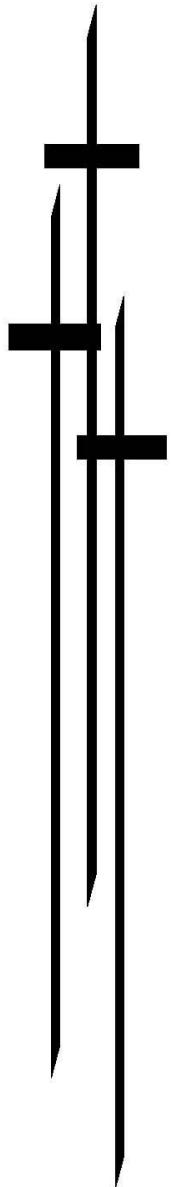


The *Pillar*

Brecksville United Church of Christ

January 2014



*Loving, Serving, and Accepting All People
with God's Life-Changing Power*



PASTOR'S PONDERINGS...

...What Just Happened?

Pastor Dave

The tentative title of this Pillar piece was "Welcoming in the New". I planned to write about the New Year, and our welcoming a new congregation to share our building. However....while our

congregation has decided to extend the offer, there have been new developments between the Korean Church of the Nazarene and their current host congregation. The District Bishops of these two groups are initiating a process to try to help them resolve their differences and continue their partnership. Because of Christmas activities and schedules, there won't be a decision on this until sometime mid-January.

Regardless of the outcome of their deliberations, I'm glad that we've had the opportunity to go through the process of considering - and acting - on their request. I know that for some of us, the procedure we followed may have seemed a bit hurried, confusing, or strange. After all, this was a first for most of us, and it truly was a significant decision to make! If this moves forward, it will definitely make a difference in what goes on here - creating some new possibilities, and perhaps some new problems. This is one reason our Church Council recommended that the arrangement be established for one year, so we could thoroughly evaluate its overall effect on our

ability to perform our ministry and mission as Brecksville United Church of Christ. If the negatives for us, or the Nazarenes, outweigh the positives, then either party can graciously terminate the deal.

Even though it may not materialize, I feel good about the way we have dealt with this opportunity thus far. Here are some of the benefits that I think have already come from it:

- It helps us better understand our Congregational polity And process
- It gives us an appreciation for the openness of the UCC and BUCC
- It raised some good and meaningful theological discussions
- Regardless if a member agreed, disagreed, or abstained, each person's decision was based on what they felt was best for BUCC and the larger Church
- Our willingness to welcome them may have provided the push - and - leverage - needed for a reconciliation with their current hosts

What happens next, is up to those Nazarene congregations. Personally, I'm thankful to be part of *this* amazing congregation that faithfully follows in Way of Jesus of Nazareth! Thank you all for making this past year at BUCC such a joyous and positive one! And in regards to "Welcoming in the New", I would simply encourage us all to consider some new ways we might increase our involvement in the life of the Church. This month, our Church Council and Ministry Teams will be regrouping to gear up for an awesome year of activities and events, ministries and missions. Their meetings are open to anyone who is interested, so please feel free to attend, participate, and find out more about the work of this

congregation. With all of us serving together, we can continue to do great things for our Great and Loving God!

With you in Christ's Service,
Pastor Dave

If you would like to have a pastoral visit in your home, or simply need to talk, please call Pastor Dave at the church office (440-526-4364) or at home (440-546-1193). He will be glad to meet with you.



From the Ministries of BUCC



NEWS FROM OCWM

The last hunger meal was served on December 1, 2013 at Bethany UCC. Approximately 45 meals were served (including seconds and takeaways) by 11 or 12 BUCC

members and friends. The next hunger meal is scheduled for May 18, 2014 at Pearl Road UMC in conjunction with Church of the Advent Episcopal Church. They are providing the main course, and BUCC will provide the salad, bread, and dessert.

During December, 20 bags of food, as well as empty bags and medical supplies were delivered to Brookside WSEM Food Center. Also, the first mitten tree collection was included in

the delivery. Thank you to all the knitters and sewers for providing these items now that the cold weather is upon us.

Recently, a letter was received from the Executive Board of SARA, thanking BUCC for a check in the amount of \$500.00 to be placed in the undesignated fund. Probably these funds will be put to good use in the Ukraine. Where did the money come from? From the aluminum cans BUCC members and friends placed in the magic barrel in the lower commons. Thank you to all who participated.



MEMBERSHIP

Dust off your Old Maids, Uno, Go Fish, Pinochle, Rummy, Euchre whatever card game makes you happy and join us on Saturday,

January 18Th for our "Chase the Winter Blues Card Party "....Join us in Pilgrim Hall at 6:30 PM. So pack a snack to share and your favorite card game and join the fun. Membership will provide the hot chocolate.

Please join us for a trip to the Kent State Museum on Sunday, Jan 26 from noon-4:30. We will gather after coffee hour and car pool to KSU. The museum has a special display of religious garments and fabrics as well as the usual items at the Fashion Museum. See a Membership member for details.



FLOWER MINISTRY

Flowers are placed in the front of the church each Sunday to honor/celebrate your family/friends/events. We need your help in getting this information to our office manager, Jeannette, before she prepares the Bulletin on Thursdays. It's easy as 1-2-3.....

1. Put your name on the chart hanging on the west wall just inside the door to the narthex.
2. Fill out the information form found in the pocket below the chart.
3. Turn this information form in to Joy Garapic.

The flower ministry does not want to miss sharing your joy by not having the correct information.

Our ministry is small in numbers and welcomes new members anytime. You don't have to be a florist, an artist or anyone special to come up with an arrangement or just a vase of colorful flowers. All ideas are worth exploring. If interested, please contact me at coffee hour, calling 330-467-9357 or jrenovetz@gmail.com. Thank you, Jan Renovetz

Notes and Asides



A LETTER OF THANKS....

We want to express our sincerest thanks to Sue and Cliff Stenzel for their generous gift of time and talent in preparation of the Thanksgiving turkey at our Church celebration. Thanks to all who helped them. It was truly a joyful occasion for which we are thankful to be participants. The food was delicious, the music joyful, and the community spirit uplifting. Thanks to all.

During Bill's recent illness, the outpouring of support from BUCC members has been truly heartwarming. Among many others, Marge Culver and Joy Garapic have been so kind and generous in driving us to Severance Hall, The Hanna Theater, and the Valley View Theater for special events. We are truly grateful. Thank you all for your prayers and support. How Blessed we are!

Bill & Ann Toneff



Happy, Happy January Birthdays to the following BUCC Members! Please share in their joy and wish them a Happy Birthday!

January 9:

Dylan Rees

January 12:

Zachary Kolar

January 18:

Jan Renovetz

January 31:

Cliff Cribbs

If you have a January Birthday and are not included above, please contact the church office so we can add you to the BUCC Birthday List!



FOOD PANTRY

January

Canned Fruit & Vegetables



Office

Please contact the Office if you have a change of phone number, address or email address. Either call Jeannette at 440-526-4364, or email us at buccoh@sbcglobal.net .



Did you know that our church bell was recovered from the basement where it had fallen during the tragic 1965 fire that destroyed our sanctuary? In the old church it had been rung before worship by the deacons using a rope in the narthex. It is now rung electrically by the organist. This bell and the one in the Methodist church were tuned to each other so that when they were rung at the same time before worships on Sunday morning, the sounds would be pleasant.

Did you know that the Brecksville Congregational Church (our former name) sold a small piece of land at the northwest corner of its property to the Coates general store for their expansion which included the first Packard hardware store? When the Coates store was eliminated when the westbound Route 82 was changed in 1937 to follow along a widened Highland Drive instead of Stadium drive, we reacquired the exact same piece. By then it was 7 feet wider, reflecting a correction for a surveying error made in the original deed.

Did you know that at one time a large gully ran immediately behind our church building, draining land all the way up Highland Drive to beyond Elm Street? Over time, it was tiled,

covered and mostly abandoned. The main remnant of this drainage system is an existing 30 inch drain from in front of East of Chicago Pizza. This drains much of the Center and runs diagonally under Brecksville Road to discharge behind the shopping center. The original gully and its contributaries have given BUCC water problems in our parking lot and elevator shaft, requiring added drainage and a pumping system.



ENCORE

So be Good, for Goodness Sake! (Text - Matthew 3:1-12)

Pastor Dave Shackle
December 8, 2013

At this time of year, many advertisers put aside their hard-sell commercials and bring us beautiful pictures, music and words of Christmas Joy. It seems that everyone, from the makers of deodorant to disposable diapers want to "wish you and yours the Happiest of Holidays." (You and your *what*, they don't say.) Now while there's nothing inherently wrong with this advertising approach, it is important that you and I consider who the messenger is, so that we can properly evaluate the message. For example, eight Clydesdale horses pulling a sleigh through a snowy street does create a beautiful picture; but a motorist who has just drank eight Budweisers, driving that same snowy street, could create an ugly path of destruction. So when the people at Budweiser wish me and

mine a safe and peaceful holiday, I take that message with a grain of salt. Regardless of what message you or I hear, it's important that we consider the source, so that we can rightly weigh the validity of that message.

When John the Baptist brought his urgent message of repentance to the people of Israel, it was at a time and place of tremendous trouble and distress. The Roman Empire had an iron grip on much of the known world, and upon the land of Israel. And many people in Israel felt that their religious society was in need of drastic renewal. Many Israelites, including John the Baptist, were anticipating that God was about to send the long-awaited Messiah - a formidable figure - who would overthrow the Romans, and deal swiftly and severely with the corruption within the Hebrew community. They were expecting an imposing individual, who would usher in the Reign of God with a cataclysmic event - One who would bring Bad News to those who were on God's "bad side," and Good News to those few who were good enough to receive it.

It's as if they were anticipating that the Messiah would come with a list of those who were naughty, and those who were nice. And like most of us - who prefer to think that we are on the nice list, while others are the naughty ones - so it was with many of the religious leaders in Israel. Like First Century Fred Phelps, they absolutely *knew* who would incur the wrath of God: it was all those *other* "sinners" - tax-collectors, prostitutes, Samaritans, foreigners, and the rest of those "unfaithful" people. But not to worry: the Messiah was coming to take care of those naughty ones - so they better watch out, better not pout, better beware!

That was the ominous message of many religious leaders at the time of Jesus, including John the Baptist. However, when Jesus comes on the scene, he completely confuses and

frustrates many of those leaders. Jesus teaches with a personal authority and integrity that is refreshingly different from many other rabbis. He performs works of wonder and power - healing the sick, cleansing the lepers, raising-up those who are downcast or outcast. Jesus proclaims a message of remarkably *Good News* - conveying a radically inclusive image of a Heavenly Father-Mother, whose desire is to gather *all* Her children, even as a hen gathers and shelters her entire brood. He speaks of God as a Divine *Lover* of people, whose only real concern is that this Love be reciprocated. And perhaps most shocking of all, Jesus contends that this Loving God is best served - not through acts of religious piety - but by vigorously loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. Jesus *is* a tremendously powerful figure; but his strength is centered in compassion and service, not fear or force.

John the Baptist is absolutely correct in believing that the Messiah is coming to take care of the sinners of this world; but his understanding of how the Messiah will "take care of them" is clearly inadequate. John anticipates a resounding blast of law and judgment; but Jesus brings a redemptive blessing of love and grace. Maybe that's why John will later ask this question of Jesus: "Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?" John's limited understanding of Divine Love and Grace, makes it difficult for him to fully envision and recognize Jesus as the Messiah. In spite of John's own greatness, he has trouble grasping Jesus' *greater* vision of the wonderful, welcoming Realm of God - because that was something far more grand and glorious than John himself ever anticipated or imagined.

One-Hundred-ten years ago, on December 17th, 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright accomplished the first flight of a self-powered airplane, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. It lasted less than a minute, yet it signaled the advent of modern air travel.

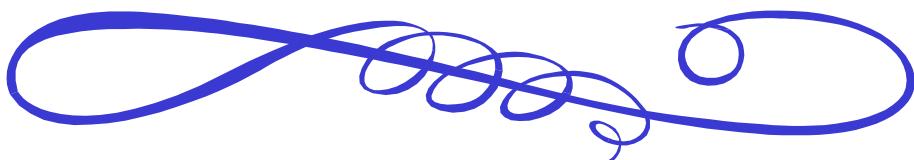
Later that day, the Wright brothers sent a telegram to their sister in Dayton, Ohio, to tell her the exciting news. The telegram read: "1st sustained flight today! 59 seconds! Hope to be home for Christmas." Their sister was so excited about their success, that she took the telegram to the editor of the Dayton Daily News, so he could publish this historic event. Imagine her surprise the next morning, when she had to dig through the paper to finally find a small article buried in the back section, with this caption: "Popular Local Bicycle Merchants to be Home for (the) Holidays."

This editor had seen the telegram, but had missed the real news. One of the greatest scoops of the 20th Century had literally been placed into his hands, yet he completely missed it. Looking back, you and I might think, "how could he be so clueless?" But remember, this was the *first* self-powered airplane flight; therefore, this editor had no frame of reference to recognize this spectacular news. He could think in terms of bicycles, or trains, or maybe even those new-fangled automobiles; but a self-propelled flying machine, soaring to new heights, was something totally foreign to his world. Therefore, he wasn't prepared to receive, or to share, that fantastic message.

Maybe that's how it was for John the Baptist. He knew all about God's judgment and wrath; he was familiar with many of the harsh words of the Hebrew prophets, and his own message certainly echoed those words. Therefore, when Jesus comes on the scene, John anticipates and expects more of the same - only this time even more powerful and devastating. However, John is mistaken. Rather than ushering in the Divine Realm with a cataclysmic event, Jesus comes to establish that Realm within the hearts and lives of those who will follow him. And rather than bring more pain and grief to a world already struggling beneath the load, Jesus comes to

share that pain and grief and struggle - to live, and even to die, so that the message of Divine love and grace will not be foreign to anyone!

The message of Jesus the Messiah is a message of *Good News*! And it's a message that's perfectly in sync with the messenger himself. Jesus not only *talks* about compassion and wholeness, forgiveness and freedom - he also embodies those qualities, and graciously conveys them to anyone who desires to share them, including you and me. Today, Jesus Christ invites *us* to be messengers who embody the Good News - who feed the hungry, heal the sick, lift-up the oppressed, and warmly welcome all people. Jesus shows us how to do this, and his Spirit fills us with the power to make it happen: not the power of domineering control, but the power of Divine compassion. A power that can truly help us soar to new heights, and carry us faithfully forward wherever our Life's journey might take us.





2013 POINSETTIAS

Cindy Burton *In Memory of her Parents, William L. Burton & Delores R. Burton.*

Joanne Cook *In Memory of The Deeter Family, Robert and Willie Deeter, and twin sister, Jeanne Durig, and in Memory of her Beloved Husband Skip Cook.*

Jeanne R. Cowden *In Memory of James W. Cowden.*

Marjorie Culver *In Memory of her Husband Dick, and Nancianne Martin.*

Jim & Peg Duffy *Happy Birthday Jesus!*

Dottie & Jim Farwell *In Honor of Dottie's Mother.*

Anna Mary Fisher *In Memory of Loved Ones.*

Dorie Gabor *In Memory of her Husband, Steven Gabor.*

Joy Garapic *In Memory of William Garapic, Husband, Father, Grandfather.*

Diane Gressley *In Memory of Pauline Farina, and Emma & Evan Gressley.*

<i>Phyllis Hassler</i>	<i>In Memory of Frank Hassler.</i>
<i>Agnes Hastings</i>	<i>In Loving Memory of Phil Hastings (Husband)</i>
<i>Sons, Daughters, Daughters-in-Law, & Grandchildren of Phil Hastings</i>	<i>“We Love you Papa”</i>
<i>Mac and Marianne Hoppel</i>	<i>In Honor of the Karwowski-Hoppel Families.</i>
<i>Dassie Matsuoka & Daughters</i>	<i>In Memory of James Matsuoka.</i>
<i>David Pastor</i>	<i>In Memory of Eleanor Pastor & Albert Romanin.</i>
<i>Fred & Connie Pesek</i>	<i>In Memory of our Parents.</i>
<i>Bettina Ortiz</i>	<i>In Loving Memory of Betty, Joseph, & Timothy Ortiz.</i>
<i>Bettina Ortiz</i>	<i>In Honor Daniel King; Rachel, Grace, Julianne, Jenna and David Kubic; Stephanie King, Steven, Lyndsey and Bradley Hough.</i>
<i>Max Roha</i>	<i>In Loving Memory of Mary Chapman Roha 5/7/1960-7/21/01, and Lois Langmead Wallin 3/29/23-7/21/07.</i>
<i>Max Roha</i>	<i>In Loving Memory of David J. Roha 5/7/1960- 7/18/2013.</i>
<i>Mariam R. Rosewicz</i>	<i>In Memory of Loved Ones.</i>
<i>George & Carole Snider</i>	<i>In Memory of our good Friend Debbie Busta.</i>

BUCC Calendar January 2014

Wednesday, January 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR!	Friday, January 10	Monday, January 20
Thursday, January 2 1 pm Bible Study	Saturday, January 11	Tuesday, January 21
Friday, January 3 9-3 Quilters	Sunday, January 12 10 am Worship and Church School 11:00 Fellowship Hour	Wednesday, January 22 6:00 am Early Birds Thursday, January 23 1 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Joyful Noise 7:30 pm Choir
Saturday, January 4	Monday, January 13	Friday, January 24
Sunday, January 5 10 am Worship and Church School 11 am Fellowship hour	Wednesday, January 15 6 am Early Birds PILLAR DEADLINE	Saturday, January 25 Sunday, January 26 10 am Worship and Church School 11 am Fellowship Hour 12 pm *Trip To Kent State*
Monday, January 6 7:00pm Spiritual Life	Thursday, January 16 1 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Joyful Noise 7:30 pm Choir	Monday, January 27
Tuesday, January 7 7 pm Membership	Friday, January 17	Tuesday, January 28
Wednesday, January 8 6 am Early Birds 7 pm Council	Saturday, January 18 6:30 pm Card Party	Wednesday, January 29 6:00 am Early Birds
Thursday, January 9 1 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Joyful Noise 7:30 pm Choir	Sunday, January 19 10 am Worship and Church School 11am Fellowship Hour 5:30pm Youth Percussion 6pm Youth Minsitry	Thursday, January 30 1:00 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Joyful Noise 7:30 pm Choir

Participants in Worship

JANUARY 5, 2014

Lay Reader:	Sue Stenzel
Head Usher:	Bridget Sproul
Ushers:	Carole & George Snider, Chad Sproul, Diane Gressley
Acolyte:	Benjamin Davis
Peace Cndl:	Michalina Fawcett
Sound:	Val Duffy
Commons:	David Pastor
Narthex:	Linda Kriynovich
Flowers:	
Nursery:	Kathy Pastor
Counters:	Nancy Stella, Anna Mary Fisher
Servers:	Joy Garapic, Joanne Cook
Clean Up:	Jan Renovetz, Jon Thompson
Snacks:	Melissa Lund, Tia Began
Snow Herder:	Billy Harris

JANUARY 12, 2014

Lay Reader:	Matt Wolbert
Head Usher:	Caroline Chandler
Ushers:	Sue Maier, Joanne Cook, Dan Stewart, Fred Pesek
Acolyte:	Grace Hunt
Peace Cndl:	Drew Demko
Sound:	Max Roha, Doug Fawcett
Commons:	Ann Kelley
Narthex:	Betty Gifford
Flowers:	
Nursery:	Kara Rees
Counters:	Bruce McCain, Sam Koch
Servers:	Carole & George Snider, Dottie Farwell
Clean Up:	Kathy & David Pastor
Snacks:	Sue Maier, Max Roha
Snow Herder:	David Pastor

JANUARY 19, 2014

Lay Reader:	Ruth Morris
Head Usher:	Evie Novak
Ushers:	Jim & Peg Duffy, Julie & Dave Bernard
Acolyte:	Courtni Began
Peace Cndl:	Garrett Demko
Sound:	Mike Westerberg
Commons:	Marge Culver
Narthex:	Jane Cribbs
Flowers:	
Nursery:	Maria Corrado
Counters:	Jan Renovetz, David Pastor
Servers:	Caroline Chandler, Chad Sproul, Dottie Farwell
Clean Up:	Bob Chandler, Lynne Struck
Snacks:	Mary Ann Hoppel, Jill Zedan
Snow Herder:	Wes Novak

JANUARY 26, 2014

Lay Reader:	Betsey Wilson
Head Usher:	Diane Gressley
Ushers:	Sam Koch, Spencer Whyte, Kathy & David Pastor
Acolyte:	Naomi Klonowski
Peace Cndl:	Olivia Klonowski
Sound:	Dave Bernard
Commons:	George Snider
Narthex:	Cliff Cribbs
Flowers:	
Nursery:	Shauna Bigelow
Counters:	Mac Hoppel, Carole Snider
Servers:	Sue Stenzel, Jill Zedan
Clean Up:	Jane & Cliff Cribbs
Snacks:	Marge Culver, Susan Snyder
Snow Herder:	Dan Stewart

At Print time, Flower Schedule not available, see weekly Bulletin

H A P P Y

N E W

Y E A R !

The Pillar

is published monthly by the

Brecksville

United Church of Christ

**23 Public Square
Brecksville, Ohio 44141**

Moderator: Diane Gressley
Dgressley@gmail.com

Phone: 440-526-4364
E-mail: buccoh@sbcglobal.net
Web: www.BrecksvilleUCC.org

Pastor: Rev. Dave Shackle
440-546-1193
buccpastor@sbcglobal.net

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Director of Music:
Dave Debick
buccmusic@sbcglobal.net

Financial Secretary: Joy Garapic
buccfinance@sbcglobal.net

Editor: Diane Lightbody
D2Zippity@aol.com

FIRST CLASS

