We'll plan to resume our normal youth group time in January.

Advent Scavenger Hunt – Calling all middle and high school students! Our first joint event will take place on December 21st, from 2-4pm. Join us as we team up and set out on a community-wide scavenger hunt...but this isn't just any old scavenger hunt. We'll be performing Random Acts of Christmas Kindness throughout town, and sharing Jesus' love with everyone we meet! RSVP to Courtney at youth@brecksvilleumc.com so we know how many treats to prepare.

Middle School Youth Group – Just like our high school youth group, middle school youth group will look a little bit different for the month of December. We'll meet at our regular time, Wednesday from 3:15-5pm, for the first three weeks (Dec. 3, 10, and 17). December 21st, we'll mix it up with our high school students during the Advent Scavenger Hunt! There will be NO youth group on Dec. 24th or 31st. Enjoy your Christmas break!

Confirmation Class Retreat – While it may feel like we just returned from our Nehemiah Mission Trip, it's time to register for our Confirmation retreat! We'll travel to Camp Aldersgate from February 20-22, so mark your calendars. Look for more information and registration forms during Confirmation Sunday school this month.

Nehemiah Mission Trip – Thanks to all of our Confirmation students and chaperones for making our Nehemiah Mission trip such a success! Check out the pictures on this page from our great weekend.

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Rock-A-Thon
February 6-7

Confirmation Class Retreat
February 20 through 22

Music with a Mission
March 6





Spread Christmas Cheer...

Help deliver poinsettias to those who are home bound or unable to come to services. Delivery after December 24. Contact Gretchen Mates to volunteer: 440-526-6481. (Don't forget to order your plants. See the order form below.)

...by Singing Loud for All To Hear

Here We Come A-Caroling!

Saturday, December 13 – 12:45 to 1:30pm at The Oaks—This will be a short, 30-minute program with a combination of simple choral pieces and familiar carols that we will invite the residents to sing with us. All are welcome – please let Joy know if you plan to attend!

Tuesday, December 16 – Gather at 6pm at the church for caroling to friends of BUMC. Two caroling “teams” will split up and visit our friends who cannot make it out and about during the cold winter months. This is a great evening for families and singers of all ages! Please contact Craig Czarnota at maxczarnota@gmail.com if you plan to attend!



Warm Heads, Hands and Hearts

The Hat and Mitten Tree will be set up in the Parlor again this year beginning November 30. As is our tradition, we will be collecting hats, mittens and scarves for those in need this winter. Can you help? There will also be a box under the tree where you can drop off toiletries (soap, shampoo, toothbrushes and toothpaste) and socks. Please bring these items to church anytime before December 14. Thank you for your generosity!



The holidays officially begin with the annual Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony on Sunday, November 30. Come to the band stand on the square for Yuletide songs, Christmas carols, and a special appearance by Santa Claus. The parade steps off at 4 pm. BUMC and the Evangelism Committee will host a reception following the parade in Fellowship Hall. If you would like to assist in providing this welcoming hospitality, please contact Catherine Vastartis at 440.526.9406.



Poinsettias will be used to decorate the altar and chancel area Sunday, December 21 and Christmas Eve. Poinsettias may be ordered in honor and in memory of loved ones or to the glory of God. **Poinsettias will be delivered as an act of caring after the Christmas holidays.** Please indicate below if you will pick up your poinsettia any time after 10:00pm worship on December 24, if you will donate it to be delivered to someone, or leave it for the remainder of Christmastide. Again the cost of red or white poinsettias is \$7.50 per plant. **To Order:**

Fill out the information below, printing clearly so the secretary can read your name and the persons in whose honor or memory the poinsettia is donated.

Indicate whether you wish to pickup, have it delivered to a person who is confined, or leave for the remainder of Christmastide.

Attach to the order a check for \$7.50 per plant ordered—payable to BUMC or cash in the proper amount.

Place the order in an envelope and mail or bring to the church office or place in the offering plate no later than Sunday, December 7.

Deadline for orders is Sunday, December 7. No orders can be honored after that date.

Name _____ Phone _____

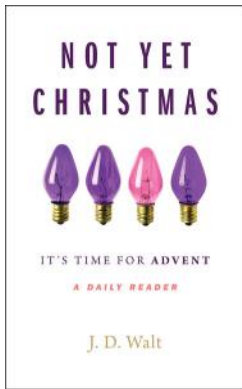
Address _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

To the glory of God _____

<input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/> White @ \$7.50 per <input type="checkbox"/> Pickup 12/24 after 10 PM service / Dec 28 after 10 AM service <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver to someone for me
--



Advent Devotional

Are you ready to 'do' Advent? Be sure and pick up a copy of [Not Yet Christmas: It's Time for Advent – A Daily Reader](#). Every year we say we are tired of the consumerism of Christmas, the earlier start time to Black Friday and the absorption of Thanksgiving into "the holidays." This year, let's do something as a church to reclaim this sacred season. Let's joyfully embrace that we will 'do Advent' in the midst of a culture that loves Christmas but does not seem to understand it. When the church can reclaim Advent the culture will behold Christmas.

This 25 day reader will offer us the opportunity to get on the same page in preparation for the season of Christmas. You will find within its pages the trusted texts that have guided the church for centuries combined with daily insights and prayers composed by some of the best Christian poets of our time.

Books go on sale November 23 and cost \$8. If you have any questions, ask Jenny!



Sunday School—it's not just for kids!

Attending Sunday School is an excellent way to find fellowship, receive strong, biblical teaching and journey with other believers in the life of faith. If you have never been to a class, why not give one a try? Sunday School can play an important role in your faith journey. Have questions? Want to learn more? Contact Jenny Gee, 440-526-8938 x 230 or education@brecksvilleumc.com

Check Out These New Adult Sunday School Classes, Nov. 30—Dec. 21

A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens had a heart for social justice and a deep reverence for Christ and his teachings. Dickens' father was placed into a debtors' prison and at the age of 12 Dickens was sent to work in a dingy blacking house where his work day stretched from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. This experience helped craft his attitudes toward the poor and destitute people living in London. Novels such as the Pickwick Papers, Oliver Twist and A Christmas Carol all drew attention to the social issues of the day.

Throughout Advent we will watch the 1984 film version of a Christmas Carol (which follows the book very closely) and then spend some time discussing the significant social issues brought forward. Which pieces of scripture are most clearly illustrated in this classic work? We will meet in the Chapel.

Lectionary Learnings

Did the scripture readings touch your heart on Sunday? Or leave you with more questions than answers? Did you hear a message that helped you think about the scripture in a whole new way? Join your church friends to discuss and learn together. This Sunday morning section, led by Diane Pidwell, will give you the opportunity to think out loud, ask questions, dialog with others, or share your insights. If you attend second service attendance at this class will get you ready to participate fully in worship, as you enter with a better understanding of the scripture readings. Class will meet in 201.

Note: There will be no Sunday School for any age on December 28.

Reminders

Need to hang up a poster or flyer at church? The Trustees ask that we please use the tack strips, bulletin boards or easels in the building and not attach anything to our painted walls and woodwork. The adhesive in tape and other fasteners has been known to pull off the paint, leave a residue behind, or leave marks. Thanks for your help with this!



To ensure the safety of our staff and visitors, our church offices will close when the roads get too bad this winter. **When Brecksville Broadview Heights City Schools are closed due to bad road conditions, our church offices will close.** Any church events scheduled for that day will be cancelled unless otherwise notified. Tune into the local newscasts for closing information when the weather threatens. Thank you!



**Brecksville Community Chorus and Youth Chorus
Sunday, December 14 at 4 pm**

At Brecksville UMC, our concert series is one of the ways in which we open our doors to the community and seek to glorify God through music. This concert, a Christmas tradition, offers a wonderful opportunity to invite friends, family, or neighbors to experience the welcoming and joyful atmosphere at our church! The program will feature a variety of music including works by G. F. Handel, Tomás Luis de Victoria, John Rutter, Randall Thompson, and Moses Hogan. A festive reception will follow in Fellowship Hall! Don't miss this wonderful afternoon of mu-

A New Ministry Tool for BUMC

Our church is currently “test driving” a new software system for managing our church finances and records. An exciting aspect of the program is the ability for each of us to connect with other church members throughout the week on-line. Think of it as an online, secure, password protected, always updated church directory! It can help us all communicate more effectively with each other and keep up with small group activities and events. Additionally, you will be able to update your own contact information, give online, review your contributions history, and print giving statements. Church leaders will be testing it out through December and we'll learn from their experiences before making it available to everyone in January. And don't worry—if you're not interested in connecting on line, that's just fine. We'll still be doing the work of the church on paper, too! If you have questions, or can't wait to give it a try and want to join the test drive team, contact Melanie in the church office: 440-526-8938 or by e-mail at office@brecksvilleumc.com.



In the new year, the Finance Committee will be offering an exciting nine week class that asks, “Do you control your finances, or do your finances control you?” Financial Peace University is a Biblically based curriculum that will show you how to get rid of debt, manage your money, spend and save wisely, and so much more. The nine week class will start in late January or early February and will meet on Sunday evenings. More details will follow in the new year. If you're interested in learning more, contact the church office!

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



**Advent in the Music
Department...**
Join in the song!

Now is a great time to get involved with music!! Our annual **Christmas Festival Choir** begins rehearsal on Thursday, December 4, at **7:15pm**. We will rehearse three weeks (December 4, 11, and 18) and sing at both worship services on **Christmas Music Sunday on December 21**. Festival Choir participants are also invited to join the choir at 8:00 and/or 10:00 worship on Christmas Eve!

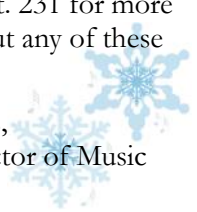
Men's Ensemble will rehearse on Thursdays, December 4 & 18 at 8:15 pm (for about 45 minutes) in preparation for singing on Christmas Music Sunday, December 21.

Handbells will also be ringing on December 21 and on Christmas Eve. Rehearsals will be on Thursday evenings beginning at 6:15pm.

Our **Children's Choir** continues to gather on Thursday afternoons from 4:30 – 5:15. Children in Kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to come and sing, play instruments and learn wonderful music together!

You can reach me at music@brecksvilleumc.com or 440.526.8938, ext. 231 for more information about any of these opportunities.

Advent Blessings,
Joy Parker, Director of Music





MILESTONES
News of the Fellowship

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

Happy 68th wedding anniversary
to Fred and Olive Priest!

Eileen Yates has a new address and
we're sure she'd appreciate your
cards and letters: 730 N Spring
Rd, Apt 346, Westerville, OH
43082. Her new phone number is
614-569-3491.

Our church staff celebrated some
significant milestones in Novem-
ber. On November 18, Pastor
Barb celebrated the 30th anniver-
sary of her ordination! On No-
vember 9, Jenny Gee, Chris Toth,
Jeff Hastings, Scott Hastings, and
Melanie Smith each celebrated
their fifth anniversary in ministry
here.

After serving seven years in our
church office, Cec Podolny, will be
leaving us to help care for her twin
grandsons, who will be born soon.
Please join us in thanking Cec for
the great work she has done for
Brecksville United Methodist
Church! We will surely miss her!



As the year draws to a close, we
would like to say "thank you" to our
communion stewards for 2014

Bob and Joan Bloch

Dave and Cec Podolny

Chuck and Becky Gezze

We are in need of new teams for
2015. Can you help?

Contact the church office!

DECEMBER Birthdays

Allen McCrodden	1	Sydney Hazelton	15
Sue Ellenberger	2	Ruth Moorhead	15
Marisol Wylie	2	Hannah Stein	15
Ronnie Rajkovich	3	Dale Meyer	16
Ed Crist	4	Elinor Rowan	17
Diane Ellis	4	Carol Wilson	18
Nicholas Mihalich	4	Jeff Fesler	19
Bruce McCrodden	6	J. Donald Moorhead	19
Mike Memmer	6	Nathan Petznick	19
Katie Pasek	6	John Zupanc	19
Karen Schroedel	6	Hudson Schneider	20
Rachel Dubin	8	Carol Dambaugh	21
Steve Harper	8	Megan Louttit	21
Allison Loughner	8	Adam Derry	22
Dick Gordon	9	Anna Derry	22
Charles Helm	9	Bryan Derry	22
Joyce Johnson	9	Amanda Auble	23
Daniel Soltis	9	Pam Papp	24
Josh Kesling	10	Kayla Kosla	26
Joan Quade	10	Anastasia Brachna	28
Scott Schneider	10	David Brown	28
David Schroedel	10	Christine Drescher	29
Barb Berry	11	Sylvia Fowler	29
Amy Piorkowski	11	Brandon Schroedel	29
Greg Urso	11	Mary Lou Bennett	30
Buck Bambic	12	Darell Fisher	30
Mitchell Bell	12	Sharon Hotaling	30
Penny Burns	12	Bob Jaite	30
Steve Piorkowski	12	Connor Hulten	31
Trinity Crouch	13	John Scott	31
Kiira Olszko	13		
Shirley Harper	14		



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 the generous givers who helped sponsor the salaries of the staff of Camphor Mission for one month during the Ebola crisis; the Evangelism

Committee, who organized another wonderful and moving Veterans Day observance; and Matt Auble who rallied a group of parents to help during the Confirmation trip to Nehemiah Mission. We are thankful for you, one and all!



News from the Brecksville United Methodist Women



Celebrate the Season with UMW Thursday, December 4

The annual UMW Christmas Potluck Luncheon, hosted by Asbury Bremeth, will be Thursday, December 4 at 11:30. Everyone is welcome! Bring a dish of your choice to share and a canned good donation for Brookside. Good food, fellowship and Christmas carols lead by Joy make a wonderful beginning for the holidays!

You're Invited to a Christmas Tea

Greater Cleveland Church Women United is sponsoring a Christmas Tea at Church of the Savior, 2537 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights at 11:30am, Friday, December 12, 2014. An inspirational program will follow the refreshments. Please bring one plate of finger sandwiches and/or bite size desserts (per attendee) and your church's charity donation. Call Nancy at 440.838.4341 for more information.



Donations Needed

Please join BUMW in supporting Parma-Southwest of Greater Cleveland Church Women United's Christmas drive for the Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Center. We're collecting much needed items this holiday season. If you can help, bring your donations to the laundry basket in the first floor coat room through Dec. 10. Items requested include:

- Used cell and smart phones
- Gift cards
- Household cleaning supplies
- Lotions, body wash & deodorant
- Hand soap and sanitizer
- Toothpaste/toothbrushes
- Underwear for women & children
- Large diapers - sizes 5-6

Acme Register Tapes Wanted

Acme Fresh Market register tapes are wanted by UMW for the Acme Cash Back program. Shop at Acme now and throughout the holidays. Place your register tape in the Acme labeled box in the coat room. It's an easy way to help earn money for UMW missions and help those in need!



Come Join The Circle!



A new UMW circle has formed and **you** are invited to be a part of it! **On Wed. Dec 3 at 7 pm** we will be creating earrings to donate to Ears to You, an organization bringing hope and joy to people with cancer. Allison Loughner is teaching the group. A \$5 donation is requested to help pay for supplies. Please bring a hand towel to work on, needle nose pliers, and if you want to, bring a friend! Everyone is welcome! We meet the **first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m.** We will sometimes do a Bible study, sometimes have a speaker and sometimes do community outreach. Our ages range from 16 to 70-something and everywhere in between.

Asbury Bremeth Circle

Bells will be ringing for our December Asbury Bremeth Circle meeting on December 11 in the Parlor at 9:30 am. Same program idea as last year BUT.....contribute a bell (\$5 or less) wrapped in a brown paper sack. Exchanging the bells will be in a game format. The continental breakfast will be a potluck of yummy breakfast items! Remember, every time a bell rings, an angel gets her wings! Call Nancy for more information or questions at 440.838.4341.

Used Stamps Needed

On Dec. 11, we'll turn in our collection of cancelled stamps to Church Women United. Check those "junk" drawers, see if you have any cancelled stamps (no Forever stamps) and put them in the Stamp drawer in the charity collection center in the first floor coat room. Your stamp donations help women around the world buy tools and farming implements to feed their families and provide income. We collect year round! Next donation date will be in May 2015.



UMW Bicentennial Cook Book



Your favorite recipes are wanted for The Brecksville United Methodist Women's Bicentennial Cookbook

before the end of the year. Drop a copy of your favorites in the recipe collection box in the Parlor.

DECEMBER 2014

BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH www.brecksvilleumc.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
 <p><i>Chuck & Becky Gezza</i></p>	<p>1 7 Disciple Bible Study 7:30 Boy Scout Troop 175</p>	<p>2 10 Staff Mtg 7 Evangelism 7:30 Church and Society</p>	<p>3 6:30 Dawnbrks 3:15 MS Youth Group 7 Eve. Circle</p> 	<p>4 11:30 UMW Potluck 4:30 Children's Choir 5 Men's Group 6:15 Bell Choir 7:30 Chancel Choir 8:15 Men's Ensem</p>	<p>5 7 Emmaus Reunion</p>	<p>6 8:30 Women's Small Group</p>	
<p>7 <i>Communion Sunday</i> 8:45 Worship 10 Education Hour 11:15 Worship 7 HS Youth Group</p> 	<p>8 7 Disciple Bible Study 7:30 Boy Scout Troop 175</p>	<p>9 11 Staff Mtg 7 COM 8 Music & Worship Board</p>	<p>10 6:30 Dawnbrks 3:15 MS Youth Group</p>	<p>11 9:30 Asbury Brem 4:30 Children's Choir 5 Men's Group 6:15 Bell Choir 7:30 Advent Worship 8:30 Chancel Choir</p> 	<p>12 7 Emmaus Reunion</p> 	<p>13 8:30 Women's Small Group 12:45 Caroling at the Oaks 6:15 Ecumenical Chapel Service at Chippewa Place</p>	
<p>14 8:45 Worship 10 Education Hour 11:15 Worship 4 Community Chorus Concert 7 HS Youth Group</p> 	<p>15 7 Disciple Bible Study 7:30 Boy Scout Troop 175</p>	<p>16 10 Staff Mtg 10 Stitch'n'Time 6 Caroling 7 Gifts & Memorials 7 Missions 7:30 Trustees</p>	<p>17 6:30 Dawnbrks 3:15 MS Youth Group</p>	<p>18 4:30 Children's Choir 5 Men's Group 6:15 Bell Choir 7:30 Chancel Choir 8:15 Men's Ensem</p>	<p>19 7 Emmaus Reunion</p> <p><i>UMW Food Delivery to Brookside</i></p>	<p>20 8:30 Women's Small Group</p>	
<p>21 <i>Christmas Music Sunday</i> 8:45 Worship 10 Education Hour 11:15 Worship 2-4 Youth Group Advent RAK Scavenger Hunt 4 Music Christmas Party</p> 	<p>22 7 Last Disciple Bible Study 7:30 Boy Scout Troop 175</p>	<p>23 10 Staff Mtg 7 Finance</p>	<p>24 6:30 Dawnbrks</p> <p>Christmas Eve Services 5 pm (Family) 8 and 10</p> 	<p>25</p>  <p><i>Christmas Day</i></p>	<p>26 7 Emmaus Reunion</p> <p><i>Christmas Observed, Offices Closed</i></p>	<p>27 8:30 Women's Small Group</p>	
<p>28 <i>Christmas Carol Sunday</i> 10 One Worship Service This Sunday! <i>No education hour this week.</i></p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 10 Staff Mtg</p>	<p>31</p>  <p><i>Happy New Year!</i> <i>Offices Close at 12:30 pm</i></p>	 <p>End-of-Year Giving</p>			<p>Reminder: To qualify for the 2014 tax year, all contributions must be received by 11 am on December 31, or post-marked December 31.</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...

- Pray for all those traveling and for those who are apart for the holidays.
- Say a prayer for those who have suffered a loss and are missing someone this year.
- Let's pray for a joyful embrace of Advent in preparation for the celebration of Christmas.
- Pray for those who will be wearing the mittens and hats collected on our tree in the Parlor, for the girls of the Sisterhood, and for the patrons of Brookside Food Pantry.
- We offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the greatest gift we've received, the reason for our celebration, Jesus!

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	Special Service	Second Service	Goal of 300
Oct. 26	138	92	76	-86
Nov. 2	165	96	74	-61
Nov. 9	175	99	106	-19
Nov. 16	116	95	63	-121
Nov. 23	132		83	-85

We've set a goal of bringing 300 people together for worship on Sunday mornings. We fell short of this goal again this month. What's keeping you from church on Sunday? What are some other ways you can be present in the life of the church this month?

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
Oct. 26	\$5,820
Nov. 2	\$8,154
Nov. 9	\$8,345
Nov. 16	\$9,165
Nov. 23	\$8,860

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*):

- Donate to our food drive. Bring your non-perishable items and paper products to the Brookside bin in the coat room.
- Save your Acme market receipts for the UMW. Help them earn money for their mission fund.
- Sing! Join the Christmas Festival Choir and help brighten the season for worshippers at BUMC.
- Consider serving as a Communion Steward in 2015. We need you!

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

10 Easy Ways to Share Gratitude This Thanksgiving

By Joe Iovino*

Thanksgiving Day elicits a bounty of wonderful memories for many people in the U.S. The crisp air. The smell of a turkey roasting and a pumpkin pie baking. The sound of a cheering crowd at a football game. All these can create warm feelings during this special time of year.

Thanking God for our blessings is a spiritual discipline that should not be limited to a single day. Along with expanding our waistlines, our celebration of the holiday can be the impetus toward growing an attitude of gratitude that will carry over into the rest of the year. In his [commentary on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#), John Wesley writes, “Thanksgiving is inseparable from true prayer; it is almost essentially connected with it.” Giving thanks is as essential to our spiritual growth as prayer. These creative ideas will help us get started this Thanksgiving.

Fill a family Thanksgiving box. As part of your Thanksgiving preparation, create a [Thanksgiving Box](#). Each day family members write on slips of paper something for which they are thankful that day and place them in the decorated box. The box will make a nice Thanksgiving table centerpiece, and when opened, a way to remember how blessed we are every day. You could add to it all year too of course.

Serve someone. In the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving, food banks, churches, and other service organizations supply meals to the hungry on Thanksgiving. Centenary United Methodist Church in Los Angeles holds a sleepover for their youth called the “[turkey lock-in](#).” On the night before Thanksgiving the youth prepare, and the next day, deliver meals to people in the community who will be alone on Thanksgiving. Ask your pastor for suggestions of places near you to serve or donate.

Take time for quiet reflection. As the big day approaches, things get busier. Set aside some time each day to say thank you to God for all he has provided. “[A Morning Prayer of Thanksgiving](#)” by The Rev. Dr. LaGretta Bjorn is a great start.

Make a Thanksgiving frame. As you and your family reflect on those things for which you are thankful, compile a list. A few days before Thanksgiving, neatly transfer the list onto a piece of paper you can then insert into a frame for a beautiful expression of gratitude to decorate your home.

Invite someone new to dinner. Athens First United Methodist Church invites international students from the University of Georgia to spend [Thanksgiving with their members](#). The students enjoy spending time away from campus and in family homes. Explore ways to invite those who may be alone or far from family to celebrate with you on the holiday.

Share blessings together. When gathered around the table, many families will ask guests to share something for which they are thankful. In [Thanksgiving Celebrations for the Home](#), MaryJane Pierce Norton suggests creating a list together, such as foods each person enjoys. Then together offer “thanks for the Earth and all with which we are blessed in the world God created.”

Send cards to those we miss. Remember those who are not able to be with you this year by [making or purchasing cards](#) for them. “On Thanksgiving Day,” Norton writes, “invite all who are gathered in your home to sign and/or write a note on the cards to those who are missing.” Mail them the next day to share the gratitude.

Create a keepsake of thanks. When you take that group photo around the table or in front of the fireplace, record not only the names of those in attendance, but also something for which each person is thankful. This will be a great item to revisit when everyone gathers again next year. See [Thanksgiving Celebrations for the Home](#) for more ideas of celebrating gratitude together.

Include children. Involve the children celebrating with you by sharing the [Child’s Thanksgiving Prayer](#). Use this prayer at the kids’ table as a grace or an after meal blessing, having one of the older children lead. Then encourage the kids to write their own Thanksgiving prayers, with which they could lead the adults in prayer later in the day.

Voice your gratitude. If your family is musical, consider a Thanksgiving sing-a-long, as you might do with Christmas carols. Dean McIntyre offers [Hymns for Thanksgiving Day](#) from our United Methodist Hymnal and Songbooks that would be a great way to celebrate. He also offers a quiz of hymns with lines about thanksgiving in [Musical Thanksgiving](#). Make a game out of who can guess the most.

However you can, find ways to give thanks to God for all of his blessings throughout your celebration this year. Instill the habit of an attitude of gratitude, which will extend far beyond Thanksgiving Day.

**Joe Iovino works for UMC.org at United Methodist Communications. He may be reached at jiovino@umcom.org or 615.312.3733.*



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