



BRECKSVILLE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SINCE 1814

Spiritual TRAIL GUIDE WINTER 2026

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BRECKSVILLE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SINCE 1814

MISSION

Creating safe spaces to grow with God and one another.

WHAT GOD HAS CALLED US TO DO.

VALUES – GUIDE OUR ACTIVITIES AND REVEAL THE UNIQUE STRENGTHS OF BUMC

Honest Worship

We invite everyone to participate in worship authentically and holistically; heart, mind, soul and body.

Joyful Gathering

We gather in an atmosphere of joy and laughter as we share in the life God offers us.

Lifelong Learning

We are unabashedly authentic in our lifelong quest to grow with God and learn with one another.

Courageous Inclusion

We whole-heartedly welcome all people to come as their perfectly imperfect selves.

Determined Service

We show God's love for others by meeting the needs of the whole person.

MEASURES

I will create safe space to grow with God and one another by...

THESE QUESTIONS HELP US KNOW HOW WELL WE'RE DOING. ARE WE LIVING OUR VALUES?

... sowing love and compassion.

- Am I seeing myself and others through God's eyes?
- Am I seeking and giving forgiveness?
- Am I recognizing the presence of God's kingdom around me?

... cultivating sanctuary.

- Am I listening for the voice of the marginalized?
- Am I nurturing someone else's healing?
- Am I accepting of those different than me?

... tending to life-long learning.

- Am I engaged in exploring my faith with others?
- Am I actively seeking to grow my personal relationship with God?
- Am I reflecting my spiritual growth in my daily life?

... bearing God's fruit in service.

- Am I giving back to God?
- Am I sharing God's blessings with others?
- Am I demonstrating God's love beyond the church doors?

OUR MOST DEEPLY HELD IDEALS



REACH OUT TO PASTOR HEIDI OR THE VISION TEAM TO LEARN MORE!

HOW MINISTRY FITS TOGETHER TO FULFILL THE MISSION. THE BASICS OF HOW WE ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION

STRATEGY

Rooted in worship.
Nourished in groups.
Branching out in service.





A message from Pastor Heidi

When I was in my early 20s, I was looking for a part-time job to have while I finished my undergraduate degree. My (future) father-in-law, Ash, suggested I apply for a Youth Director position at a local United Methodist Church. My response: “I don’t like working with youth.” He asked, “Have you ever worked with youth?” When I reluctantly said, “...no...” he challenged me not to assume I wouldn’t like it, but give it a try. “At the very least, apply and see if you get an interview.”

Long story short, I got the job and learned that working with youth is one of my gifts and actually a great joy. Teenagers are imbued with a healthy dose of skepticism and can tell when someone isn’t being authentic or all-together truthful. (And they’re not afraid to call you on it, either!) They’re often comfortable with asking questions and are open to learning different viewpoints (at least more so than most adults). And they don’t take themselves too seriously, so they find my sarcasm and goofiness entertaining.

My years in youth ministry taught me important lessons about faith:

- “It’s not all about you, Pastor Heidi!”
- Authenticity and openness will expand your faith, while certainty will stifle it.
- Spending time with someone is never a waste, and ice cream can always make a bad day better.

Years later, I took a Spiritual Gifts Inventory and learned that my gifts of wisdom and shepherding (combined with my personality and interests) are what make working with youth so life-giving for me. When I shared this with Ash, he said, “Yeah, I know. That’s why I suggested you do it!”

Again and again, people tell me, “I want to grow in my faith but I just don’t know what to do!” And while I would love to sit down with each and every person and help you figure that out, that’s just not realistic. So, we’ve retooled this year’s Spiritual Trail Guide to help you discern this for yourself!

In the pages of this guide, you’ll find a link to a Spiritual Gifts Inventory, and information on how various gifts correspond to different ways of serving and growing as a disciple here at BUMC. Our dear Dana created most of these resources for our New Member class last year. But we want everyone—not just those who are members or becoming members—to learn how God created them with unique gifts to bring joy to themselves and others! If you take the inventory and find yourself going, “Hmm...” then give me a call—I’ll use my gift of discernment to help!

Rev. Heidi Welch, Senior Pastor

Explore Your Spiritual Gifts



SCAN HERE

You are gifted. You have a purpose. Discover your gifts today!

About the Spiritual Gifts Inventory: God has made each of us wonderfully unique and calls us to be part of one body in Christ, each member serving with a purpose. By exploring the spiritual gifts God has given you, you can discover ways to serve that not only bless others but also bring you joy and fulfillment. The UMC's Spiritual Gifts Inventory is a tool to help you name those gifts and imagine how they might be used in the life of the church and beyond. Take the inventory, and see where God might be inviting you to share your gifts. Scan the QR Code or visit BUMCLinks.com to begin. (Find the link in the Lifelong Learning section.)

My top three gifts:

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one.

Romans 12:4-5

1

2

3

**Where has God blessed you, given you a gift? And what have you done with that gift?
How have you accepted the responsibility that goes with it?**

Brain

You like to think through problems and solutions. Wisdom, Discernment, Leadership, Helping

Mouth

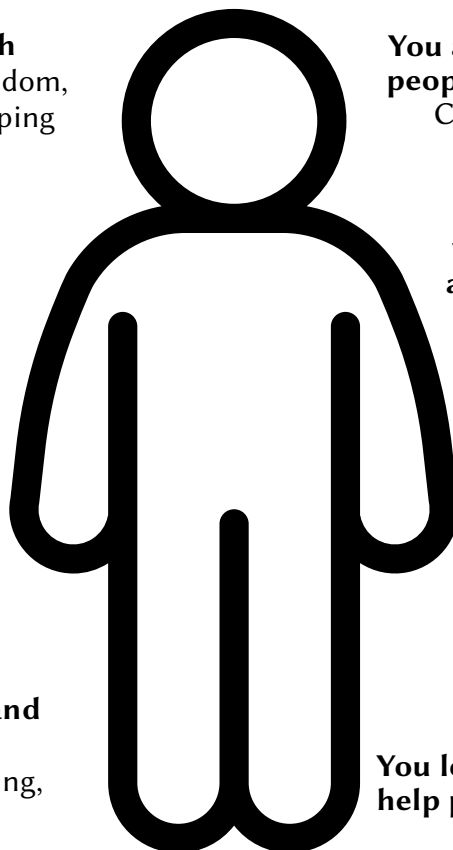
You enjoy talking to people. Witnessing gifts include: Prophecy, Teaching, Evangelism, Exhortation

Hand

You love to help others. Outreaching Gifts include: Apostleship, Working Miracles, Compassion, Healing, Servanthood

Stomach

You are passionate about food and feeding others. Feeding Gifts include: Compassion, Faith, Helping, Exhortation, Helping, Giving



Ear

You are a great listener and care about people's needs. Listening gifts include: Compassion, Discernment, Helping

Heart

You aren't afraid to show people your emotions and love people just as they are. Nurturing Gifts include: Wisdom, Shepherding, Exhortation, Helping, Discernment, Faith, Compassion

Leg

You may not love to be center stage but supporting others in their projects makes you really happy. Organizing Gifts include: Knowledge, Administration, Giving, Helping, Wisdom

Foot

You love to travel and go places in order to help people. Your gifts include: Apostleship, Faith, Giving, Miracles

How to use your gifts through Brecksville UMC:

Learn more about each of these opportunities in this trail guide!

ADMINISTRATION

- Help with projects in the office
- Join us for the newsletter assembly party
- Help with registration at VBS

APOSTLESHIP

- Travel with a Volunteer in Mission team
- Volunteer with youth (or elders) and learn how your faith can translate to Gen Z (or Boomers)

COMPASSION

- Serve on the Funeral Reception Team
- Volunteer on the next Trials for Hope Work Day
- Help out with the Frozen Food ministry

DISCERNMENT

- Learn about Leadership Board and visioning for the future of BUMC
- Join an Adult Education Class and share your thoughts about world events, theology, and other interests you may have

EVANGELISM

- Become a mentor in our Confirmation program
- Volunteer at the Home Days BUMC booth

EXHORTATION

- Every single ministry needs you!
- Lead the Bike Ministry
- Send cards to our Care & Prayer Mail recipients

FAITH

- Lend your gifts to the Congregational Care Team
- Subscribe to the Prayer Chain and pray for those who need some extra love
- Join the Green Team and put your faith into action through creation care

GIVING

- Serve on the Stewardship Team or Capital Campaign Work Group
- Chat with Matt Gabor about the “Close the Gap” efforts of the Alternative Revenue Team
- Serve in the Pumpkin Patch

HEALING

- Join the Congregational Care Team
- Look into ways you can continue and grow Dana’s Spiritual First Aid Work
- Check out the Courageous Inclusion events throughout the year

HELPING

- Join the Worship Arts or Worship Tech Team
- Join the Meal Train or Gopher lists
- Join the Communion Steward Team or Welcoming Team

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

- Join the Worship Band
- Help out on the Joyful Gathering Team
- Be a reader for the Advent Wreath Lighting

KNOWLEDGE

- Help teach Sprouts or Sunday School
- Volunteer to lead an adult ed class

LEADERSHIP

- Check out what Leadership Board is all about
- Join the Welcome Team
- Talk to Pastor Heidi about the Leadership Development & Nominations Team

MIRACLES

- Join the Prayer chain and pray for those in need
- Gather with the Prayer Circle at the front of the Sanctuary after the 10:30 am service

PROPHECY

- Be a liturgist in worship
- Join the Lectio Divina group on Mondays
- Participate in the podcast class!

SERVANTHOOD

- Help get our Green Team up and running
- Serve on a regular Sunday morning rotation for morning coffee, welcome team, or communion.

SHEPHERDING

- Become a Confirmation mentor
- Teach during Sprouts
- Help out in the Wiggle Room
- Chat with Jenny about spiritual direction

TEACHING

- Talk with Jenny about teaching an adult class
- Teach during the 9:30 kids learning hour
- Help out at the Christmas Extravaganza
- Learn about bike repair and teach others through bike ministry

WISDOM

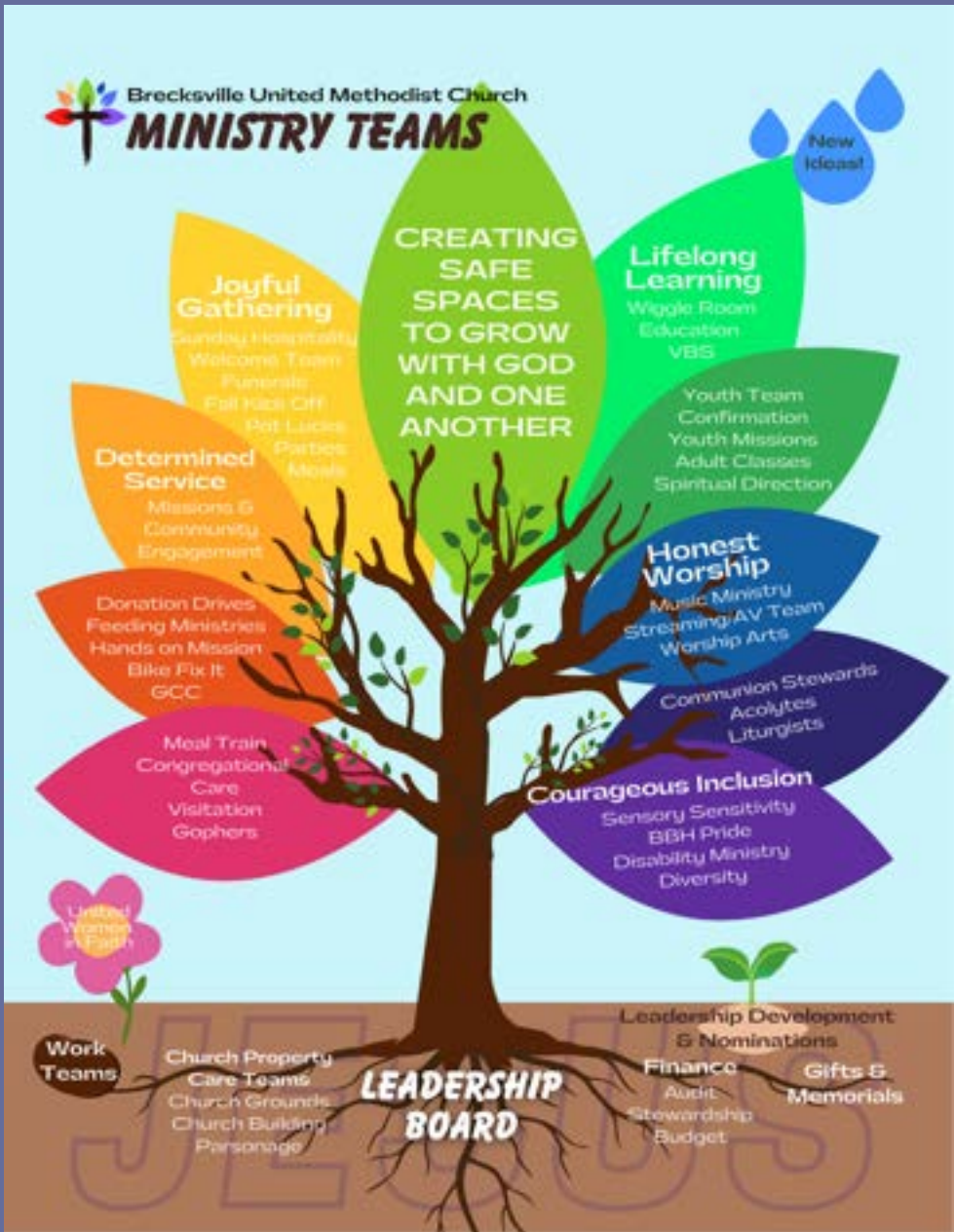
- Volunteer with youth
- Take a class with Pastor Heidi
- Check out BUMC’s online Bookshop

Learn more about Spiritual Gifts: brecksvilleumc.com/spiritual-gifts/

MINISTRY TEAMS

The real success of BUMC lies in the hands and hearts of our Ministry Teams. That is where we put our vision framework into action! The Ministry Team Tree organizes all our teams into leaves for each of our BUMC values, and soil which gives us the foundation and nutrients to grow (church property & finances). Some are ongoing teams, like the Welcome Team, and Church Property Care Team, and others are short-term work groups tasked with a specific project, like the annual audit.

Each and every person at BUMC is challenged to "get off their donkey" and put their spiritual gifts into practice by serving on a Ministry Team!



LEADERSHIP BOARD

The Leadership Board focuses on strategic planning, mission, vision, and governance, empowering other leaders and teams to engage in direct ministry while remaining accountable to the board.

Read about the Leadership Board's Guiding Principles and more at BrecksvilleUMC.com/2026LeadershipBoard



2026 Leadership Board

Brian Bendlak, Brenda Calovini, Matt Gabor, Michael Houff, Kathy Louttit, Alan Scheufler, Tracy Scott, Maria Shurik, Deb Watkins, and Rev. Heidi Welch.



PERSONAL GROWTH AND WELLNESS

We are each given unique spiritual gifts that allow us to find our place in God's community of faith. As we employ these gifts in daily living, we find fulfillment and purpose in our relationship with God and with others. Reach out to Director of Education, Jenny Gee, to learn more - education@brecksvilleumc.com.



Spiritual Direction

Are you longing for a deeper connection with God or seeking clarity about where God is leading you? Spiritual direction offers a safe, sacred space for prayerful conversation. A spiritual director is a trained, compassionate listener who will walk alongside you on your journey—helping you notice God's presence and activity in your everyday life, and inviting you to reflect on your own responses. This ministry nurtures your prayer life, supports you through seasons of discernment, and encourages you to live fully into your calling as a follower of Jesus.



Small Groups

Small Groups can help us dive deep into mature discipleship together, and help us learn to know and care for one another with vulnerability, commitment, and openness. Host training took place in the fall of 2025 and small groups are forming now. Ready to connect? Shannon Kantorowski is leading the way.

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

Craniosacral Therapy & Supportive Group Healing Circles - Sunday, January 25 at 6 pm

Tina Mihalek will teach us how gentle, hands-on techniques and shared healing spaces can calm the nervous system, reduce stress, and promote resilience.

Pelvic Floor Health - Sunday, February 22 at 6 pm

With Belle Panza from Cleveland Pelvic Wellness Center. 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 - Sunday, March 22 at 6 pm

Tori Whitehair, a Rehabilitation Physician with MetroHealth will join us. Explore how yoga can increase flexibility, balance, and peace of mind through mindful movement and breath.

Sign up: BUMCLinks.com ● Connect: Hello@Brecksvilleumc.com ● Call: 440-526-8938



SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION

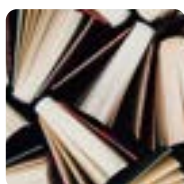
Adult & Teen Faith Formation Groups

Our classes are intergenerational and foster mutual spiritual support, accountability, and growth in discipleship. These groups provide encouragement, a place for open discussion about faith, and a structure for watching over one another in love, ensuring no one is lost in the community and promoting the practice of holiness.



Walking with the Mystics - *Sundays at 9:30 in the Chapel.*

This six-week series explores the wisdom of some of the church's most inspiring mystics — from the Desert Mothers and Fathers to Julian of Norwich, Hildegard of Bingen, Meister Eckhart, Teresa of Ávila, and Howard Thurman. Whether you are new to contemplative prayer or looking to deepen your spiritual rhythm, this class offers quiet time, meaningful reflection, and practical ways to bring ancient wisdom into everyday life. Come curious, come seeking, come ready to experience the rich spiritual heritage of the mystics.



Monday Book Study *Monday evenings at 7 pm in the Parlor*

Fully Alive by Elizabeth Oldfield. Holy Hell by Derek Kubit, Better Ways to Read the Bible by Zach Lambert. What will our next book be? Check back to find out which though provoking title will guide our discussions next!



Podcast Class *Sundays at 9:30*

What might we discover when we explore our big questions through the lens of faith? Join this class as we listen to a selected podcast during the week, then gather to reflect, question, and seek where God might be leading us.



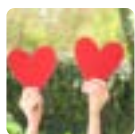
Lectio Divina *Mondays at 10:30 am in the Chapel*

Each week, we rest with one passage of scripture—slowing down enough to truly listen. Through prayer and guided reflection, we'll open our minds to God and engage our holy imagination, picturing ourselves within these sacred stories. This gentle practice helps scripture come alive and invites us into a more personal, transformative encounter with God.



Sacred Sound Bath Experience *2026 dates TBD*

The gentle, layered sounds of crystal singing bowls, rainsticks, Koshi chimes, an ocean drum, and a resonant gong invite your body to relax, your mind to quiet, and your spirit to open to God's peace. It's a time of centering prayer through sound, creating space for renewal and deep spiritual rest.



The Membership Journey

The Christian faith was never intended to be a solo journey. Church membership is an expression of our faith in God, our desire to live as disciples of Jesus Christ, and commitment to join with our church community to keep the vows made at baptism. How are you living out your promises to faithfully participate in the life and ministries of our local congregation through our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness? Start the membership journey and learn what it means to be a United Methodist and a member of Brecksville United Methodist Church.

Basic Beliefs -

A 5-week class focused on exploring the roots of the Methodist movement. Learn the amazing history of The UMC, including the challenges we've had along the way.

Membership Class -

This 3-week class builds on what you learned in Basic Beliefs, and focuses on what it means for you to be an active member of this local church, Brecksville UMC. This class will be spent helping you to learn about your God-given gifts, and how you can use those gifts to glorify God through Brecksville United Methodist Church.

Interested in starting this journey? Reach out to Pastor Heidi to learn more - heidi@brecksvilleumc.com

Chrysalis and Walk to Emmaus

Western Reserve Emmaus and NEO Chrysalis is committed to serving our community and sharing the love of Christ. Everyone is welcome in a space that strives to be safe and inclusive for all people. Learn more: wreneoc.org



Chrysalis is an annual three day experience of spiritual renewal designed for high school youth ages 15 to 18 from any Christian denomination. Young people are making major decisions about religion, lifestyle, vocation and lifelong relationships. Chrysalis challenges them to grow in mind, body, spirit and faith. Boys' Flight is January 17-19 2026, and the Girls' Flight is February 14-16 2026.



The Walk to Emmaus develops Christian disciples and leaders by inspiring, challenging, and equipping active adult church members for Christian action in their homes, churches, workplaces, and communities. It also benefits less active members who are seeking to renew a relationship with God, grow spiritually, or discover firmer foundations for their lives. This annual retreat happens in the fall.

SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION through self guided study

There are so many great resources for exploring and strengthening your faith journey. Here are just a few of them. If you have an area of interest not covered in this guide, please reach out to Pastor Heidi for ideas about where to look.



Discipleship Ministries E-Learning Courses

Receive high-quality information that will enrich your faith life! Check out a full list of online course offerings through the UMC, including some that offer Continuing Education Units. Check out current offerings here: <https://discipleship-ministries.teachable.com/>



Devotionals

For daily readings and prompts for spiritual reflection, pick up a copy of “The Upper Room” (from the display in the church lobby) or one of our seasonal devotionals (for Lent or Advent).



Amplify Media - Videos for Self Guided Learning

This streaming service delivers high quality videos with an emphasis on Wesleyan perspectives for digital discipleship - that you can enjoy anytime, anywhere. Our congregation has a subscription. Please email Jenny@BrecksvilleUMC.com for the details!

BookShop.org - Books for Self Guided Learning

Visit our shop for recommendations on books for your spiritual growth - with curated lists of books on Methodism, Missions, Grief and more. BUMC earns a commission from books sold through the BookShop platform, but it's also a great place to learn about books to request from the library, your favorite local bookstore or a friend's collection.



Check it out at Bookshop.org/shop/BrecksvilleUMC

There's a display in the church Parlor with staff reading recommendations!



SCAN



FIND IT AT BUMCLINKS.COM

All of our links, sign ups, and downloads are in one place! Use your phone camera to scan the QR code or visit www.BUMCLinks.com



United
Women
in Faith

Brecksville United Women in Faith

The First Thursday of the Month in the Parlor

9:30 Refreshments & Community. 10 am Program & Meeting

Driven by God's love and united in sisterhood, United Women in Faith work to improve the lives of women, children and youth. Get connected with one of our circles!

Upcoming Events

The United Women in Faith meet in the Parlor on the first Thursday of each month. Come for refreshments and conversation at 9:30 and stay for a presentation at 10. A business meeting follows the presentation. Watch for details in the Bulletin and newsletters. Subscribe to our mailing list! UWF@BrecksvilleUMC.com

- February 5 - We'll learn about the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad
- March 5 - Kate Schlademan from the Learned Owl Book Store
- April 2 - Bobel's talk on Beaver Boardwalk
- May 7 - Richard Wiskins on Euclid Beach History
- June 4 - Field Trip

Asbury Bremeth Circle - *Second Thursday of the Month.*

Women of faith gather for meaningful conversation (bring your own beverage) at 9:30 then begin our study with Jenny Gee at 10.

Radicle Methodism

Join your UWF friends for meaningful conversation, new insights, and a renewed appreciation for the living tradition we share. Together, we'll explore the roots of our story, reflect on what they reveal about our faith today, and imagine how they can guide us into the future God is calling us toward. Everyone is welcome—meet us in the Parlor and bring your own coffee or tea!

Eve Circle

Usually The Second Tuesday of the Month at 6:30 pm

This service-oriented group of women meets fall through spring for hands-on projects. "We'd love for you to be part of it and are always open to new ideas and activities!" Contact Lynn Hobzek at kezboh@aol.com

- We'll be delivering a little TLC to those who can't get out and about in January.
- In February, we're sending "thinking of you" cards to college students.
- We are considering making hygiene bags to distribute to people in need in the spring.
- In May we will do a collection to be determined.



SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION for children

We are unabashedly authentic in our lifelong quest to grow with God and learn with one another, with age appropriate opportunities for all ages. Our early childhood education programs are designed to meet children where they are and to develop “sticky faith” that will give kids a foundation for lifelong growth with God. Caring teachers and helpers make learning fun, with plenty of opportunities to develop lasting friendships.



The Wiggle Room *Sunday mornings from 8:30 am to Noon*

Kids are always welcome in our worship spaces, but The Wiggle Room is available as another option! Staffed from 8 am until noon on Sundays, it's a safe space for our little ones, infants and up. Each adult is background checked and mindful of allergies and other needs.



Do Something Sunday *Sunday mornings at 9:30 am. Grades 1 - 6.*

A wonderful way for children to see how God's love can be shared through acts of service in all corners of our community and experience faith in action, living into our Methodist roots of service and love for neighbor. Can you help inspire the next projects? If you're involved in service project and think kids could join in, please reach out to Jenny@BrecksvilleUMC.com

This class began in the fall of 2025. So far, our kids have:

- Sorted frozen food for the Frozen Food Ministry
- Hosted the table for Veterans' Christmas Cards
- Organized Christmas books for the children's cart
- Helped put up the Giving Trees in the Fellowship Hall
- Packed activity bags for Veterans

Seedlings & Sprouts *After the Children's Moment of the 10:30 service*

Two wonderful ways for children to grow in faith and learn God's stories. Whichever path you choose, your child will experience God's love, engage with scripture, and build lasting friendships!



SEEDLINGS is a gentle, “old-school” style class perfect for younger children and anyone who enjoys a quieter setting. Children hear Bible stories, pray together, and enjoy simple, hands-on activities at an unhurried pace - discovering God's love in ways that are hands-on, heart-opening, and full of fun!



SPROUTS is a lively, rotation-style class designed for older kids with more independence; children must be in 1st grade or older to join Sprouts. We explore one Bible story every five or six weeks, digging deeper through science experiments, cooking, storytelling, videos, games, and art. We'll start the year with the story of the Wedding at Cana, discovering how Jesus' first miracle shows God's joy in celebration—and exploring fun, hands-on ways to bring that story to life!

SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS IN THE PARK 2026 - JULY 6 - 10. REGISTRATION OPENS IN APRIL!

Sign up: BUMCLinks.com ● Connect: Hello@Brecksvilleumc.com ● Call: 440-526-8938

STAY AND PLAY

FOR KIDS &
PARENTS OF
ALL AGES

OCCASIONAL SUNDAYS AT 11:30

CONNECTION, COFFEE & LAUGHTER IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

Parenting is busy. Exhausting. Overwhelming sometimes. And yet, you keep showing up for your kids — and that's something to celebrate! Many of our families are craving connection—not more structured programs, but real time together, where kids of all ages can be kids and parents can just breathe, chat, and share a laugh. That's why we're inviting 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. 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 understand what parenting today really feels like.
- Take a little breath for yourself in the middle of a busy day.

Stop by for a few minutes or stay as long as you like—let's enjoy some lighthearted family fun together!

JENNY [at] BRECKSVILLEUMC.COM

A SPACE
FOR
PARENTS,
TOO!



SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION FOR YOUTH

Youth Group *Weekly on Sundays from 5:30-7pm.*

Faith, food and fun is on the agenda for students in grades 6 through 12 on Sundays during the school year. Each week we'll do our check-in with each other while noshing on pizza. Then we'll have a conversation about one person from the book "Holy Troublemakers & Unconventional Saints" and do an activity/game. Parents will sign up to lead each week, and Jamie Schwendeman, Kim Petro, and Pastor Heidi will be around to lend support and make sure the kids know they're loved! Friends are always welcome! We meet on the front lawn or in the Youth Room. Sign up for the weekly youth news for updates and details - youth@brecksvilleumc.com! Want to volunteer? Contact Pastor Heidi!

BUMC Support Squad

Are you in grades 6 - 12? We want to celebrate YOU and all the amazing things you're doing outside of church. Are you on the Robotics Team? Debate? March in the band? Play a sport? Dance? Crew on the Cuyahoga? Let us know! We want to come support you and cheer you on. Your church family loves you and are so excited to see all the ways you are growing! Email Jenny at education@brecksvilleumc.com to tell us what you are up to this year and attach a schedule if possible. And don't worry. We promise not to embarrass you! Let us know if you'd like to hear loud cheers, or if a quiet supporting presence is what you need!

The Confirmation Journey - Begins in the fall

Confirmation is an opportunity for any student, grade 7 or above, to explore what it means to be United Methodist. Students learn what it means to be a Christian, and more specifically, a United Methodist, by digging into scripture, church history, prayer, spiritual development, theology, mission, and the structural connections of the UMC. This learning takes place on Sunday mornings, with individual mentors, during worship, on retreat, and in other avenues through the two-year process, which asks "Do I want to follow Jesus and choose to be a United Methodist?" Confirmation is a safe space for students to grow with God and one another. They can ask questions, explore with curiosity, and find a place in the world (and the church) where they know they can be their authentic selves. Ready to go on this journey? Reach out to Jenny Gee, Dir. of Education: Jenny@BrecksvilleUMC.com



GROWING WITH GOD

HONEST WORSHIP:

We invite everyone to participate in worship authentically and holistically; heart, mind, soul and body.



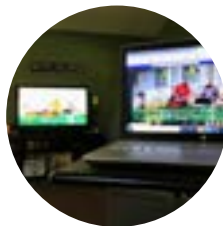
HONEST WORSHIP: Sundays at 8:30

Contemplative Worship: With a focus on achieving a direct, intimate, and experiential relationship with the Triune God through prayer and contemplation, this evolving worship experience features ancient practices of the early Christian Church. We worship in Fellowship Hall from October through spring. Worship on the Lawn returns after Easter.



HONEST WORSHIP: Sundays at 10:30

This energetic service, led by the Worship Band, includes an inspiring message and has additional options for kids - a Children's Moment during the service, and a special program for faith filled learning & fun (Seedlings & Sprouts) after the Children's Moment.



HONEST WORSHIP: Online

Worship live or later! Our services are streamed live to our website, Facebook, YouTube, and Boxcast - with real time chat on our Facebook page. Worship on your own schedule with our video archives. Prefer to take the message with you? We post a podcast every week of the scripture, sermon and prayer time. Listen on SoundCloud or wherever you get your podcasts.

Communion

Communion nourishes and sustains us on the journey. In The United Methodist Church, we observe an open table, which means all are welcome to participate, no matter your age or how long you have attended. The elements are gluten and alcohol free. Holy Communion is celebrated each week at the 8:30 service and on the first Sunday of the month at the 10:30 service.

Baptism

Through the sacrament of Baptism, we are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. We receive God's grace in a unique and special way, no matter how old we are or how long we've been worshipping God. Interested in baptism? Please reach out to Pastor Heidi!

HONEST WORSHIP: Worship Services this season



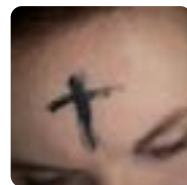
Better Ways to Read the Bible *Sermon series begins January 11*

Have you ever been hurt by harmful interpretations of Scripture? Or feel disconnected from Scripture? If so, our January worship series is for you! Using Zach Lambert's book, [Better Ways to Read the Bible](#), we will tackle these big struggles and reclaim the Bible's life-giving message. We'll dismantle three common lenses for reading the Bible that lead to harm, and then offer three new lenses that promote healing and wholeness. No matter your background, doubts or wounds, you're invited to engage with scripture with us beginning January 11.



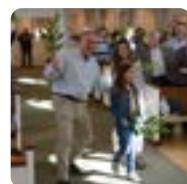
Tell Me Something Good *Lenten series begins February 18*

The good news should bring us back to our roots, back to what grounds us: loving our neighbor, caring for the vulnerable, pursuing justice and mercy, and resting in God's unending grace. This Lent, may the teachings of Jesus lead us forward. Let the good news ground us. And let that good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see, and taste what is good.



Ash Wednesday *February 18 at 7 pm*

We step into the season of Lent together with this special mid-week worship service. It's a time to slow down, reflect, pray, and receive ashes as we prepare our hearts for Easter. The good news is - all are invited.



Palm Sunday - March 29. Palm Processional at the 10:30 Service.

Holy Week is a time of remembrance for Christians, marking the events leading up to Easter Sunday. We begin with a processional of palms and shout of "Hosanna in the Highest!" The good news is - inspiring us to act!



Maundy Thursday - April 2 at 7 pm

In his final hours, Jesus shares a final meal with his closest friends and those who will soon betray him. We remember his command to love one another in this service. The good news is - even Judas gets his feet washed.



Good Friday - April 3 at 7 pm

A solemn service remembering the crucifixion of Jesus and his death at Calvary. The good news is - revealed in non-violence.



Easter Sunday - April 5

- Sunrise Service at 7 am - we greet the dawn on the front lawn.
- Traditional Service at 9 am - with Easter brass, choir and organ.
- Easter Service at 11 am - with worship band.

GROWING YOUR GIFTS THROUGH SERVICE

We show God's love for others by meeting the needs of the whole person. We create safe space to grow with God and one another by bearing God's fruit in service.



Acolytes

Kids 3rd grade or older are invited to help create a worshipful space by bringing the light of Christ into the Sanctuary as the 10:30 Worship Service begins. Is your child ready to be part of worship in this way? Reach out to Jenny!



Alternative Revenue Team

The costs for ministry and our church income don't always match up. This team dreams up ways to close the budget gap to help make God sized dreams for our church possible. The pumpkin patch, flea and cookbook are examples.



Audio & Visual Technology

Help produce worship services for people in the building and those joining us online. Run the cameras, mix the sound, or operate the worship slides with the team in the balcony. It's a special way to create space to grow with God!



Bike Ministry - *Getting Spokes to Folks since 2015*

We accept donations of bicycles year round, and are always in need of helping hands to clean, repair, and make them road ready. On Bike Fix It Days, all are invited to gather on Saturday mornings from 9 - 12: Jan 24, Feb 21, Mar 21.



Chippewa Craft Days

Spending time in community with our neighbors at Horizon Chippewa Place, a senior living apartment building, is one way we share God's love. In 2026, we want to expand from 4 times to six times per year. Craft ideas are welcome!



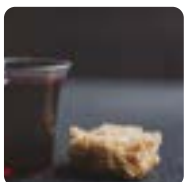
Church Closers

Our church is busy, with evening meetings six days a week. Closers commit to securing the church after the last meeting each night for one week, on a five to eight week rotation (depending on how many closers we have!)



Church Property Care Team

Ministry is messy and our church building is well-used! This team is tasked with looking ahead and planning the projects that keep our building looking fantastic, allowing our Facility Managers focus on the everyday maintenance and upkeep.



Communion Stewards

From cutting the bread and pouring the juice to washing communion glasses after the service, preparation of communion elements is holy work that can be done alone, as a family or with a friend. Reach out to Pastor Heidi to help.



Congregational Care Team

Pastor Heidi leads this team in making regular visits to those in need of prayer and encouragement. If you can help make calls, send cards, or visit people, your caring would be a gift well received!



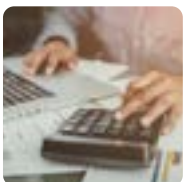
Counters

Teams of two or more serve on a rotating basis, Sunday mornings, to count, record, and deposit the weekly offering. (To serve as a counter, you must be a member of the church.)



Deeds of Mercy

We maintain a fund to assist people in our community who have fallen on hard times, because sometimes \$25 for groceries makes a world of difference. Support this ministry with your monetary donations and prayers.



Finance Teams

We are honored when people give their financial gifts to BUMC. The Stewardship Team, Budget Planning Team, and Audit Team help keep us accountable to using each gift in a way that helps us live into our mission and glorify God!



Frozen Food Distribution Ministry

In partnership with Strongsville UMC and the Cleveland Food Network, we take surplus frozen food from area restaurants and deliver it to feeding ministries. Help a hungry neighbor and keep good delicious food out of the landfill!



Funeral Reception Team

Being there for one another in times of grief is one of the greatest gifts we can share. Serve as a funeral service greeter/welcome team, or by helping set up, serve, or clean up after funeral receptions.



Gophers!

Born of the pandemic, the gopher team is at the ready to activate at a moment's notice make home deliveries to people in need when the need arises. Have a car and a willing heart? You can be a gopher!



Greater Cleveland Congregations

Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC) is a nonpartisan, multi-racial, multi-faith group of people working together to build power for social justice. GCC unites people from across Cuyahoga County to tackle issues and take actions that strengthen our communities. Learn more at BUMCLinks.com



Grounds Maintenance Team

Adopt-A-Bed, Mowing Teams, Yard Clean up days and more. Wonderful folks volunteer their time to care for our church grounds, creating safe and welcoming space for worship, reflection, and community building on the Square.

Sign up: BUMCLinks.com ● Connect: Hello@Brecksvilleumc.com ● Call: 440-526-8938



Habitat for Humanity Faith Build

Our church is a founding partner of this initiative which brings together communities of faith to help build a home with a partner family each year, creating stability for a family and health and vitality for a CLE community. Be a part of it!



Lay Servant Ministries

“Laity” means all the people of God. If you are feeling called to witness, lead, and have your service inspire others to a deeper commitment to Christ and more effective discipleship, reach out to Pastor Heidi to learn about Lay Servant training in our conference.



Liturgists

Add your voice to a worship service as a liturgist, reading prepared passages of scripture and prayers, and leading the congregation in responsive readings. Reach out to Pastor Heidi to learn more.



Kids' Book Bank - Second Saturday, odd months (Jan, March, etc.)

The mission of the Cleveland Kids' Book Bank is to foster literacy and a love of reading by distributing free books to children. The Aubles will lead a team downtown caravanning from the church from 9 am - 12 pm. Ages 13+. Sign up to serve at BUMCLinks.com



Meal Train

A new baby is born, an accident knocks you off your feet, a surgery is scheduled - sometimes help with a meal is a tremendous gift! Sign up to be part of the team delivering meals for people in need.



Monthly Donation Drives

We partner with a different non-profit each month of the year, collecting items to fill their most immediate needs. Learn about this month's organization and bring your donations to the first floor bin.



Music

Has God graced you with the gift of music? Consider sharing that gift in worship. Vocalists and instrumentalists are always needed in the choir, the worship band, and to share special music during worship services & funerals.



Nehemiah Mission - Bread on Bridge

This United Methodist Mission located at W 65th and Bridge Avenue, serves all corners of Cleveland. We prepare a community meal there on the third Tuesday of every other month.



Newsletter Team

It's a production party! We get together once a month to stuff, fold, stick, and sort about 300 printed newsletters (or seasonal program guides like this one) - and mail them out into the world.

Sign up: BUMCLinks.com ● Connect: Hello@Brecksvilleumc.com ● Call: 440-526-8938

GROWING WITH OTHERS THROUGH DETERMINED SERVICE



Online Host

Every Sunday, people join us in worship from all over the United States – and the world! You can help these people know that they are part of our community by engaging with them as an online host. It's a real blessing!



Pearl Road Dinners (new location!) - January 26 and March 22, 2026

We partner with Ridge Road UCC to serve dinner at The Wholeness Project (3389 Fulton Ave) while Pearl Road undergoes significant repairs. We need 8 - 9 volunteers to help prepare and serve the meal. Details at BUMCLinks.com.



Pull Together for the House!

Saving your aluminum pull tabs is an easy way to support families being served by Ronald McDonald House NEO. Bring them to the donation bin in the coat room and the Harpers will deliver to RMH!



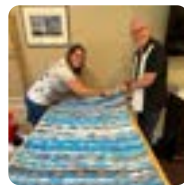
Stitch'n'Time - *third Tuesday of the month at 10 am*

This group of talented people who knit and crochet meet monthly to make prayer shawls, prayer blankets, hats, mittens and gloves for people in need. All abilities welcome!



Sew4Good - *third Tuesday of each month from 5 - 9 pm*

This group of crafters dreams up ways to serve others through their creative talents. If you are a sewist of any level, or can iron or use a pair of scissors, you are encouraged to be part of it!



Sleeping Mat Ministry

We turn disposable plastic grocery bags into sleeping mats providing a protective barrier between those who live outdoors and the cold hard ground. Help is always needed - folding & cutting bags, making "plarn" and weaving.



Welcome Team

Have you ever walked into a gathering and no one said "Hello! Good to see you?" That's a terrible feeling, isn't it? It should never happen at church. Join the Welcome Team and share that warm Sunday-morning-feeling with all!



Worship Arts Team

Help bring the message to life through the medium of the visual arts - from flowers to banners to paraments and visual images. This team is forming now!



COURAGEOUS INCLUSION

We recognize that God made all creation and saw that it was good. As a diverse people of God who bring special gifts and evidences of God's grace to the unity of the Church and to society, we are called to be faithful to the example of Jesus' ministry to all.

Inclusion is a Spiritual Practice

Jesus' teaching and example challenge us to be inclusive in practical ways. In everyday life, we are called to reach past people's physical and mental struggles, gender, and ethnicity so that we may really see one another as beloved children of God. Here are a few examples of opportunities to strengthen your skills for empathy and inclusion.



Sensory Sensitivity Training

Develop your empathy muscles with this annual training from Kulture City. Through this free, online, and self-paced study, you will learn what the world might feel like to some of your siblings, and learn how you can create a welcoming space for those on the autism spectrum, those with brain injury, PTSD and more.



Commemorate Martin Luther King Day - Monday, January 19

Let us observe Martin Luther King Jr. Day by honoring King's legacy of justice, equality, and racial reconciliation. The East Ohio Conference will soon share ways we can engage in community service (a "Day On, Not Off") and recommit to building the beloved community through anti-racism work, guided by our faith principles. Do you have ideas for our community? Reach out to Pastor Heidi.



Night to Shine - February 13, 2026

Strongsville UMC partners with Bay Presbyterian Church each year to host Night to Shine, a prom for people with special needs, which takes place the Friday before Valentine's Day. This year's event is at LaCentre in Westlake. Volunteers of all abilities needed! Sign up at BUMCLinks.com



Reconciling Anniversary & Pride Month

We want to shout it from the rooftops - God loves YOU just as you are! In May 2011, our church set out our intention to create a welcoming space for all of God's children. We live that out every day, but Pride Month is a unique opportunity to reach out into the community. There are many ways to be part of it. Reach out to Pastor Heidi or the office to learn more.



Care & Prayer Mail is a weekly opportunity to reach out in love to another human being. A list is published in our newsletter each month. Take a moment once a week to lift up a prayer and send a note, letting the person know you are thinking of and praying for them!

JOYFUL GATHERING

opportunities for connection



Volunteer Appreciation Sunday - February 2026

Our volunteers are the heart and soul of our church—they greet us with smiles, organize our ministries, lend a hand wherever it's needed, and make our community a brighter, more welcoming place. It's time to celebrate them!

Join us for a Volunteer Appreciation Pancake Breakfast, where pancakes are flipped, coffee flows, and gratitude fills the room. Whether you've served as a volunteer yourself, want to learn about opportunities, or simply want to show thanks to those who keep our church running smoothly, this breakfast is for you.

Come for the food, stay for the fellowship, and let's give a hearty round of applause (and syrup!) to the amazing volunteers who make our church feel like home. Everyone is welcome!



Game Night! - Friday, February 20 from 6 - 8 pm

Joyfully gather with your church friends to play a variety of board games from the old classics to some new ones you may not even know about yet. This event is for young and young at heart, individuals and family groups. Everyone is invited and encouraged to join the fun!



Dawnbreakers Breakfast Group - Wednesday Mornings

This group gets up with the dawn to enjoy breakfast, a devotional and conversation. They meet in Fellowship Hall or at the Brecksville Panera Bread. Doug & Gail Huth help keep things organized. Reach out to the church office for contact information!



Sunday Morning Joyful Gathering

The Parlor is a space for connection and friendship, a casual gathering space between services on Sunday mornings. Stop by before or after class or worship, or spend the whole hour there with friends.



Community Connection - Save these dates! More info to come...

Brecksville Home Days - Typically the third weekend in June.

Brecksville Flea @BUMC - First Saturday in August.

Pumpkin Patch - Fall 2026



Fall Kick Off- (The Second Sunday of September) at 11:30

We celebrate Brecksville UMC's birthday and the start of a new program year with a joyful gathering. Join us for good food, a bounce house, lawn games, friendship, and fun! Bring your friends and family!

Church Staff - Office: 440-526-8938 - Text: 833-556-1171



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Resources for the journey:

- Our Sunday Bulletin announcements and updates for the week ahead. Pick up a copy at church or download at BUMCLinks.com
- On Thursdays, we email "The Sunday Blast" with links to Sunday's scripture, bulletins and action steps. Email office@brecksvilleumc.com to subscribe!
- On the fourth Friday of each month, we publish a long-form newsletter, The Good Word. Subscribe for a mailed or emailed version (or both) or pick up a copy at church. melanie@brecksvilleumc.com
- Explore our church website to view the church calendar and learn more about ALL THE THINGS: www.brecksvilleumc.com
- Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube @BrecksvilleUMC

Visit BUMCLinks.com for all of our links in one place!



Our Welcoming Statement

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.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP



What action will you take after reading this Trail Guide? Will you sign up for a class? Attend a worship service? Lend a hand in a new way? Tell us about it and we will donate \$5 to the mission you choose below! Complete this form and return it to the office, or visit BUMCLinks.com to complete online.

Your Name: _____

Email or Phone: _____

What's your next step? _____



Please donate \$5 to:

- ☐ BUMC Bike Ministry
☐ Nehemiah Mission



When we give to God through Brecksville UMC, we are opening our hearts as well as our wallets and saying, **"Yes, I want to be part of creating a safe space where people can come as their perfectly imperfect selves and be showered with God's unconditional love."**



Find us @BrecksvilleUMC

Subscribe to our YouTube Channel

www.youtube.com/@BrecksvilleUMC

____ Yes, I want to be part of Brecksville UMC's life changing work.
Enclosed is my/our tax deductible gift of \$____.

Name/s (Please print): _____

Address: _____

Email/Cell Phone: _____

Thank you!

Return to:

Brecksville United Methodist Church, 65 Public Square
Brecksville OH 44141



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onrealm.org/BrecksvilleMethodist/give/now
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