



The Good Word

The Newsletter of Brecksville United Methodist Church

65 Public Square, Brecksville, Ohio 44141 Phone: 440-526-8938

December Issue : Published December 23, 2010

BUMC News Bits



Rocking for Clean Drinking Water

On December 4 our Youth rocked the night away at our annual rock-a-thon, raising over \$1800 to build a well in Liberia. Janet Kleckner came in to speak with the kids about the work of the Liberia Mission.



Fifth Grade Communion

On Sunday, December 5 we celebrated our Fifth Grade Communion Class: Erin Gee, Sydney Hudacek, Payton Schneider, and Hannah Shively. (Also pictured, Jenny Gee, Rev. Oehl, and Bev Huber.)



Stewardship Campaign Concludes

Our "Be a Part of It" stewardship campaign included a church project. Each church member was sent a puzzle piece and brought them back to church, where we attempted to put the puzzle back together. Each person is such an important part of the whole.

Thank you for your support this year!



The picture at top is the completed puzzle.

January 9

Third Grade Bible Sunday
Congregational Meeting
Project 2010 Potluck

January 11

UMW Staff Luncheon
Administrative Board and
"Super Tuesday" Meetings
Knitting

January 12

Quest and CMAP Resume

January 13

Asbury Bremeth Circle
Soul Quest Resumes

January 16

Senior High Youth Sunday

January 18

Finance and Trustees Meetings

January 21

Good Word Deadline

January 23

Interfaith Outreach Project

January 24

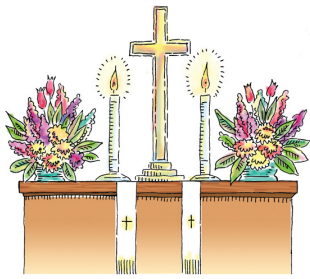
"Jesus in The Gospels"
Class Begins

January 25

Knitting

January 28

UMW Board Meeting



Worship Schedule

8:45 First Service

10:00 Education hour

11:15 Second Service

Wednesdays at 7 pm Prayer Service

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The Good Word is published monthly
by **Brecksville United Methodist Church**
65 Public Square, Brecksville,
OH 44141. Archived copies available
on line: www.brecksvilleumc.com.

**Article deadline is the third
Monday of each month.**



Leaning Towards the Sun

Comments from Rev. Karen Oehl

We are leaning towards the sun again. The shortest day of the year is past, when our northern hemisphere is tilted the furthest away from the sun that it will get. Now we begin the journey towards the longest day of the year, leaning ever more into sunlit days.

I love nativity sets. There are Mary, and Joseph, close to the baby. A shepherd and some sheep, three Magi. Take a look at the scene, and see how the bodies of the adults curve towards the baby. It may look like praying or worshipping. It is also leaning towards the son, getting closer to the source of the light.

How uncertain were the lives of those gathered around the manger! Mary and Joseph held an uncertain place in society, unmarried parents that they were. The Magi brought with them danger as well as gifts, making the little family's life even more uncertain. The shepherds had received a wondrous message, but lived on the uncertain fringes of their world. Who would listen to them?

But no matter, they all leaned towards the child, their hope. Our hope.

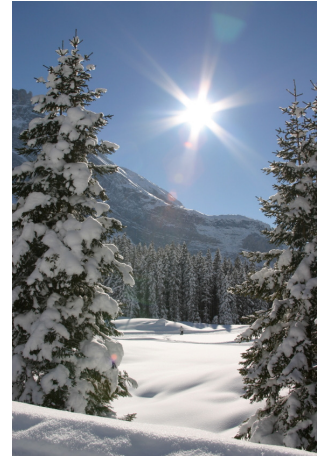
Like the shepherds we turn now from the manger and head away from Christmas and into the new year. We are facing uncertainties in the year 2011. Our budget is unbalanced to the point of wobbling. Not something we want to stand on for a whole year! We are uncertain about programs and ministries that will be effective. We do not know exactly how to grow in commitment and participation, or bring in new members, despite our longing to do so. We still hesitate to share the wonders of God that we experience here with others who might reject the message, and us.

We do not know what life will bring us in 2011.

But we do know where our hope is. We know the source of the light. And we lean towards it in faith.

Welcome, Lord Jesus. Shine, Jesus, shine.

Pastor Karen



ALTAR FLOWERS

We hope you are enjoying the beautiful altar flower arrangements. If you are interested in adding to the meaning of our worship service through placing flowers on the altar in 2011, please contact the church office by phone, 440-526-8938 or e-mail

bumc222@ameritech.net.

Forms for requesting flowers are on the bulletin board in the office workroom. Simply complete a form and leave it in Cec Podolny's mailbox.

Alice Pokes Around the Building

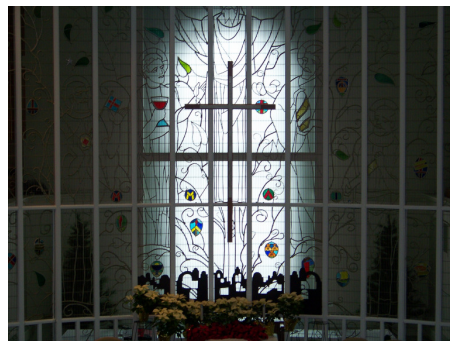
A Column of Ongoing Response to our Worship Surveys

Have you seen Alice in Wonderland? The play, not the girl. Perhaps you recall from that story the reckless way in which Alice seems willing to eat or drink any odd thing she runs across. Almost a year ago, this column was initiated as a way to respond to the ongoing questions we may each have regarding things around the church that we just don't quite understand. Like Alice, we may occasionally feel we are asked to (proverbially) eat or drink something without much explanation.

In a bit of serendipity, one of our topics this month is directly related to the *actual* eating and drinking that occurs in our congregation on a regular basis. Communion is a precious sacrament that calls us into a time of remembrance and reflection on the incredible love of Jesus for each of us. As such, the space in which communion is prepared, called the *sacristy*, is considered a sacred space within the church. This is the small room in the southwest corner of the Sanctuary near the pulpit. On communion Sundays, our stewards work in this room to prepare the communion elements that will be used in worship. It is therefore important that the sacristy be kept tidy and relatively uncluttered out of respect for the sacred act of communion which is prepared within its walls.

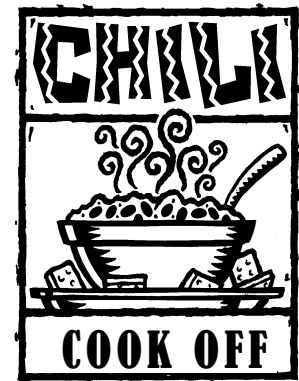
In most Christian traditions, there are guidelines for handling any leftover communion elements. It is our practice that any remaining bread and juice be "returned to the earth", in one manner or another. This might mean feeding the bread to birds, consuming the remaining bread and juice, or using the liquid to water the ground. For this reason, the sink in the sacristy empties directly into the ground, not into the usual water system. That means that anything you drop down that sink goes straight into the earth! (You can ask our trustees about what happened when those renovating our Sanctuary used that sink to clean large amounts of paint out of their paint brushes!)

Another frequently asked question is around the symbolism and significance of our chancel screen. This large, decorative metal screen provides a beautiful backdrop to our worship each Sunday, and it is as rich in meaning as it is beautiful! In addition to the central figure of Jesus, four other disciples are present in full-body outlines. John, Simon Peter, Philip and Paul can each be identified by the symbolic items in their hands. But there are nineteen *additional* symbols present in the screen. Each of the small, stained-glass pieces that dot the leafy landscape represents an individual that was significant in the life of Jesus and the early church.



You can read in detail about each of the figures and symbols in a pamphlet titled, "The Chancel Screen", available on request from the Main Office. Your deeper understanding of this beautiful element in our Sanctuary can provide the basis for meditation and reflection on the many characters present in our faith story!

Blessings to you in the New Year, Joy Fenton, Director of Music



Don't Miss

The UMM's Fifth Annual

Chili Cook Off

Saturday, January 22nd

5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall

Craig Kotnik took home last year's grand prize with his famous "Chili Pot Pie". Whose chili will wow our taste buds this year? Sign up in the Parlor after church starting Sunday, January 2.

Congregation Meeting

January 9

On Sunday, January 9, a congregational meeting will be held in the Sanctuary at 10:30 a.m.



Our regular coffee hour after the 8:45 service will run a bit long to allow us to congratulate the third graders on receiving their Bibles and share cake as part of the celebration. We will also use a bit of that coffee hour time for meeting with the teachers of the next round of Adult Sunday School for books and reading assignments. The morning schedule will look like this: 9:45-10:15, extended coffee hour; 10:15-10:30, meet with teacher and gather in Sanctuary; 10:30-11:00 congregational meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to share information about the proposed 2011 Operating Budget. This subject touches all of us—please plan to attend.



MILESTONES

News of the Fellowship

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

Karl and Laurie Riccardi are happy to announce that Matt and Ashley were married on November 27. Both the ceremony and reception were at Nighttown in Cleveland Heights. And there's more to celebrate! Karl retired at the end of October.

We extend our sympathy to the family of long-time member, Wayne Bilek, who died of cancer on December 7 at age 78. A talented woodworker, Wayne carved the sculpture of Jesus carrying the cross in our Parlor. And if there's a celestial choir, we know Wayne's beautiful voice is there. As Jesus said, "Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." (John 11:25-26, NRSV).

I would like to thank Libby for visiting me while in the hospital, as well as everyone who sent a card, telephoned and/or prayed for me during several trying days a few weeks back. It's a comfort to know we can count on each other through whatever life brings.
~Karen Thielman

To our Church Family:
We so appreciate your sympathy expressed to our family and sharing in our grief. Thank you all for your cards, prayers, and presence at the funeral service for Gordon. We will cherish the memories he provided us.

Blessings to you,
The Markley Family



Joni Robinson 1/1	Bob Carson, 1/12	Brian Meek 1/20
Kevin Schultz 1/1	Shelly Meek, 1/12	Jeanne Ross 1/20
Katie Cline 1/2	Jennifer Hoffman, 1/13	Dan Auble 1/21
Betsy Bellingham 1/3	Diana Warth 1/13	Pat Gordon 1/21
Penny Leinert 1/3	Steven Chen, 1/14	Bob Nelson 1/22
Michael Patrick 1/3	Maddy McBride 1/14	Jackie Hollo 1/23
Michelle Shively 1/3	Joy Fenton 1/15	Emily Loughner 1/24
Emily Vincent 1/3	Scott Ford 1/15	Bob Lundholm 1/24
Beryl Burkle 1/4	Donna Houston 1/15	Kay Servey 1/24
Donna Sibits 1/4	Marianne Nolan 1/15	Colin Crouch 1/25
Nate Machesky 1/6	Lois Moston 1/16	Katie Hurder 1/25
Claudia Monnett 1/6	Aundrea Dumot 1/17	Sue Hastings 1/26
Margie Benedict 1/7	Eliot Slifcak 1/17	Nicholas Campbell 1/28
Autumn Lasich 1/7	Kim Johnson 1/18	Kimmer Cave 1/28
Cole Mihalich 1/9	Fred Loeffler 1/18	Donna Culley 1/28
David Vastartis 1/9	Ellen Martin 1/18	Sue Monseau 1/28
James Vastartis 1/9	Jennifer Schneider 1/18	Jill Magistro 1/30
Nathan Hulten 1/10	Jessica Zawada 1/18	Don Salsbury 1/30
Gerry McMaster 1/11	Nate Bender 1/20	Kathy Goebel 1/31
Marc Vincent 1/11	Kaitlyn Ellis 1/20	DJ Magee 1/31

Learn and serve at interfaith event

On a Sunday afternoon (*from 1:30 -5 pm on January 23*) people from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish congregations will gather at St. Basil's for an afternoon of sharing and working together.

The day has grown from a desire for an interfaith service project shared by members of the Brecksville/Broadview Hts./Independence Interfaith Fellowship.



There are two components to the day. The first is to have time to get to know each other across faith lines with fellowship and discussion. The second is to prepare supplies of some sort for the Homeless Stand Down events later this winter. Our day will be facilitated by InterAct Cleveland; InterReligious Partners in Action of Greater Cleveland.

If you would like to know more about InterAct, go to their website at www.interactcleveland.org. This unique organization's mission is to "Build relationships across diverse religious traditions." This is done through shared volunteering and service; interreligious gatherings and opportunities for dialogue. Our event covers all of these! You can also find out more information about the Homeless Stand Down on their website. You might even be inspired to volunteer to be a part of it on your own! Come on January 23 to learn more.

Project 2010 Update

Serving in Love



In January our congregation committed to donate a total of 2,010 hours of service. Many members completed and turned in pledge cards and we started the year receiving 53 pledge cards totaling 1,346 hours of community service pledged.

As we approach the end of 2010, we are pleased to announce that we have documentation that 3,459 hours of community service have been completed by 142 participants from our church family and friends. (Their names form the border of this page!)

WOW! What seemed like an impossible task in January has been a huge success with outreach to more than 40 different recipient groups/agencies. This includes reaching out to others in love within our local community, our county, both within and outside our state, to prisoners, to the homeless, to shut-ins, as well as reaching out in love to other countries.

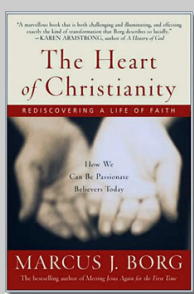


Project 2010 Potluck

Let's give the project a send off with a celebration of the hours and experience of the past year. Join your friends and family at a potluck on **Sunday, January 9 from 4—6 pm in Fellowship Hall.** We will swap stories, look at pictures and presentations and eat, of course! Everyone is invited. Just bring a dish to share.

Adult Sunday School Classes

Register on line or at church for these courses, which begin on Sunday, January 9 and run through March 6.



Book Study

In January, a 9-week adult education experience will be offered around **Marcus Borg's *The Heart of Christianity***. Joy Fenton will facilitate a look at this text about reconciling things that may at times seem at odds. If you struggle with traditional Christian paradigms and wonder where that leaves you as a person of faith, this book is for you. If you worry that yielding some of your long-held views around particular issues might leave you without a solid foundation, this book is for you. If you wrestle with the authority of Scripture, this book is for you. *But there is another critical purpose for this study!* There is a generation of people around us who have decided Christianity is “not for them” because it violates their sense of logic, it’s too archaic, or they feel that the picture it paints of God isn’t one to be admired. This book is for them and for those of us who desire to reach out to them. Broadening our perspective and sharpening our ability to think critically about our faith is indispensable. We will work to develop invaluable intellectual resources and perspectives that you can draw upon as you work to invite the skeptical and disillusioned back onto the road of discovery. The course will include discussion, prayer, activities and worship experiences as we make an effort to “learn from every angle”. Books for this course are \$10. This text will also be offered in “book on CD” format at no additional charge. Please let the office know if you would like a CD in addition to your paperback book.

Bible Study



Acts and the Travels of Paul: Living in Jerusalem just after Christ’s death and resurrection, Paul did his best to destroy the Christian church. On his way to Damascus to find and imprison more Christians, Paul met the Lord. He repented, turning in faith to Jesus Christ. Many doubted and shunned him. Christians such as Barnabas, however, accepted and spoke up for him. The two of them became missionary partners. On three separate missionary journeys, Paul preached the news of Jesus. Dive into the book of Acts with Les Buttolph and chronicle Paul’s journeys as he worked tirelessly to spread the Good News of Christ.

Faith Issues



The Mechanics of Methodism: This class will increase your United Methodist IQ and vocabulary as Pastor Karen walks us through the structure of the United Methodist Church. Have you ever wondered if the pastor has a boss? Or where our money goes? Who makes the rules and what happens if we don’t follow them? What is our relationship to the United Methodist Church in the world? What part do I play as a member of the church? All this and more will be covered in this course. Perfect for members new and old!

Senior High Youth Sunday

January 16th

8:45am & 11:15am services.

Let Lisa know if you can be a part of the morning. It is a great way to give back to our congregation that gives so much to the youth. Rehearsal will be Thursday night January 13th from 5-6pm in the Sanctuary.

Snow Tubing

January 9th--12:30-4:30pm

6-12th Graders and their families put January 9th on your calendars. We are going to Brandywine Ski Resort to snowtube!! The cost is \$25 and can be paid to Lisa in correct change on Sunday! RSVP with Lisa by January 5th. We need adults to attend because Lisa cannot snowtube. You all probably have heard that Lisa and Tony are expecting a baby, so snowtubing is a no-no!!! Call Lisa with any questions.

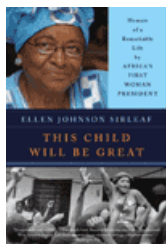


On the UMW Bookshelf

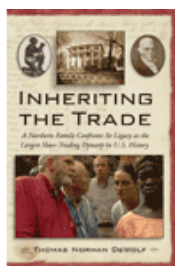
We have just added ten new books to our library in the parlor for your enjoyment. These are all books recommended by the United Methodist Women's reading program which is designed to increase sensitivity to all human beings, encourage critical thinking about issues facing us today and expand our understanding and participation in God's mission. Please put the date and your name on the card in the back of the book and place the card in the blue box beside the rack nearest the fireplace. Please do not keep a book longer than **6 weeks** as many folks are waiting for some of the books to be returned. - *Nell Taylor, UMW Program Resources*



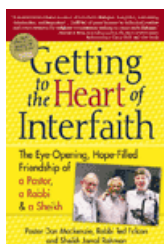
Disfigured- A Saudi Woman's Story of Triumph, *Rania Al-Baz* Rania Al-Baz was the smiling face of a family program on Saudi television. She was the first Saudi woman to have such a job when her abusive husband assaulted her. Her agreement to make pictures of her injuries public sparked criticism of Saudi culture, and as a result the first Saudi research into domestic violence began in Riyadh. Rania's memoir is not simply a story of the violence she suffered, nor is it a tale of revenge. It is a story of generosity of spirit, and of her evolution into an activist on behalf of women.



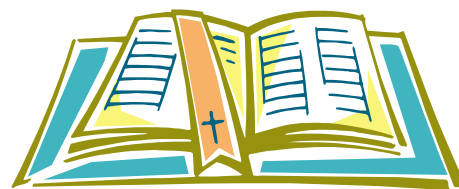
This Child Will Be Great - Memoir of a Remarkable Life by Africa's first Woman President, *Ellen Johnson Sirleaf* In January 2006, after the Republic of Liberia had been racked by fourteen years of brutal civil conflict, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf - Africa's "Iron Lady" was sworn in as president. In her stirring memoir, she shares the inside story of her rise to power, her early childhood, imprisonment and exile, and her fight for democracy and social justice. By sharing her story Sirleaf encourages women everywhere to pursue leadership roles at the highest levels of power, and gives us all hope that, with perseverance, we can change the world.



Inheriting the Trade - A Northern Family Confronts Its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in U.S. History, *Thomas Norman DeWolf* In 2001, Thomas DeWolf discovered that he was related to the most successful slave-trading family in U.S. history, responsible for transporting at least ten thousand Africans. This is his memoir of the journey in which ten family members retraced their ancestor's steps through the notorious triangle trade route - from New England to West Africa to Cuba - and uncovered the hidden slave trade history of New England and the other northern states.



Getting to the Heart of Interfaith-The Eye-Opening, Hope-Filled Friendship of a Pastor, a Rabbi & a Sheikh, *Pastor Don Mackenzje, Rabbi Ted Falcon and Sheikh Jamal Rahman* This deeply personal journey to interfaith collaboration offers hope for an inclusive and healing way of being together in the world. Interfaith Talk Radio's "interfaith amigos" provide a rich understanding of the road to collaboration by sharing their stories, challenges, and the inner spiritual work necessary to go beyond tolerance to a vital, inclusive spirituality.



New Bible Study Begins

Now that we whetted our appetites for Bible study through our Advent devotional book, there is a chance for a feast of study beginning on Monday, January 24, led by Rev. Oehl.

A study of *Jesus in the Gospels* will run on Monday nights from 7-9 through May, then resume at the end of the summer through December. This 30-week course will lead you into a deeper understanding of the gospels than you have ever had before.



Jesus in the Gospels is part of the Disciple Bible Study family. You can expect rewarding small group study, challenging daily readings, and relevant faith growth. See Rev. Oehl if you are interested or would like to know more. Watch for chances to register in January.



2011 Summer Camp Event Listings and Registration Information Available Online Now

East Ohio Camps is excited to announce that the 2011 Summer Camp Schedule, Information, and Registration Information are available online at www.EOCSummercamps.org. Once you find the event that is right for you, online registration will be live on January 17th. Contact camps@eocumc.com or 800-831-3972 ext. 108 or 120 with any questions or for more information.

January 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
January 2: <i>Communion Sunday.</i> Texts: Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:1-12. "Commissioned by grace" January 9: <i>3rd Grade Bible Sunday.</i> Texts: Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 2:1-12. "Follow the light"			To your health! Looking for different opportunities for exercise in the new year? Classes are held at BUMC weekly. Look for calendar items in GREEN .			1 
2 10 WORSHIP <i>One service today:</i> <i>Covenant Renewal,</i> <i>Communion</i>	3 5:30 Kickboxing <i>6:30 Women's</i> <i>Emmaus</i>	4 <i>11 Staff Meeting</i>	5 6:30 Dawnbreakers <i>No UMW Mtg</i> <i>No CMAP/Quest</i> 5:30 Kickboxing 6:15 Yoga 7 Prayer Svc	6	7 <i>7a Emmaus</i> <i>Reunion</i>	8 9 Zumba
9 <i>3rd Grade Bible Sunday</i> 8:45 WORSHIP <i>10:30 Cong. Mtg.</i> 11:15 WORSHIP <i>12:30 Snowtubing</i> <i>4 Project 2010</i> <i>Potluck</i>	10 5:30 Kickboxing <i>6:30 Women's</i> <i>Emmaus</i>	11 <i>Super Tues</i> <i>9:30 Staff Meeting</i> <i>12 UMW Staff</i> <i>Luncheon</i> <i>7 Ad Board</i> <i>7 Knitting</i> <i>8 COE, Evangelism, Missions, Music Board, Worship, Youth Board</i>	12 <i>6:30 Dawnbreakers</i> <i>3:15 Quest</i> <i>4 CMAP</i> <i>4:30 MS Hndbells</i> <i>5:15 MS Choir</i> 5:30 Kickboxing 6:15 Yoga 7 Prayer Svc	13 <i>9:30 Asbury Bre-meth Circle</i> <i>5 Soul Quest Re-sumes (No HS Choir)</i> <i>5 Youth Sunday</i> <i>Rehearsal</i>	14 <i>7a Emmaus</i> <i>Reunion</i>	15 9 Zumba
16 <i>Youth Sunday</i> 8:45 WORSHIP <i>10 Education Hour</i> 11:15 WORSHIP	17 <i>BBH No School</i> 5:30 Kickboxing <i>6:30 Women's</i> <i>Emmaus</i>	18 <i>9:30 Staff Meeting</i> <i>7:30 Finance</i> <i>7:30 Trustees</i>	19 6:30 Dawnbreakers <i>3:15 Quest</i> <i>4 CMAP</i> <i>4:30 MS Hndbells</i> <i>5:15 MS Choir</i> 5:30 Kickboxing 6:15 Yoga 7 Prayer Svc <i>7 SPR</i>	20 <i>5 Soul Quest</i> <i>6:15 Handbells</i> <i>6:15 HS Choir</i> <i>7:30 Chancel Choir</i>	21 <i>BBH No School</i> <i>7a Emmaus</i> <i>Reunion</i> Good Word Deadline!	22 
23 8:45 WORSHIP <i>10 Education Hour</i> 11:15 WORSHIP <i>1:30 Interfaith Outreach Project</i> <i>6 Epic Unwound</i>	24 5:30 Kickboxing <i>6:30 Women's</i> <i>Emmaus</i> <i>7 Bible Study</i>	25 <i>9:30 Staff Meeting</i> <i>7 Knitting</i>	26 6:30 Dawnbreakers <i>3:15 Quest</i> <i>4 CMAP</i> <i>4:30 MS Hndbells</i> <i>5:15 MS Choir</i> 5:30 Kickboxing 6:15 Yoga 7 Prayer Svc	27 <i>5 Soul Quest</i> <i>6:15 Handbells</i> <i>6:15 HS Choir</i> <i>7:30 Chancel Choir</i>	28 <i>7a Emmaus</i> <i>Reunion</i> <i>9:30 UMW Board Meeting</i>	29 9 Zumba <i>Cleveland Food Bank</i>
30 8:45 WORSHIP <i>10 Education Hour</i> 11:15 WORSHIP	31 5:30 Kickboxing <i>6:30 Women's</i> <i>Emmaus</i> <i>7 Bible Study</i>	January 16: <i>Youth Sunday</i> January 23: Texts: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23. "The call of the cross." January 30: Texts: Micah 6:1-8; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. "Back to basics"				

Church Office Hours: Monday - Thursday, 8:30 - 4:30. Friday, 8:30 - 12:30.