

@BrecksvilleUMC

THE GOOD WORD

September 2026

**Bible Sunday***September 20 at 10:30 AM*

One of our cherished traditions at Brecksville UMC is presenting Bibles to our young people as they grow in their faith. On Sunday, September 20, we will gift Bibles to our third graders (plus any older child who hasn't received one) and our incoming first-year Confirmation students.

There is something special about having a Bible that is truly your own—a book to write in, wonder over, and return to through every season of life. For our Confirmands, it serves as a foundational companion as they begin asking big questions and exploring what they believe.

If you'd like your child to receive a Bible, or if you aren't sure if they've received one before, please let us know! We want to make sure every child is included.

- Third Graders & Older Kids: Contact Jenny at jenny@brecksvilleumc.com
- Confirmands: Contact Shannon at shannon@brecksvilleumc.com

An Exciting Month at Brecksville UMC!

God is doing something vibrant in our community this fall! In addition to worship services and new classes, there are four major events you won't want to miss.

**Fall Kick-Off & Potluck | Sun, Sept 13**

Good food, bounce house, games, karaoke, and our annual church photo! Bring a dish and celebrate a new season together. One service at 10:30 – the party begins at 11:45!

**Community Big Sing | Sat, Sept 19**

Canadian Singer-Songwriter Luke Wallace's concert focused on climate justice and song. Be part of the pop-up choir (rehearsal at 10 am) or just come for the concert at 3 pm.

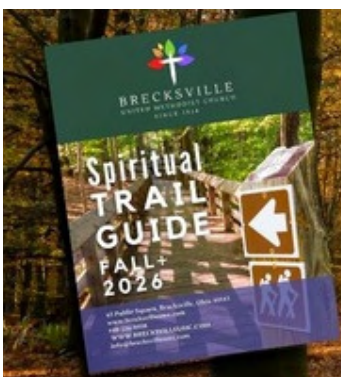
**Gospel of Mary Magdalene | Wed, 9/23**

A one night only dramatic reading of this short gospel and a reflection exploring scripture, tradition, and faith in the Chapel at 7 pm.

**Night of Worship & Prayer | Wed, 9/30**

An evening worship gathering to center our hearts as we kick off our upcoming campaign and imagine the future together.

For sign-ups, and details, visit BUMCLinks.com

**Discover your next step on the trail.**

Wondering how to connect, grow, or serve this season? The Fall edition of our Spiritual Trail Guide is here! Think of it as your complete map to life at church—packed with every worship service, class, serving opportunity, and special event happening through the season. Whether you're looking for honest worship, lifelong learning, determined service, courageous inclusion, or joyful gathering, there's a place for you on the trail. **Scan the QR code to download your digital copy, or pick up a printed guide at church today!**



CREATING SAFE SPACES TO GROW WITH GOD AND ONE ANOTHER

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We're Getting a New Roof!



It's no secret that our church's roof has reached the end of its life. (Just look at the ceiling in Room 301 or some of the fourth floor rooms for proof!) So it is extremely exciting to announce that a roofing contractor has been selected, and they are tentatively scheduled to begin work in the middle to end of September.

I want to thank the small group of individuals from our Vision Campaign team that have been working very hard meeting with roofing contractors, getting quotes, and discerning the best roofing material— thank you, Craig Kotnik, Jeff Hastings, Ric Lesinski, and Alan Scheufler! They did a wonderful job building off the work our Trustees began years ago in order to make the new roof a reality— thank you, Trustees! Now, we just wait for all the shingles to be made.

You may be wondering, “But how can we afford a new roof, Pastor Heidi?! We haven't even started the Vision Campaign!”

The answer is one of the most beautiful things about being part of a church community: in a similar way to how our Vision Campaign team built on the work of Trustees, we are able to take this next step because of the generosity of people who invested in the ministry of BUMC years and decades ago.

After much prayer and discernment, our Gifts & Memorials Committee has made a \$200,000 seed gift toward our \$1.25 million Vision Campaign.

The Gifts & Memorials Fund was established in 1964 as a way for people to honor or memorialize loved ones through monetary gifts to the church. Over the years, generous people have continued to contribute to the fund, and those gifts have been wisely invested. Today, the fund is worth roughly \$1 million. Think about that for a moment. Someone gave a gift to BUMC more than 60 years ago, having no idea what this church would look like in 2026—who would worship here, what ministries would exist, or what challenges we would face. But they believed that BUMC was worth investing in. And now, their generosity is helping us care for this building and the ministry that happens inside it. What an incredible legacy!

The Gift & Memorial Fund's guidelines call for its principal to remain invested, with only the realized income available for distribution. The \$200,000 seed gift represents a substantial commitment from G&M. But after careful consideration, the committee determined that it strikes an important balance: honoring the generosity of those who established and contributed to the fund, meeting an urgent need that benefits the entire congregation, and preserving G&M as a resource for the future.

What we don't want to do is use the Gifts & Memorials Fund as simply a savings account the church can draw from whenever we have a large expense. We want to honor the generosity of the people who gave these legacy gifts by making sure G&M remains strong for future generations.

We are incredibly grateful for the people who came before us. They invested in BUMC without knowing exactly what their gifts would make possible. They simply trusted that this church would continue to be a place where people encounter God, grow in faith, find community, and serve others. Now it is our turn.

Continues on next page...



Putting Vision Into Action

Alan Scheufler, Leadership Board

What an exciting time at BUMC! People are returning with great vacation stories to tell, Fall Kickoff Sunday is Sept 13th, new people continue to join us, children's and youth ministries are growing, ministries and programs are increasing, and our Vision Campaign is about to start. Feel the energy!

I am on both the Leadership Board and the Vision Campaign Team. I want to share what I see from that perspective. The Vision Campaign Team has been hard at work on how we can improve our terrific church building to support both our Mission: ***Creating Safe Spaces To Grow With God And One Another***, and our Vision ***to saturate our community with connection and belonging... on the square and everywhere***. Each decision and recommendation by the Team to the Leadership Board is guided by how it might further the Mission and Vision.

A capital campaign consulting firm has been hired, architect and engineering teams will soon be interviewed, possibilities and dreams are being evaluated, and some critical work will start in the foreseeable future.

But just looking at things the way we always have may limit what God can accomplish through us. The Vision Campaign Team has received valuable insight from Nick Rajkovich, who grew up in and loves our church, and is now an Architecture and Planning Professor at University of Buffalo. Nick and Team members have walked the church several times, and Nick has really helped inspire new ways of looking at possibilities and potential solutions.

How we use our building is far different today than when the building was constructed in the 1950's, or even just 10 years ago. Effective space utilization for current needs and future possibilities is being evaluated to see if there are better ways to serve our Church Family and the community, and better live into our Mission and Vision.

As for immediate "must do" work, our roof is deteriorating, badly. We incurred further water damage during last winter's harsh snow and ice. (just look at Room 301's ceiling). Three commercial roofing contractors were interviewed. We selected Absolute Roofing, which has

Our 2026 Leadership Board - Kathy Louttit (chair), Brian Bendlak, Brenda Calovini, Matt Gabor, Michael Houff, Alan Scheufler, Tracy Scott, Maria Shurik, Deb Watkins, Rev. Heidi Welch.

LEADERSHIP BOARD & MORE



extensive experience working on churches. Our current roof is a (now very brittle) man-made slate-look material. A comparable product would cost 2 to 3 times our ultimate choice. We instead selected a heavy-duty, commercial grade asphalt shingle (3 layers thick) with a slate-look appearance. It literally matches the color of our existing roof, and should be visually pleasing.

The roofing materials have been ordered, and if all goes well the new roof may be installed yet this fall! Once work is started, weather permitting, it should take about 2 weeks to finish.

We all will soon hear more in Sunday Services, meetings and materials about the Vision Campaign. We all will have the opportunity to help move our Church Building into yet better ways to meet our Congregation's needs. Together, we can successfully fund and turn our building into a springboard to put our Mission and Vision into action in our community and the world. Will you join us?

We're Getting a New Roof! Continued

In October, we will officially kick off our \$1.25 million Vision Campaign. The new roof is the first tangible reminder of what we are trying to do with that campaign: not simply maintain what we have, but invest in the future God is calling us toward. Just as the saints who came before us helped make sure there would be a church here for us, now we have the opportunity to ask ourselves, ***What might we make possible for the people who will come after us?*** That is the invitation of the Vision Campaign.

As we watch those new shingles go up this fall, I hope we will celebrate—not only a new roof, but the remarkable generosity of the people who made it possible. Their story is now part of our story. And together, we get to decide what story we will leave for those who come next.

Want to know more about the Gifts & Memorials Fund? Visit brecksvilleumc.com/gifts-and-memorials/

Pastor Heidi

Rev. Heidi Welch

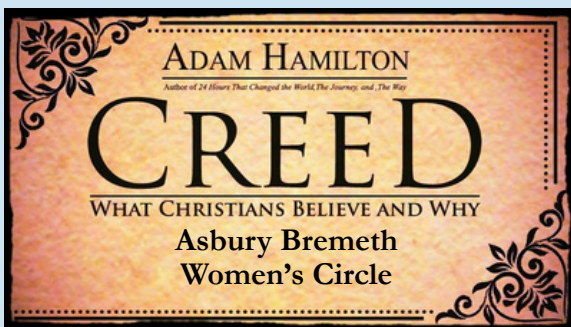
Small Groups

Our small groups are up and running, and several new ones are launching this fall.

Current groups:

- Julie Evonna: Wed, 10 am on Zoom
- Becky Bendlak: Thursdays at 7 pm in the Youth Room
- Tina Mihalek: Sundays at 5:30 in Room 201

New groups launching this fall: details coming soon. Watch your email and the weekly bulletin! Here's the thing to know: small groups are perpetually open and ongoing. There's no semester, no closed enrollment, no wrong time to start. If you're ready in October, join in October. Can't make it happen till February? Join us then! Small groups are where we actually get into each other's lives, and where growing with God happens right alongside growing with one another. ***Transformation, connection, love, real relationship. Come join us!***



The Apostles' Creed—words many of us have said countless times, but may not have stopped to consider deeply. Why do we say the words we do? What does it mean to live out those beliefs? Come take a closer look at the faith statements we share, the questions they raise, and how they might shape the way we live. We'll use Adam Hamilton's ***Creed*** as our guide, combining video sessions with conversation and discussion. Come ready to explore, question, reflect, and perhaps see some very familiar words in a whole new way. *Meets the second Thursday of the month through May. Begins September 10.*

Fellowship at 9:30 am/program at 10 am



Walking Our Neighborhood in Prayer

What happens when we slow down and really pay attention to the place where we live?

This fall, we're inviting our church community to try Lectio Vicinitas—a practice of prayerfully walking through our neighborhoods, paying attention to the people, places, beauty, needs, and surprises we encounter along the way. Lectio Vicinitas means something like “reading the neighborhood.” Just as we might prayerfully read a passage of Scripture, we can learn to prayerfully “read” the places around us.

For three Sundays in September, we'll gather after worship and walk together through the neighborhood surrounding the church. We'll walk with open eyes and open hearts, noticing what we might normally pass by. When we return, we'll sit together for conversation and prayer, sharing what we saw, what surprised us, and what we wonder God might be inviting us to notice.

Our church neighborhood walks:

- September 13 at 12:30 p.m.
- September 20 at 11:30 a.m.
- September 27 at 11:30 a.m.

You don't have to join us at church to participate. In fact, we hope you'll try Lectio Vicinitas right where you live. Take a walk through your own neighborhood sometime during these weeks. Notice the people, homes, businesses, gathering places, signs of joy, signs of struggle, and places that make you curious. Then come share what you noticed with us.

Beginning September 13, we'll also have a Lectio Vicinitas table in the Parlor at 9:30 a.m., with conversation prompts and information about the practice. It will be a place to learn more, connect with others who are participating, and share what you're discovering.

You don't need to be a walker, a theologian, or an experienced pray-er. You just need to be willing to notice. Sometimes God is already speaking through the places we walk every day—we simply need to slow down enough to listen.

Sunday morning classes begin on September 20 - See you at 9:30?

Faith is not one giant dramatic leap. Faith is a series of committed steps: a first Sunday, joining a group, serving for the first time, participating in a class. Each one matters! What's your next step?

Chapter Conversations

Practicing the Way - Finding God in the Ordinary

What if the most ordinary moments of our day could become opportunities to encounter God?

This fall, our Adult Education class will explore the idea that spiritual growth isn't reserved for retreats, mountaintops, or quiet sanctuaries. Instead, we'll discover how everyday rhythms—welcoming others, paying attention, resting, listening, expressing gratitude, offering forgiveness, serving our neighbors, and more—can become meaningful spiritual practices that shape our lives.

Together we'll ask questions like: What makes an ordinary action a spiritual practice? How do we become more aware of God's presence in our daily routines? What small, intentional habits can help us live with greater peace, compassion, and purpose?

Each week will include Scripture, conversation, reflection, and a simple practice to try during the week ahead. Whether you're new to spiritual practices or have been nurturing your faith for years, this series offers an opportunity to slow down, notice God's presence, and discover that ordinary life itself can become sacred.

Come as you are. Bring your questions, your experiences, and your curiosity as we practice the way together.

Let's Talk: Podcast Class

Looking for a different way to listen, wonder and discuss? Join us Sundays at 9:30 am in room 301 for our Podcast Class. Each week, we'll listen to a podcast episode during the week that connects in some way with the upcoming Sunday sermon. Then we'll gather on Sunday morning to talk about what we heard, share our reactions and questions, and explore how the conversation connects with our faith and our lives.

You don't need to be a podcast expert—or even a particularly enthusiastic podcast listener! Just listen during the week, come curious, and join the conversation. There's no lecture and no right answer. It's simply a chance to listen, wonder, question, and learn together before or after worship. *Come for the podcast. Stay for the conversation. Leave with something new to think about.*



The Membership Journey

with Pastor Heidi

Are you ready for the next steps on the membership journey? Our membership classes will explore what it means to be a United Methodist and a member of Brecksville United Methodist Church. Complete the classes, then decide for yourself if membership is for you!

Basic Beliefs - Sundays at 9:30,
September 20 to October 18

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 -
October 25 - November 8

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.

Youth Group

Youth Group Every Sunday night, 5:30 - 7 pm

In the Youth Room on the fourth floor. Games, food, and real talk about life and faith. Bring a friend. Bring an appetite.



Senior High Discussion Group

First Wednesday of every month, starting September 2 at 7 pm in the Youth Room. Ages 15 to 19 (9th-12th grade-ish)

We're starting with tacos in September. And going forward...there will always be food, because OBVIOUSLY. But this is the space for bigger stakes and bigger conversations, the ones that don't fit into a Sunday night. We'll dig into hard questions, watch documentaries, take on real controversies, and talk about what we actually think. The ground rules will be simple: respect, love, open minds, open hearts. You don't have to have anything figured out. Just come curious.

Get the Spond App for Youth Updates

We're streamlining all youth schedules, weather alerts, and event sign-ups into Spond (a free mobile and web app). To protect student privacy, our group is private—contact Shannon for the group access code.

Youth Ministry: Heading Into the School Year

This past summer, we kept youth group going for the first time in a few years. The group was smaller, and that turned out to be a gift. I got to know these kids better: what makes them laugh, what they're carrying, what they think about the world, and I loved it!

As the school year begins, Sunday Night Youth group will keep being what it has been. A place for games and snacks and honest conversation about life. Kids need somewhere to unwind, get to know each other, and have fun.

I also want to take a look at another piece of the youth ministry puzzle: Every conversation I have with these students leaves me more convinced that we need their voices. *Right now.* Not once they're fully grown. They notice things the rest of us stopped noticing and see things in ways we don't. They ask questions we've gotten comfortable not asking. As they move toward maturity and purpose, I want youth group to be a place where that gets cultivated together, where they practice having something to say and find out that it matters here. ***This fall - that's what we'll endeavor to create. Come be part of it!***

Confirmation

In the United Methodist tradition, confirmation is the moment a young person claims for themselves the faith that was claimed for them at baptism. At Brecksville UMC, we embrace Confirmation as an opportunity for each student to learn about the Wesleyan tradition and the Bible, examine their experience of God, and determine for themselves if they will claim this faith as their own. It isn't a graduation. It's a beginning.

Our confirmation program runs as a two-year revolving process, which means students can join at either year in the cycle. Over two years we walk through the whole arc: Scripture, church history, our Wesleyan roots, what we believe and why, and what it looks like to actually live it. Then the cycle begins again. First class: Sunday, September 20 at 9:30 am in the Youth Room.



Project Feed Sunday, November 8 Sign-up Required

Sign up early, and then show up hungry to work!



Shannon Kantorowski
Youth Director
Shannon@BrecksvilleUMC.com

A Summer of Wonder: Summer Sprouts...So Far

Sundays during the 10:30 worship service - for ages pre-school to sixth grade...and up!

There is something wonderful about spending a summer paying attention. Each Sunday, our Summer Sprouts children have been heading outside to explore God's creation around our church—looking closely, listening carefully, getting our hands dirty, asking questions, and discovering that there is far more happening in our own backyard than we sometimes notice.

We began the summer as nature explorers, learning to slow down and notice the world around us. We hunted for bugs, listened for birds, and used our senses to discover tiny details we might otherwise miss. We became animal experts, learning about mammals, reptiles, amphibians, bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. We even became wildlife detectives, looking for the clues animals leave behind when they aren't around to say hello. We learned about habitats, what animals need to survive, and how wonderfully interconnected God's creation is. We've experimented with sunlight and shadows, planted seeds, created creatures of our own, made self-portraits, and spent time thinking about what makes each person and each living thing unique. Rainy Sundays haven't stopped us, either! We've brought our exploring indoors with stories, art, habitat-building, and activities that let us keep wondering even when the weather doesn't cooperate.

There is still more to come! We'll be exploring the wonders of water, watching the changing skies, discovering seeds and new life, and thinking together about what it means to care for the beautiful world God has entrusted to us. And, of course, we'll finish our summer with our much-anticipated creek walk, where we'll have the chance to put all that we've learned into practice as we explore, observe, splash, and celebrate.

Summer Sprouts has become a little community of its own—a place where a three-year-old and a twelve-year-old can stand side by side, both completely fascinated by a bug, a bird, a shadow, a seed, or a moving stream. There have been muddy shoes, unexpected discoveries, plenty of laughter, and more than a few moments of "Come look at this!" Perhaps that's the best part of all: we are learning to notice. We are learning that God's creation is close, beautiful, surprising, and worthy of our care—and that wonder is waiting for us whenever we slow down enough to see it. *-Submitted by Jenny Gee, Dir. of Education*



Faith in Action. Sundays at 9:30

Returns September 20

Join us for a hands-on Sunday morning experience for children (in 1st grade and up) ready to roll up their sleeves and put faith into action.

Do Something Sunday invites children to **do something** that makes a difference. Throughout the year, we'll gather for practical, joyful service projects that connect our faith with the needs of our neighbors and our wider community. We might sort and pack food, create cards and gifts, prepare items for people who need them, or lend a hand with one of our church's many mission ministries.

Last year, our children packed non-perishable food bags, birthday cake kits and hygiene kits, made cards for veterans, helped with the Giving Tree, and discovered that even small hands can make a big difference.

We're looking forward to another year of learning by doing, serving with joy, and discovering that church isn't just a place we go—it's something we do together. **Have an idea for a project? Please reach out to Jenny!**

Summer Sprouts Big Creek Adventure!

Join us **Sunday, September 20** for our Summer Sprouts grand finale—a creek walk and exploration! We'll get outside, get a little wet and muddy, look for creatures and clues, explore the water, and celebrate all the wonders we've discovered together this summer. This adventure is for children in 1st grade and up—come ready to explore! Wear shoes that can get wet and clothes you don't mind getting muddy.





Acolyte Training

Acolytes are part of a long-standing Christian tradition. For generations, children and young people have had the opportunity to serve their church by carrying in the light of Christ, reminding us that God is with us throughout our time together. At the end of worship, that light is carried back out into the world—a beautiful reminder that we are called to carry the light of Christ with us wherever we go.

Children in 3rd grade and older who would like to become acolytes - join us for training after the 10:30 am worship service on **September 6** or **October 4**. We'll learn what acolytes do, practice together, and make sure everyone feels comfortable and confident before serving.

If your child would like to be part of this special tradition, please let Jenny know. We'd love to welcome a new group of young people into this important ministry! Email Jenny@BrecksvilleUMC.com

Join the Chancel Choir for our Christmas Cantata performance!

Are you interested in joining our Chancel Choir but unable to commit regularly to Sunday morning performances? Is Christmas one of your all time favorite times of the year? Consider joining the Christmas Cantata Choir! This year we will be presenting Joseph M. Martin's *The Star Arising*. Weekly rehearsals begin Thursday, September 10 at 6:30 pm with a final "dress rehearsal" the morning of Saturday, December 19. Our one and only performance will be at the 10:30 service the morning of Sunday, December 20. We're always looking to add new voices to our choir for this very special Sunday which kicks off our Christmas season! Reach out to Machala, our Director of Music, for more info! MUSIC@BrecksvilleUMC.com

Serve at the CLE Kids Book Bank

Saturday, September 12. Volunteers ages 12+

Carpool from the church at 8:50 - return by noon

A book in the hands of a child is a magical thing! Reading fuels imaginations, teaches empathy, supports academic achievement, and helps parents build bonds with their kids.

The Cleveland Kids' Book Bank fosters literacy and a love of reading by distributing free books to ensure all kids in Greater Cleveland have books to build their own home libraries.

While at the Book Bank, we will sort through donated books and organize them into labeled bins. Volunteers in the past have loved reminiscing about special memories while sorting through the books. **Come join us and take a walk down memory lane while supporting a wonderful program.**



Books Wanted

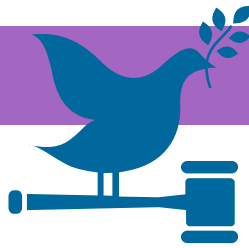
More than 70% of the books the book bank distributes come from community donations! If you have gently used books with the last copyright later than 2000, bring them to our collection bin on the first floor of the church!

Join The Mission & Community Engagement Team

Help Brecksville United Methodist Church live out our value of Determined Service: showing God's love for others by meeting the needs of the whole person. This team is tasked with continually discovering creative ways to care for our community, providing intergenerational service opportunities, and partnering with other organizations to meet basic needs. Serve on the team to help cast the vision, serve as a project lead to coordinate a project, or serve as a helper using the gifts God graced you with. The Missions & Community Engagement Team meets quarterly. **The next meeting is Sunday, 10/18 at 11:45 am.** Reach out to team lead, Marla Knight, for more details. Missions@BrecksvilleUMC.com



BIKE FIX-IT DAY
SATURDAY 9.26.26
9 - NOON



GCC Judge Candidate Forum

Thursday, September 17 at 7 pm

Over two out of three people in our jail aren't serving a sentence – they're in jail awaiting trial because they can't afford to post bond. This can lead to loss of employment, housing, child custody, medical care, and personal safety, and it costs the taxpayers a lot of money.

Join us on **Thursday, Sept. 17 at 7 pm** to learn about the issues people face after arrest and to hear candidates for Judge of the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court discuss these issues.

Your presence will help you become familiar with the Judges you will be voting on this November and will show the candidates that we want the courts to treat people justly and fairly.

The forum is organized by Greater Cleveland Congregations and will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Cleveland, 21600 Shaker Blvd., Shaker Heights.

Carpools will leave from BUMC at 6:15 pm. Contact Jim Slagle for more information or to reserve a ride (reach out to the church office for Jim's contact info).



Scan this QR Code to register for the event!



Pumpkins arrive Sunday, September 27

Our fall community builder is a great opportunity to serve. With opportunities to share our strength, work with the public, be creative, or work behind the scenes.

All Hands On Deck to unload the truck!

Invite your friends and neighbors to come lend a hand in the church yard at **11:30 am on Sunday, Sept. 27**. Many hands make light work! And we'll enjoy a baked potato bar when we're done!

Not able to help that way?

- Be part of the set up crew on Saturday, 9/26
- Serve a shift at the pumpkin patch sales table. We'll be open 11 - 7 through October 31 (or until we're sold out!)
- Serve on the counting team - a 45 minute shift each morning.
- Help promote the patch! Share flyers with your friends and neighbors.
- Buy a pumpkin or two
- Surround the whole project in prayer.

Visit brecksvilleumc.com/the-pumpkins-are-coming/ for more details and to sign up.

Fun God Math

Did you know that when Jesus sent the disciples out to the world, he sent them with almost nothing, on purpose? No bag, no second coat, no backup plan. It seems like a strange way to launch a movement, doesn't it? But, what if the discomfort and strangeness was the whole point? They couldn't mistake their own provision for God's. They had to go and find out that God would care for them and provide for what God called them to.

We're on that kind of journey right now. We have been praying and discerning where God is calling us as a church. We've been watching as God unfolds some very big dreams!

The question in front of us, if we see it from God's perspective, is actually never really "can we afford it?" Or, "is it possible?" The question, for us, is: **what is God calling us toward?** We remember together that God will never call us to something God isn't going to provide for.

Are we ready to start walking, even before we can see the whole road? Because none of this is about us and our resources. It's about what God wants to do through us, and what God provides when we surrender, follow, and build together.

The past few months have been incredibly faith-building already. We keep watching the math work out in ways we couldn't possibly have controlled or forced. It's GOD working. Perfectly providing, one step at a time! Often almost to the dollar. I've been calling it "Fun God Math" because it just brings a smile to my face to see God bringing us along on this journey of faith. The pattern is consistent: God provides for what God leads us to. Not always early, and not always the way we expect it, but faithfully.

Soare you ready? Let's keep following where God leads as we embark on this new campaign! Continue to pray with us, and get ready for God to show up in God-sized ways. -Submitted by Shannon Kantorowski, Finance Manager

We Can Make a Difference

Many of us have heard about the inhumane conditions in ICE detention centers, which are run by for profit companies, such as Core Civic and Geo Group. One of these facilities is in Youngstown, which just last year added 2000 beds to hold even more ICE detainees.

Earlier this year, Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC) decided to act. They joined with the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization and others to publicize the fact that Citizens Bank was only major bank still financing these companies.

They gathered commitments from individuals and organizations to collectively withdraw millions of dollars from Citizens Bank, if they chose to continue funding Core Civic and Geo Group.

What was the result?

On Aug. 7th, Citizens Bank announced that they would no longer provide financing to Core Civic or Geo Group!

This was a major victory which demonstrates the collective power of people of faith working together. When we see injustice, we are called to act and together we can make a difference. - Submitted by Jim Slagle, BUMC GCC Team

Transgender Truth: A Straightforward Conversation

Tuesday, Sept 22 - 6-8 pm Brecksville Community Center

BBH Pride invites you to a non-judgemental space to discuss the facts about the transgender experience. Q&A and conversation led by an expert panel including:

- Local psychologist specializing in gender diverse adults
- MetroHealth Physician practicing Family Medicine and Gender Care
- Executive Director of TransOhio a trans-led advocacy organization
- Motivational Speaker discussing lived experience within the transgender community

Our transgender friends need understanding now more than ever. Attend with an open mind and heart. Come ready to ask questions and gain understanding with compassionate experts and members of the community willing to share with you. Registration is required. Learn more and register at bbhpride.org/pride-events



Taking a close look...at our garbage

As part of our commitment to creation care and environmental stewardship, our Green Team is auditing our current practices. As a start, we're taking a closer look at how our church manages solid waste. On Monday, September 21, we will be partnering with a specialist from the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District to conduct an official Solid Waste Audit on-site.

What is a Waste Audit?

A waste audit is a practical, data-driven checkup of our disposal streams. We will literally sort through a representative sample of our trash and recycling to analyze:

- **What we generate:** The total volume and breakdown of our waste.
- **What gets diverted:** How much recyclable material is actually making it into recycling bins.
- **Where streams get mixed:** Areas where recyclables end up in the landfill trash, or where trash contaminates recycling bins.
- **Infrastructure gaps:** Whether our bin placements, labels, and sizes match how our congregation and ministry groups actually use the space.

Why Are We Doing This?

- **Faithful Creation Care:** Proper waste management is a direct, practical way to reduce our footprint, keep unnecessary items out of local landfills, and honor the resources entrusted to us.
- **Eliminating Guesswork:** Instead of assuming our current setup works, an audit gives us concrete data on what is happening in our kitchen, classrooms, offices, and fellowship spaces.
- **Optimizing Our System:** The insights from September 21 will help us simplify our bins, improve clear signage, reduce contamination, and potentially lower church costs over time.
- **Customized Local Solutions:** Working directly with the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District ensures our future recycling and composting efforts align precisely with what local facilities can accept and process.

How You Can Help

- The audit itself will take place on **Monday, September 21 at 9:30 in Fellowship Hall**. We can have up to 5 volunteers to help speed the work. Want to help? Reach out to GreenTeam@BrecksvilleUMC.com
- You don't need to do anything differently before then—in fact, keeping our routine normal gives us the most accurate data!

Following the audit, the Green Team will share the findings alongside suggestions to help make recycling effortless for every member, guest, and ministry team in our building.

Thank you for supporting our Green Team as we work toward a cleaner, more sustainable church home!



The Circle of Care: The Art of Showing Up

On my 13th birthday, I received a beautiful card in the mail from my pastor. The paper was thick, featuring a gorgeous painted butterfly. I read her handwritten note and thought, "She gets me! She knows I'm not a kid anymore—I'm growing up! My pastor remembered my birthday!" That card was a huge deal to me.

Years later, I found it tucked inside my childhood Bible. It fell from the pages, and I knew immediately what it was. I opened it to re-read those transformative words. It said: "Dear Melanie, Happy Birthday! Love, Rev. Alice." That was it! Six simple words.

Sometimes, when I sit down to write a note, send a text, or make a call, I get tongue-tied. I worry about saying the wrong thing or not saying the right thing. But then I remember Rev. Alice's card. It wasn't *what* she wrote that touched my 13-year-old heart—it was simply the fact that she thought of me at all!

Showing up is the gift. You don't need perfect words; you just need to reach out. Here are a few quick ways you can show up for someone today:

- If you have 5 minutes: Pick up the phone. A quick, "Hello! You crossed my mind today and I just wanted to say hi!" can completely turn someone's day around.
- If you have 15 minutes: Send a card or a quick text. Drop a "thinking of you!" in the mail. Share a silly story about your pet, include a fun sticker, or just say hi!
- If you have 30 minutes: Drop by for a visit. Bring an *Upper Room* devotional or flowers from your garden. "I can't stay long, but I wanted to check in on you!"
- If you have an hour: Offer a ride, or take someone out for ice cream or lunch. Give them the gift of your undivided attention—ask questions and just listen.

When it comes to caring for others, the only way you can do it wrong is by not doing it at all. - *Submitted by Melanie Smith*

Next Month: Care Is a Team Sport

Want to learn more? Exercise your heart for others! Explore joining our Congregational Care Team (even just to bake cookies, make phone calls, or send a card!) Contact Norla Lamonte at Care@BrecksvilleUMC.com.



United
Women
in Faith

faith

action

sisterhood

A NEW SEASON FOR UWF

Between the time that this newsletter is printed and reaches you, our United Women in Faith group meeting to discern how God is calling them to organize themselves in the future. Stay tuned for more information! Until then, here are some good things planned for the group through the end of the year:

- September 8 at 6:30 pm in the Parlor:
Combined Meeting UWF plus Eve Circle.
Womankind Baby Shower
- Thursday, October 1. **Jenny Gee Presentation on Methodism.** Gathering at 9:30/Presentation at 10
- Thursday, November 5. **Graham Ball, Director of Nehemiah Mission of Cleveland.** Gathering at 9:30/Presentation at 10
- Thursday, December 3 at 12 o'clock noon.
Christmas Potluck. All are welcome!



Baby Gifts, Big Impact!

The Brecksville United Women in Faith are hosting a donation drive in support of Womankind, an amazing local non-profit providing free prenatal care, essential baby supplies, and loving support to parenting and expectant mothers and families in need.

Let's surround thesemothers with the love and support of our church and community!

Needed items

- New or gently used baby clothes, especially sizes 6 mos to 2 T.
- New or gently used baby toys and equipment.
- Baby wipes.

Bring your donations to the green collection bin on the 1st floor on Sunday mornings or during church office hours. **Deadline: Tuesday, September 9**

One small item can make a world of difference for a family in need. Thank you for showing Christ's love in action!



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

Week of September 6

Dr. Harry Wilson

Just had a birthday!

8260 Chestnut Blvd

Broadview Hts, OH 44147-1604

Week of September 13

Jim & Liz Fredrick

Celebrating their wedding anniversary today

3425 Russett Dr

Broadview Hts, OH 44147-2615

Week of September 20

Mary Reid

Has a birthday this week!

1830 Hampton Run

Broadview Hts., OH 44147-3290

Week of September 27

Mr. & Mrs.

Scott & Jessica Hastings

Congratulations on their wedding 9/26

6562 Summer Wind Dr

Brecksville, OH 44141-3362

*Nominate someone who could use a reminder
that they are loved and kept in prayer!*

Email Prayer@brecksvilleumc.com



MILESTONES
News of the church family

*Would you like to celebrate a birth,
graduation, achievement, engagement or
anniversary with your church family?*

Send your Milestone to

Melanie@Brecksvilleumc.com

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

9/1 Alan Jones	9/14 Doug Huth	9/23 Gianna Hricko
9/1 Mary Kaminski	9/16 Claire Hayes	9/24 Anne Rosenthal
9/1 Elizabeth Mathewson	9/16 Nikolai Vastartis	9/24 Russ Dieringer
9/1 Samantha Bellone	9/17 Kathy Bartholomew	9/25 Kelly Cramblett
9/3 Ann Rittman	9/17 Ash Watkins	9/25 Kayla Cramblett
9/4 Tim Miller	9/18 Gary Traicoff	9/26 Jeff Schillo
9/4 Marilyn Huber	9/19 Lexi Stetler	9/26 Mary Reid
9/4 Augie Mihalek	9/19 Emily Vastartis	9/26 Owen Paroda
9/5 Harry Wilson	9/19 Joshua Stacher	9/26 Austin Pribble
9/6 Mariella Siemer	9/19 Meredith Weber	9/26 Violet Krolkowski
9/6 Jessica Wiles	9/20 Becky Gezze	9/27 Kathy Holmes
9/8 Quinn Slifcak	9/20 Jon Wise	9/27 Jeannie McBride
9/8 Max Mellott	9/20 Claire Kenney	9/28 Mary Jane Matts
9/9 Ellie Ritterbusch	9/20 James Patrick	9/29 Matt Harper
9/9 Jennifer Mathewson	9/20 Brody Skoda	9/30 Craig Kotnik
9/10 Tonya Boldt	9/20 Janet Gravette	9/30 Kaiya Crouch
9/10 Jackie Czarnota	9/21 Audrey Fowler	9/30 Ella Davis
9/11 Jinho Lee	9/22 Shannon Kantorowski	
9/13 Jessica Vastartis	9/23 Emma Sak	

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



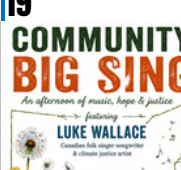
Brecksville UMC is a thriving community of faith because of people like you! We thank God for each of you every day, and pause in this space to say a public thanks for just a few of you for the many ways you help saturate our community with connection and belonging.

People like Emmerson & Harper Seeley, who are learning to serve as acolytes, bringing the light of Christ into the 10:30 worship service. Sue Ellenberger does *so many things* we're thankful for, one of them being stepping out of her comfort zone serving as a judge for the youth LEGO build-off. Some of us work together, like Ric Lesinski, Sharon Judson and Kristi Eberhardt to offer rides to a family who don't have transportation to church on Sunday mornings. Kim, Matt, Sophia & Braxton Vann, Matt Gabor, Alan Scheufler, Fran McClean, Kim Meyer, Kaycee Borders and girls, Cathy Krolkowski, Janine Telischak, Barb Sindyla, Amy Hazelton, Tracy Scott, Marla Knight, Brenda Calovini, Ann Thal, Julie Evonna, Mags Boros, Jenny & George Gee, Sarah & Austin Pribble, Pastor Heidi, Catherine Vastartis, the Watkins Family, and Jim and Melanie Smith all gave of their time to help make our 3rd Annual Brecksville Flea a day of community building and fun. Speaking of community, Michael and Hilary Houff stepped in to lead Youth Group on a Sunday when plans changed and Shannon needed some help. As the old song goes, "We get by with a little help from our friends!" We're lifting up a prayer of thanks for all of you, named and unnamed and the help you give others every day!

2026 AUGUST						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September

2026 OCTOBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food 2:30 Chippewa Communion 7 Gifts & Memorials	2 7a Breakfast 7p Senior High Discussion Group - Taco 'Bout It!	3 <i>Leadership Board Reports Due!</i> 10 Zoom Sm Grp 11:30 Funeral Service for Dorothy Bowles 6:30 Choir 7 Small Group 8 Band	4 <i>Mowing Team: M. Botzman/ Meyer</i>	5  BBH Cheer Team Car Wash 12-3 pm
<i>Dana's Birthday</i>  6 Communion 8:30 Worship/Lawn 9:30 Mat Makers 10:30 Worship with Sprouts 11:45 Acolyte Training 12:30 Staff Picnic 5:30 Youth Group 5:30 Small Group	7  Happy Labor Day <i>Church Offices Closed today!</i>	8 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food 6:30 Eve Circle & UWF Joint Meeting	9 7 Breakfast  <i>Horizon's Preschool First Day!</i>	10 <i>Cantata Rehearsals Begin!</i> 9:30 Asbury Bremeth 10 Zoom Sm Grp 6:30 Choir 7 Small Group 7:30 Leadership Bd 8:30 Band	11 <i>Mowing Team: P. Botzman/ Spencer</i>	12  BUMC at the Book Bank 9-12
13 Fall Kick Off 10:30 One Worship Service Today 11:30 Fall Kick Off Potluck Picnic - a celebration of connection! 5:30 Youth Group 5:30 Small Group	14 10:30 Imaginative Prayer 6:30 BBH Pride Parent Support Group	15 10 Stitch'n'Time 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food 5-8 Sew4Good 7 Safety & Security Mtg 7 AV Info Night	16 7 Breakfast LAST DAY <i>October Newsletter Deadline!</i>	17 10 Zoom Sm Grp 6:30 Choir 7 Small Group 7 GCC Judge Candidate Action 8:30 Band	18 <i>Mowing Team: Auble/Gee</i>	19  Choir at 10 Concert at 3!
20 Bible Sunday 8:30 Worship on the Lawn 9:30 Mat Makers? 9:30 Basic Beliefs 9:30 Classes for all 10:30 Worship 5:30 Youth Group 5:30 Small Group	21 9:30 Waste Audit 10:30 Imag. Prayer 6:20 Square Dancing Lessons Begin! 7 AV Info Night	22 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 2 Mission Food HAPPY BIRTHDAY SHANNON!	23 7 Breakfast 7 The Gospel of Mary Magdalene 	24 10 Zoom Sm Grp 10 Newsletter Production Party 6:30 Choir 7 Small Group 7 Engage GCC 8:30 Band	25 <i>Mowing Team: Brown/Sendrey</i> 9:30 UWF Board Meeting 12 Chippewa Place Ice Cream Social	26  <i>Bike Fix It Day</i> 9 am - 12 pm
27 8:30 Worship on the Lawn 9:30 Classes for all 10:30 Worship 11:30 PUMPKINS 2 Charge Conference 5:30 Youth Group 5:30 Small Group	28 10:30 Imaginative Prayer 11-7 Pumpkin Patch 7 Youth Parent Info Night	29 10 Worship Tm 10:30 Staff Mtg 11-7 Pumpkin Patch 2 Mission Food	30 7 Breakfast 11-7 Pumpkin Patch 7 Night of Prayer and Worship			

Find calendar updates at www.BrecksvilleUMC.com/calendar



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UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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BRECKSVILLE, OH 44141

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Church Office Hours

Sunday 9 - 1 pm
Monday - Thursday 9 to 3 pm
440-526-8938
info@brecksvilleumc.com



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



GLORY TO GOD, WHO IS
ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH
INFINITELY MORE THAN
WE COULD ASK OR
IMAGINE THROUGH
GOD'S MIGHTY POWER
AT WORK WITHIN US.
EPHESIANS 3:20

650 PRAYER

God of abundance, saturate our community with connection and belonging. Where there is isolation, make me present. Where there is loneliness, make us family. Show me my part in cultivating relationships so that others will know of Your boundless love. Open my heart and mind to the incredible things I haven't even imagined yet. **Amen.**



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.