

@BrecksvilleUMC

THE GOOD WORD

December 2025

I DIDN'T KNOW CHURCH COULD BE LIKE THIS

"I didn't know church could be like this." An individual said this to me after our Service of Naming on November 16th. "Yeah. Usually, churches and pastors make it clear that Jesus isn't for me—the message they share is for everyone else... but not me."

It warmed my heart that this person truly felt a loving welcome at our church, and that we were able to help fill that Jesus-sized hole in their soul.

I stood there thinking, "This is why we do what we do!"

The day before, I spent seven hours in that very room (the Parlor) with our Leadership Board members and Rev. Dr. Lisa Withrow, talking and praying about the purpose of our church and where God is calling us in the future.

We discussed lots of questions, including:

What is our passion?

What concerns surface in the data (Home Gatherings, greater church context, conversations with local leaders, local demographics, trends, and happenings, global news, etc.)?

What keeps us up at night?

What are our biases?

What is God up to?

And throughout the whole day, we asked, "What threads do we see woven through all these elements?"

The threads we saw were:

Connecting the community

Deeper reach

Variety of ways to connect relationally

The need is immediate

Open-minded

Intentional and adaptable

Continues on next page...

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2025

10:30 AM | 3:00 PM | 5:00 PM | 8:00 PM

10:30 am - Joyful Morning Carols & Candles

3 pm - Traditional Service with Organ

5 pm - Christmas Pageant with Worship Band

8 pm - Carols & Candlelight
with Choir and a String Quartet

Christmas Extravaganza

December 21, 2025 at 9:30 am

Down in the Big Hall, don't delay,

Christmas fun in a morning way!

Music-making, games to play,

Crafts that sparkle—hip hooray!

Ho, ho, ho! Come feel the glow!

Ho, ho, ho! Let's all go!

To the 'Stravaganza—joy everywhere,

A morning of magic we all can share!

Join us for our annual *Christmas Extravaganza*—a merry morning filled with crafts, cookie decorating, canvas painting, music-making, reindeer games, and joyful surprises for all ages. It's the perfect way to step into the sparkle of the season together. Don't miss the fun!

Brecksville UMC

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NEW Submission deadline
3rd WEDNESDAY monthly
Editor, Melanie Smith
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From the Pastor, continued from page one

We *know* we are called to create a safe, welcoming community where people can build relationships with one another and with God. At the same time, when we concluded the retreat on Saturday, we didn't have solid priorities of what that looks like... yet. Instead, we had lots of questions and prayers and thoughts still swirling through our minds.

Sometimes, when you talk about things a lot, they can become theoretical. But meeting that person after the Service of Naming was a reminder: *This is real—our mission, the people we are reaching, the work God is doing through Brecksville United Methodist Church—it is real and important.*

In fact, the Service of Naming is just one example of how God is already using our church to reach people and let them know that God's love is big enough to include them, *even if and no matter what.*

And the exciting thing is that the data shows that this is just the beginning.¹ There is a slow revival happening in the US: God is stirring in people's hearts, and people are seeking places like our church—a safe space to explore faith and ask big questions without being judged or rushed. They're seeking honest worship and lifelong learning and authentic community, and that's who we are!

We have the opportunity to work with God and make a really amazing impact in the world.

And we find ourselves at a turning point: over the past 4 years, our church has seen an influx of new people of all sorts of ages and stages of life. And we've grown to the extent that our current staff (even with a Youth Director) isn't big enough to care for everyone we have—build relationships, help them grow spiritually, create spaces for healing and hope, etc.

We're also well-aware of a few significant needs of our physical building—a new roof, a new boiler, an updated elevator—all necessary to keep our church home dry, warm, and safe.

The long and short of it is, we're going to need a larger budget to move Brecksville United Methodist Church to where God is calling us. What a great "problem" to have!

So what will it take to get us there? How will we fund the work that God has already started at BUMC? It's going to take all of us—all our prayers, all our dreaming, and all of us opening our hearts as well as our wallets and saying, "Yes! I want to be part of creating safe space for people to come as their perfectly imperfect selves so that the world can encounter God's unconditional love!"

Are you in?

Rev. Heidi Welch, Senior Pastor

¹ *Is Your Church Ready for the Next Great American Revival?*
<https://careynieuwhof.com/american-revival/>



What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope This Advent



November 30, 2025 - January 4, 2026

Every Advent, we light candles, sing carols, and pray for Christ's coming because we believe God entered a frightened world to bring good news. We hold onto hope because we believe that Christ did come—that's the promise of the season. Our hope is not flimsy or fleeting. It's gritty, resilient, and can endure—no matter what we fear or face. This season, let us insist on hope and trust that good news is greater than fear.

Advent Dinner Church

Wednesday, December 3 at 7 pm in Fellowship Hall

Joseph was a man caught in confusion and fear, tempted to withdraw, yet visited in a dream by an angel who whispers, "Do not be afraid." Beneath that message, we hear God say another one: Give me your hand. Let's walk this road together. Join us for a special worship service over a simple meal of soup and bread and be reminded that faith is communal. We don't wait alone. We don't carry hope alone. And we don't face the unknown alone.

Your RSVP helps ensure that we prepare the right amount of food. BUMCLinks.com

The Longest Night: A Vigil For Hope

Wednesday, December 17 at 7 pm in the Sanctuary and Online

Though Christmas is a time of joy and hope, we recognize that fear and grief are often present too, weighing on us like a heavy fog. Together, we will light candles and keep vigil, inviting God to join us no matter what emotions are present too.

Hope Has Dawned, Noel - A Cantata for Christmas

Sunday, December 21 at 10:30 am (One worship service this day!)

The Brecksville UMC Chancel Choir presents a Christmas Cantata.

This worship service in song is a wonderful way to prepare for Christmas. Bring your friends and family. A Word From the Composer : HOPE - longing for a certain thing or event to happen; being filled with great anticipation of something we want to be true. Christ brought to us that hope, one that was told to Isaiah by an angel 700 years prior to Jesus' birth. Imagine waiting, longing, hoping for a Savior to come to earth to bring redemption to all people. In *Hope Has Dawned, Noel*, we look back over the events leading up to the birth of Christ and journey through the hope of Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds, Angels, Magi, and even Zachariah and Elizabeth in the birth of John the Baptist. These events would eventually lead us to the birth of Christ, the hope of all the world.

Let Fear Fuel a Fire for Justice



December 28 -

One Worship Service at 10:30 am

The holy family fears for their safety and for their child's life, like so many refugees around the world. Their valid fears motivate them to move—and so they seek refuge in Egypt until it is safe for them to return home. Instead of trying to push fear away, what if we used it as fuel? What if we harnessed that incredible source of energy for good, fighting for a world where no one fears for their safety? Utilizing our fear wisely not only helps others; taking concrete action also interrupts the fear that so easily paralyzes us. The work helps others, but the act of putting our fear to work changes us, too.

We will be joined by Graham Ball, the new Executive Director of The Nehemiah Mission of Cleveland who has experience working with displaced people and grassroots immigrant rights organizations and is completing a Masters degree in Forced Migration and Refugee Protection.



Chef Rasul will be cooking up a festive buffet dinner in Fellowship Hall at 6 pm Christmas Eve.

Bring a dessert to share or a suggested donation of \$5. (If it's not in your budget, don't worry! We got you!)

RSVP at BUMCLinks.com



FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN & TEENS



Calling All Christmas Stars!

This year, our Christmas Eve celebrations are bursting with opportunities for our young people to shine!

10:30 am – Christmas Eve Skit: The Shepherd Boy
We're inviting kids to help act out our fun skit during the 10:30 am service! One rehearsal will take place the week of December 15 (exact date TBD). Kid-readers and actors of all ages are welcome!

5:00 pm – Family Christmas Eve Pageant

Would your child love to step into the story of Jesus' birth? We need shepherds, sheep, angels, wise ones, and even a donkey or two! Kids of all ages can join—from our youngest who are ready to be in front of the crowd, to older kids who can help lead and guide our groups, and older kids who love reading aloud. One rehearsal will take place the week of December 15 (date TBD).

The Children's Chime Choir will also perform at the 5 pm service! Practices are Sunday mornings from 10–10:30 AM on December 7, 14, and 21. This is open to children in Grade 3 and higher, and they'll perform at our 5 pm service on Christmas Eve.

Interested in joining the pageant or reading?

Reach out to Jenny at Jenny@brecksvilleumc.com. Don't miss the chance for your child to be part of the magic of Christmas!



Stay & Play: Connection, Coffee & Laughter

First Ever Event - Sunday, January 11 at 11:30, Fellowship Hall

Parenting is busy. Exhausting. Overwhelming sometimes. And yet, you keep showing up for your kids — and that's something to celebrate! *We know many of our families are craving connection* — not more structured programs or lessons, but real time together, where kids can be kids and parents can just breathe and chat. That's why we're excited to invite you to *Stay & Play!*

What is Stay & Play? A casual, drop-in gathering after Sunday worship. Kids can play with simple toys and coloring materials in the same space where parents are hanging out.

It won't be strictly supervised, but a few of our youth will be nearby to help and be with the kids. No agenda. No pressure. Just connection.

Special Treats: Each Stay & Play will include a small seasonal surprise — because little joys matter as much as big ones.

Why come?

- Give your kids space to explore, create, and be themselves.
- Connect with other parents who get what parenting today really feels like.
- Take a little breath for yourself in the middle of a busy day.





What Do You Fear? (Advent Adult & Teen Education)

Join us Sundays in Advent, 9:30–10:30 am in the Chapel



This Advent, join us for a four-week reflective journey exploring fear, hope, and courage through scripture, art, poetry, and conversation. In a world where fear often divides us, we'll gather to ask: How might our fears shape us—and how might God call us forward?

Class Highlights:

- *Week 1: Facing Our Fears* – Begin with gentle reflection and name the fears that quietly shape our lives.
- *Week 2: When We're Running Out of Hope* – Explore the story of John the Baptist and ways to cultivate resilient hope.
- *Week 3: Even in Our Fear, We Are Called Forward* – See how Mary and Jeremiah show us the courage to say “yes” amidst uncertainty.
- *Week 4: When You're Afraid, Give Me Your Hand* – Reflect on Joseph's solidarity and how fear can lead to connection and community.

Each session will feature guided discussion, poetry, art, and reflective practices—no prior experience required. Let's journey through Advent together—learning to move through fear, recognize God at work, and reach out our hands to one another. **Questions?** Reach out to Jenny at Jenny@brecksvilleumc.com.

Lectio Divina

Monday mornings at 10:30 in the Chapel

Each week, we rest with one passage of scripture—slowing down enough to truly listen. This gentle practice helps scripture come alive and invites us into a more personal, transformative encounter with God. Drop in anytime!

2026 Wellness Speaker Series

Caring for the Whole Person at Brecksville UMC — Mind, Body, and Spirit

As we step into a new year, we're excited to offer a new **Wellness Speaker Series** designed to nurture the full wellbeing of our community. Each month, we'll welcome a guest expert to help us explore practices that support healing, strength, and wholeness.

- **Craniosacral Therapy & Supportive Group Healing Circles with Tina Mihalek.** *Sunday, January 25 at 6 pm.* Learn how gentle, hands-on techniques and shared healing spaces can calm the nervous system, reduce stress, and promote resilience.
- **Pelvic Floor Health with Belle Panza.** *February 22 at 6 pm.* Discover practical, accessible ways to strengthen and support one of the body's most essential muscle groups—beneficial for people of all ages and stages.
- **The Benefits of Yoga (Speaker TBA).** *March 22 at 6 pm.* Explore how yoga can increase flexibility, balance, and peace of mind through mindful movement and breath.

All are welcome—come learn, ask questions, and care for your whole self alongside your church community.



Find Your Calm: December Sound Bath

Friday, December 12 at 7 pm
Fellowship Hall

December can be a whirlwind—lights, parties, errands, and expectations. Amid the bustle, it's easy to forget to breathe, pause, and simply be. Join us for a seasonal evening of sound and stillness with the gentle vibrations of singing bowls. Let the resonant tones wash over you, easing tension and opening space for reflection, warmth, and peace. This is a time to step out of the holiday rush and into a moment of mindful calm.

Bring a yoga mat, blanket, eye mask, and pillow so you can fully settle in and experience the soothing sounds. No experience needed—just bring yourself and a willingness to breathe. Take a break from the chaos, and give yourself the gift of stillness this December. \$20 recommended donation.

Let's Talk... Podcasts:

Sundays at 9:30 in Room 301

We explore big questions through the lens of faith with thought-provoking podcast episodes that investigate issues that matter deeply to our hearts and to our faith. Whether you're ready to speak or simply to listen, you'll find space here for curiosity, honesty, and hope. Learn what we're listening to this week at BUMCLinks.com and drop in anytime!



Meeting Needs in the Season of Giving

Determined Service means that we show God's love for other by meeting the needs of the whole person. Consider helping in this season by donating to one of these collections in December:

- **Bike Ministry Tree** - Grab an ornament from the tree, or shop from our Amazon Wishlist to help supply our volunteers with the parts they need to *get spokes to folks* this holiday season.
- **Colony Cupboard** - This ongoing collection for students of Brecksville Broadview Heights Middle and High School helps fill needs that equip students in need for lifelong learning.
- **Food Tree** - Your donation of non-perishable food, household cleaning items and toiletries will help those served by Cory UMC's feeding ministry in Glenville.
- **Hat & Mitten Tree** - Donate hats, scarves, mittens, gloves and socks to help warm the people served by Trials for Hope.

Lights for Lions

Don't throw away your broken string lights and extension cords! Recycle them through the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo to help protect lions and cheetahs in Tanzania. The Brecksville UMC Green Team is making it easy with a donation bin in the Parlor through 12/21. Bring your broken lights and drop them in the box (without bags, boxes or packaging, please) and the Green Team will drive them to the Zoo. If you miss the deadline, the Zoo is collecting through February 15!



Where: At the main entrance of Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, 3900 Wildlife Way (you don't need a Zoo ticket to drop them off) or year-round at the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District, 4750 East 131 Street in Garfield Heights

Frozen Food Ministry Grows

What started off as picking up donated food that Strongsville UMC couldn't use to prepare camp meals for the un-housed has expanded into feeding people at least 5 different locations each week! On any given Tuesday afternoon, we have upwards of 9 volunteers sorting, cooking, boxing, clean-up, and delivering meals and food throughout Northeast Ohio and beyond. We support:

- **Nehemiah Mission's** weekly community brunch on Bridge Avenue, Cleveland.
- Meals for the 15-20 in-house residents at **B. Riley House**, an LGBTQ+ Drug and Alcohol Treatment facility on the West Side of Cleveland.
- **Trials for Hope:** Hot meals for the un-housed delivered to the camps weekly on Tuesday and Thursday.
- **Elevate Worship Center Cafe** serves community meals each Wednesday and Friday in Wellsville, an Ohio River Town hit hard by the closing of the industries that supported the town for generations.
- Starting in January, we will be helping prepare a meal for **House of Champions**, an after school program for inner city young girls that attend **Urban School**.
- **Emergency Needs:** When someone in need reaches out to members of our church for emergency food, we work with them to take care of this need.
- Our Church is now a member of the **Food Hunger Network**, which connects with businesses to ensure leftover food never goes to waste. We pick up from Lubrizol every Friday.

We are always looking for new sources of food and places to deliver. If you know of a need, or want to be part of this ministry, please contact the office to reach our team leads, Matt & Kathy Auble, or one of our volunteers: Ric Lesinski, Paul Calovini, Bob Fehlner, Maggie Jones, Jack Drescher, Heidi Slagle, Julie Evonna, Ann Thal, Brian, Becky or Abigail Bendlak, Dave Brown, Melanie Smith or John Leitch.

Thanksgiving Offering

Help create a warm, safe space for international newcomer families to live!



Text "GIVEBUMC Thanksgiving" to 73256
<https://onrealm.org/BrecksvilleMethodist/give/Thanksgiving>



GIVING TUESDAY
 DECEMBER 2ND
 GOAL: \$42,000

GIVE WARMTH.
GIVE HOPE.
GIVE LOCAL.
First \$11,000 matched!



Want to help our community care for God's creation?
 Email GreenTeam@Brecksvilleumc.com for info!



Sew4Good Christmas Bazaar

Sundays, 12/7 and 12/14 from 9 am - 11:30

Stop by the lobby to see the types of projects this special group of sewists has been working on this year, and pick up a handmade craft to gift this Christmas. Your purchase will help the Sew4Good team buy fabric and notions for projects in the new year!

BUMC Cookbooks Make Great Gifts!

Sundays, 12/7 and 12/14 from 9 am - 11:30

A church cookbook is a special thing, and our most recent edition is a beauty! Filled with over 300 recipes from 150 cooks, this cookbook – published in December of 2024 – is sure to be a cherished and treasured addition for any kitchen. Your purchase helps Brecksville United Methodist Church continue to be a safe space for the whole community to gather. We even have gift wrapped copies and some with additional items that make great gifts! Stop by the lobby on 12/7 or 14 or by the office anytime.

Christmas Eve Helpers Needed

Wednesday, 12/24 at all four services: 10:30 am and 3, 5, and 8 pm

Hospitality is a Christian spiritual practice, and there are *plenty* of opportunities to practice on Christmas Eve! Can you share some of your time or talent by serving on the welcome team, passing out candles, tidying up the pews after a service, refreshing refreshments, or serving on the tech team? We need you! Talk to Anthy - Hello@BrecksvilleUMC.com

Small Groups are Coming in the Spring!

As we prepare to launch small groups, we want to do it in a way that truly serves you and helps people connect more deeply. *To help us do that, we're asking everyone to take our quick Small Groups Survey.* It takes about two minutes.

Whether you're excited to join a group or you're just curious, your response will help us shape the kinds of groups we offer in this first season. *Thank you for helping us launch this new step in our church's life and community.*



Take the survey today.

Open your phone camera and focus it on this QR code above, then click the link – or visit BUMCLinks.com.

Grief During the Holiday Season

If you are feeling a mix of sadness, anxiety, or even quiet anger this holiday season, please know that you are not alone. Feelings of grief can intensify at this time of the year. Taking time to ask yourself these five questions may elicit some peace in your heart this holiday season.

1. ***Are you practicing self care?*** Eat, sleep, hydrate, and exercise - even if you don't feel like it. Take time to rest. Be gentle with yourself. Self care is important for our physical body, and for mind and spirit as well.
2. ***Are you giving yourself permission to not be jolly?*** Don't feel obligated to participate in every holiday activity. Choose one or two events that feel genuinely comforting, and kindly decline the rest without guilt.
3. ***Are you resting in the care of your church community?*** God's love can be profoundly felt in the presence of a community that loves you. Can you find the quiet, honest space for sorrow at church? Lean into that comfort.
4. ***Are you doing something your loved one loved?*** Some holiday traditions bring back comforting memories. Consider attending a holiday concert, baking cookies, singing carols – and draw your loved one's memory close.
5. ***Are you looking for beauty?*** Moonlight like diamonds on a frozen windshield. The sound of birdsong in the morning. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says: "God has made everything beautiful in its time. God has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end." Are you attuned to the moments of awe in your life in this season? It's powerful stuff!

United Women in Faith invites you to these
upcoming events! Everyone is welcome.
“Even men!”



United
Women
in Faith

faith

action

sisterhood



• Please join Asbury Bremeth Circle
and Brecksville United Women in Faith
to welcome in the joyous Christmas season
on Thursday, December 4

at 12:00 in the Parlor
for our annual
**Christmas Potluck
Buffet Luncheon.**

The whole church family is invited to attend!
Please bring a dish to share.

2026 UWF Officers will be sworn in by
Pastor Heidi. Brenda Calovini will entertain
us with her piano skills and we will enjoy
trivia about Christmas Carols.

*Merry Christmas from
United Women in Faith!*

FEBRUARY UWF MEETING

Thursday, February 5. Gathering at 9:30. Program at 10 am

We don't meet in January. Save the date for our February
meeting, a talk about the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad.

ASBURY BREMETH CIRCLE

Radicle Methodism: Discovering the Roots...

Thursday, December 11. Gathering time at 9:30. Conversation at 10.

Join your UWF friends for thoughtful conversation, fresh
insight, and a renewed appreciation for the living tradition
we share. Together, we'll explore where our story began,
reflect on what it means for our faith today, and imagine
how those roots might help us grow into the future God is
calling us toward. Fellowship starts at 9:30 - conversation
around our study begins at 10am. Everyone is welcome,
meet in the Parlor and bring your own coffee or tea.

Join our mailing list! UWF@Brecksvilleumc.com



2025

POINSETTIA FUNDRAISER FOR HUNGER

Help beautify the sanctuary for worship and help feed the hungry with a poinsettia
dedication! [Return this form to the office by Sunday, December 14.](#) Dedications will be
included in the bulletins on Cantata Sunday (12/21) and Christmas Eve (12/24).

Suggested donation \$10 per dedication.



Your Name: _____ Phone or Email: _____

How would you like your poinsettia dedication to read? Limit 180 characters. Some examples:

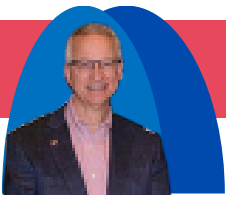
- Given by George & Mary Bailey in honor of Clarence Odbody.
- In memory of Susan Wells with love from Buddy and Jovie.
- Given to the glory of God by The McAllister Family.

- ☐ Payment Enclosed.
- ☐ I paid online or will bring my payment to the office.
<https://onrealm.org/BrecksvilleMethodist/give/Poinsettias>
- ☐ I would like to help deliver poinsettias after Christmas. Please contact me.
- ☐ I understand that a poinsettia is not guaranteed, but would like one after 12/24. Please contact me.

Prefer to order online?

Scan the QR Code or visit BUMCLinks.com





Charting the Way Forward

On behalf of Leadership Board, we welcome our incoming members for a new 3-year term: Brenda Calovini, Tracy Scott and Brian Bendlak. They are participating in Board meetings and our annual day-long retreat (in the Parlor) as we plan and think about the new year. In 2026, the board will be chaired under the excellent leadership of Kathy Louttit!

From the bottom of our hearts, we are so grateful for the tremendous service of our members who are rotating off the board: Kristi Eberhardt, Julie Kubek and Jim Slagle. They have been tremendous assets to the Board and our church, bringing heart and soul to every meeting, participating fully, and providing valuable insight and guidance. Thank you!

Our church is at a transition point. Our church family has grown and our needs have changed post-pandemic. Even before the tragic passing of our dear youth director, Dana Schwendeman, our staff was pushed to max capacity. Our staff and parent volunteers have been outstanding in stepping up to keep our youth group active. But collectively, we need to do something different.

Leadership Board is extensively examining staffing for our church, both short and long term. We are looking at the current and future anticipated needs, and evaluating ways to best serve our church family. Always keeping Brecksville UMC's purpose top-of-mind, some changes may include restoring positions, gradually adding some positions, and re-configuring existing positions.

We are looking at Brecksville UMC's visioning meeting responses, input from Pastor Heidi and our staff, discussions with local community leaders, demographics of the communities we serve, and national church trends. Staffing was the topic for the entire annual retreat, facilitated by an excellent consultant. Finances and building capacity/condition clearly are a part of those discussions. As conclusions are reached, more information will be shared with all our congregation.

It has been an honor the past two years to serve as the initial Leadership Board Chair. Great discussions have occurred, and the board members are tremendous. Because the board must simultaneously consider staff-parish concerns, finance concerns and trustee concerns, the opportunity is there for decisions to occur expeditiously, but with a full consideration of our church family's needs and gifts. And every decision is guided by our Brecksville UMC mission: to create safe spaces to grow with God and one another. Blessings in this Christmas season! - *Alan Scheufler, Board Chair*

The 2025 Leadership Board:

Kristi Eberhardt, Kathy Louttit, Michael Houff, Julie Kubek, Alan Scheufler (chair), Matt Gabor, Jim Slagle, Maria Shurik, Deb Watkins, Rev. Heidi Welch.

Catch-up and Beyond:

A Tax-Smart Reminder for Giving

Our church has been richly blessed this year — by your prayers, presence, service, witness, and gifts. Every gift has helped our church live out our mission — creating safe space to grow with God and one another. Your giving makes ministry possible, from the lights in the sanctuary to the lives touched in our community.

Catch Up Gifts: As the year ends, consider an additional gift to help close the year on a firm footing. Your faithful support allows us to enter the new year ready to serve with confidence and compassion. Every dollar given is a testimony of trust — in God's abundance and in the mission we share together.

Seed Fund Started: Although the details of a proposed Capital Campaign are being discerned, a "seed fund" for the campaign allows you support our church while reducing your taxes in 2025:

For everyone: Starting in 2025, taxpayers who take the standard deduction may be eligible for a tax credit of up to \$1,000 per person (\$2,000 per couple) for charitable gifts. This means even if you don't itemize, your giving can reduce your taxes.

For retirees (age 73+ with a traditional IRA): Consider a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA. Money given directly from your IRA counts toward your required minimum distribution (RMD) but is not taxed as income. The IRA custodian can send the check directly to the church, or to you made out to the church. This may also reduce your adjusted gross income, helping with federal and state taxes.

For questions about giving options, please contact Shannon Kantorowski in the office. Always consult your tax advisor for personal guidance.



Reach out with a prayer and a note,
call or text each week this month!

Week of December 7

Faith McAllister

In physical therapy recovery from stroke

1500 Weaver Dr Apt 420

Granville, OH 43023-0305

Week of December 14

Elinor Rowan

It's her birthday this week!

7005 Stadium Dr Apt 213

Brecksville, OH 44141-1895

Week of December 21

Amanda Bianchi

It's her birthday this week!

8513 Ackley Rd

Parma, OH 44130-2308

Week of December 28

Sylvia Fowler

*It's her birthday, and recovering from hip
replacement*

9251 Highland Dr.

Brecksville, OH 44141-2605

*Nominate someone who could use a reminder
that they are loved and kept in prayer!
Email Prayer@brecksvilleumc.com*



December BIRTHDAYS

1 Allen McCrodden
2 Sue Ellenberger
2 Dave Dobos
2 Jack Burrows
3 Ronnie Rajkovich
4 Ed Crist
4 Zachery Momchilov
5 Diane Ellis
5 Kate Krause
5 Carter Barnum
5 Danny Bendlak
6 Mike Memmer
6 Bruce McCrodden
8 Steve Harper
9 Dick Gordon
9 Daniel Soltis
9 Rita Brown
10 Scott Schneider
10 Jordan Welch

10 Larry Girod
11 Amy Piorkowski
11 Barb Berry
11 Greg Urso
12 Steve Piorkowski
12 Penny Burns
12 Doug Ritterbusch
12 Mitchell Bell
12 Renuka Malenie
12 Abigail Bendlak
13 Kiira Olszko
13 Trinity Crouch
14 Shirley Harper
15 Ruth Moorhead
15 Sydney Hazelton
16 Dale Meyer
17 Elinor Rowan
17 John Jatsek
18 Carol Wilson

18 Mae Smith
19 Jeff Fesler
19 J. Donald Moorhead
19 Nathan Petznick
20 Hudson Schneider
21 Megan Louttit
23 Amanda Bianchi
23 Theodore Samblanet
23 Emily Wallace
24 Pam Papp
25 Logan Hricko
27 Calvin Lundy
28 David Brown
29 Sylvia Fowler
29 Christine Drescher
30 Darell Fisher
30 Mary Lou Bennett
30 Todd Fowler
31 John Scott
31 Hadley Spencer

**If you would like to be added to - or to opt out of - the monthly birthday list,
please email melanie@brecksvilleumc.com*



Brecksville UMC is a thriving community of faith because of people like you who care for one another and reach out in love to those who are in need. We are thankful for people who are serving in new ways, including Allison Galimoto who is teaching Sunday School this year and Carly

Kubek (and her boyfriend) who hosted youth group for the first time. We're thankful for all 22 people who signed up for Death Over Dinner, even when they weren't *quite* sure what it was all about - and for Mr. Harper, who did the dinner dishes. Sue Ellenberger leads an ecumenical worship service at Chippewa Place every week! Matt Gabor and Kim Vann put a lot of heart into the pumpkin patch. Ryan Lohr came to the rescue and repaired a broken camera controller on a Sunday morning and the Aubles....The Aubles! They are leading us to serve in new ways through Trials for Hope, the Frozen Food Ministry, Do Something Sunday and Project Feed AND they took the UWF on a virtual tour of Lakeview Cemetery. **Thank you all!**

Praise God for Babies born in 2025!

Wesley Crooks, son of Emily & Aaron
Micah DellaTorre, son of Heather (Manocchio) & husband
CJ Gabor, son of Max and Matt
Violet Krolkowski, daughter of Darren & Samantha
Audrey Miller, daughter of Bryan & Olivia
Mary, daughter of Shannon & Michael Pace
Hudson Vastartis, son of David & Allyson
Harper Winkler, daughter of Hannah (Johnson) & Logan











NOVEMBER 2025

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DECEMBER

JANUARY 2026

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 10:30 Lectio Divina 7 Bible Book Study	2 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food 2:30 Chippewa Communion Svc 7 LB Staffing Convo	3 6:30 Breakfast  7 pm Advent Dinner Church	4 12 UWF Christmas Potluck Luncheon 6:30 Choir 8:30 Band	5  6 Staff Christmas Party	6 
7 2nd Advent 8:30 Worship 9-12 Sew4Good Christmas Bazaar 9:30 Classes 10:30 Worship 5:30 Youth Group	8 10:30 Lectio Divina 7 Bible Book Study	9 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food	10 6:30 Breakfast	11 9:30 Asbury Bremeth 6:30 Choir 7:30 Leadership Brd 8:30 Band	12 7 Sacred Sound Bath	13 Have you placed your poinsettia dedication?
14 3rd Advent 8:30 Worship 9-12 Sew4Good Christmas Bazaar 9:30 Classes 10:30 Worship 5:30 Youth Christmas Party	15 10:30 Lectio	16 10 Stitch'n'Time 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food 5 Sew4Good	17 6:30 Breakfast  7 pm Longest Night Service	18 6:30 Choir 8:30 Band	19 <i>Horizon's Preschool Christmas Break Begins!</i> 	20 9 am - 11 am Cantata Final Rehearsal
21 Cantata Sunday! 9:30 Christmas Extravaganza! <i>One worship service today</i> 10:30 Worship	22 10:30 Lectio Divina	23 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food	24 Christmas Eve Worship at 10:30 am 3 pm, 5 pm 8 pm	25 MERRY Christmas 	26 	27
28 <i>One worship service today</i> 10:30 Worship <i>Contemplative Worship returns next Sunday.</i>	29 Church Office CLOSED 10:30 No Lectio Divina	30 No Staff Mtg Church Office HOLIDAY HOURS 9 - 12 2 Mission Food	31 6:30 Breakfast Church Office HOLIDAY HOURS 9 - 12		2 	3 

Find calendar updates at www.BrecksvilleUMC.com/calendar



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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
65 PUBLIC SQUARE
BRECKSVILLE, OH 44141

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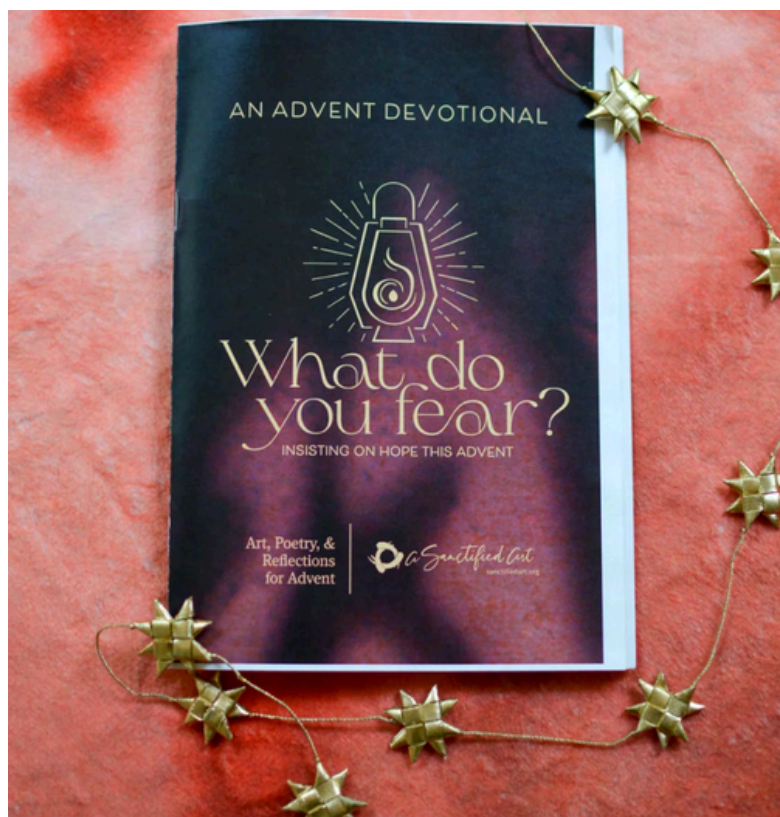
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Sunday 9 - 1 pm
Monday - Thursday 9 to 3 pm
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info@brecksvilleumc.com



*You are wanted, welcome, expected and
accepted here, exactly as you are.*



Request a copy of our Advent Devotional
Hello@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.