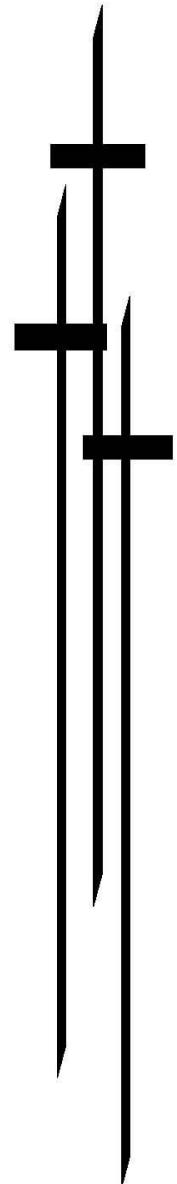


The *Pillar*

Brecksville United Church of Christ

February 2014



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



PASTOR'S PONDERINGS...

...Let Me Tell You About My Church...

Pastor Dave

When we think about all that churches that are located in our area, it could give us pause to wonder: What difference

does it make that we are here? During my recent time away, I found myself talking quite a bit about the UCC and BUCC. It's not like I bring up the subject; it's just that when people ask what kind of work I do, there are usually some follow-up questions. I now recognize that most of these questions derive from one essential question: "What kind of Church embraces an openly gay Pastor?" And before you know it, I'm presenting a condensed course on Theology and Church History:

"The United Church of Christ and its predecessor bodies, have a rich tradition of progressive thinking, social action, and boldly proclaiming the *Good News* of God's deep and abiding love for all people. And Brecksville United Church of Christ has been - and continues to be - an integral part of this remarkable tradition...."

Actually, I express myself in far less formal language. I also try to keep my responses brief, so as not to bore people, or make them regret having asked. However, many people have several follow-up questions that keep the conversation going.

It's then that I am happily reminded of how fortunate I am to be a part of this remarkable community of faith, day-in and day-out:

To be inspired by the uplifting music of our choirs, energized by the lively enthusiasm of our children, and fed together through the gifts of Word and Sacrament.

To offer and receive the prayers and support needed for Life's difficult and painful times.

To have the opportunity to experience how God continues to bless us, speak to us, and speak through us.

And to be able to carry forward the important ministry of Christ's extravagant welcome to all.

As a congregation, we at Brecksville United Church of Christ take our Faith seriously, yet try not to take ourselves too seriously! We strive to celebrate our diversity of thoughts, expressions, and experiences with a spirit of openness and kindness. We try to create a worship experience that is warm and welcoming, as well as being relevant and uplifting. And we freely share both our faith and our doubts, trusting that our God is big enough and loving enough to accept each of us wherever we are on our life's journey.

Basically, the bottom line is this: Our presence in this community can - and does - make a tremendously positive difference! And here's another important thing: *Your presence, and prayers, and participation at Brecksville United Church of Christ are an extremely significant part in helping make that difference!* Because, together, we are a Church that has claimed a crucial and wonderful mission: *To Love, Serve, and Accept All People with God's Life-Changing Power!*

Personally, I can't imagine a better mission to have, or a better place in which to carry it forward!

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

Recently, Brookside Hunger Center hosted an open house tour of the new facilities, which are located a few doors south of the previous location on Pearl Road. The tour was interesting, and the facilities are spacious. About 850 families are served by this center, and Heidi Boness, the manager, indicated that the need has grown larger following the hard financial times of 2008 and 2009. That is one reason why the food donations from BUCC members and friends are very important. Also, the items from the mitten tree were delivered (second time the tree has been "trimmed").



The date of the next Family Promise will be upon us soon. Watch for the sign-up board in the narthex for further information.

SARA will be sponsoring a trip to the Ukraine in late May this year. It will be a cultural, educational, and a spiritual trip. Those interested in participating should contact Bob Chandler for more information.

MEMBERSHIP



DON'T MISS THE FUN!!!!
Join us for our 2014 Bowling Party Sunday,
February 23, 2014, 1:00PM at:

Northwood Lanes
10435 Valley View Road
Macedonia, Ohio 44052

Bumper bowling for our Youth
Two (2) games and Shoe Rental \$6
Pizza and Pop will be provided

Sign up soon so we can have lots of lanes for everyone to have fun. Advance payment will be accepted!

FACILITIES – Lenore Harris



The "Raise the Roof" campaign is over the top with a very generous anonymous donation of \$5,000.

The final figures are:

Rebuilding	\$6,500
Roof replacement	\$61,025
Total cost	\$67,575
Matching Council funds	\$33,787.50

Raise the Roof donations \$37,010

Money kept in a roof fund toward future replacement of the
sanctuary roof \$3,222.50

Thank to everyone for your generous donations. The new roof is a real improvement.

When our 1844 sanctuary burned in 1965, the 12 yr. old C.E. wing was saved by a closed fire door.

Please see that the fire door(s) you opened are closed when you leave the building.

Fire doors are located:

*at the top and bottom of the stairs leading from the South Entry to the Upper and Lower Commons.

*between the C.E. wing and the main building, both Flrs

*at the top and bottom of the east entry stairway

*at the Pilgrim Hall entry to the furnace room

*bottom of the stairs from the narthex to Pilgrim Hall.

Notes and Asides



A LETTER OF THANKS....

Thank you so much for the beautiful Poinsettia presented to us by Jan Renovetz. It is still beautiful and reminds us daily of your loving concern for us.

Our gratitude and Love are extended to all of you for your kind and generous expressions of caring for us, especially during Bill's recent illness and recovery. Your cards, phone calls, visit to Marymount Hospital and The Oaks. Bill treasured the visits, including many by Pastor Dave, and many by you dear friends – your willingness to drive us where we need to go – Marge Culver, Joy Garapic, Caroline & Bob Chandler have been so generous. The outpouring of offers to help in any way makes us feel valued and loved by this community. How blessed we are!

Another blessing occurred a few months ago when the Capella Quintet, Kate Klonowski, Diane Lightbody, Matt Wolbert, David Debick, and Jon Thompson sang the 23rd Psalm. It was a truly transcendent performance; perfect intonation, balance, phrasing, blend, attack and release – in short, a performance which was angelic, heavenly. We are hoping for a repeat performance or two or three, please!

Happy New Year to all of you. May God bless you with peace and happiness in 2014.

Bill & Ann Toneff



FINANCE

2013 Giving Recap

Throughout the year our members contributed to many causes, chief among them the "Raise the Roof" fund. Council had voted to match dollar-for-dollar up to \$35,000 from the Nan Martin Remembrance Funds. A total of \$37,010 was raised.

Pastor Dave distributed \$5,699.50 to parishioners and others in need of financial support, \$1338 went to LGBT Coalition, and \$503 was sent to Womankind. Western Reserve Association of the UCC was sent checks for the Christmas Fund=\$713, Neighbors in Need=\$818, Strength the Church=\$521, CUE/CUM=\$436, and On Great Hour of Sharing=\$860, making us a 5 for 5 church.

There were many other instances of this congregation's generosity, such as the mitten tree, Hunger Center donations, and Adopt-a-Family.

Monthly financial statements are kept in a notebook on the counter in the Office for your information.



RECORDING OF SUNDAY WORSHIP has resumed - now on audio CDs using newly installed sound equipment. If you missed a service or just want to hear again a sermon, an anthem or whatever, please check with the church office to borrow the CD.



WE ARE SAD TO ANNOUNCE that Pastor Jim Smith, who served as BUCC Interim Minister in 2004, passed away on April 7th last year, at the age of 85. Rev. Smith continued to serve the UCC in Virginia as a part-time interim and pulpit-supply pastor, until he was slowed by a broken hip in late 2012. His widow, Cornelia, of Narrows, Virginia, wrote to Ann and Bill Toneff: "Brecksville was one of the first places where Jim served as an interim pastor....Thank you for helping to make his time in Brecksville an important era in his life." We at BUCC are truly blessed, and grateful, that Jim Smith's kind and caring ministry among us helped carry us through some challenging times.

UPCAM Board needs you! UPCAM is the United Protestant Campus Ministry serving Case Western University, Cleveland State University and Tri-C. As a board member you will help provide guidance and leadership to the Executive Director and serve on a committee or project. If you are interested in applying for a board position, contact board member Edward Lusk. To learn more visit www.upcam.org.



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

February 3:

Dave Shackle

Connor Rowitz

February 5:

Anna Mary Fisher

February 7:

Dave Barchet

February 8:	Marge Culver
February 11:	Judi Smith
February 12:	Jeanne Cowden
	Claire Cunningham
	Ian Stewart
February 13:	Cliff Stenzel
February 14:	Arthur Oravec
February 19:	Joyce Barchet
February 22:	Drew Demko
	Garrett Demko
	Jan Rahnenfuehrer
	Bill Toneff
February 23:	Arlene Akuszewski
February 25:	Darlene Kelly
February 27:	Doug Lightbody
	David Pastor
February 29:	Diane Gressley

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



CRAFT CUPBOARD

February - School Supplies Pencils, Paper, Crayons, etc.

Musical Notes – Dave Debick



On Sunday February 16 at 4:00 p.m., BUCC will host the Third Rail Wind Trio from Oberlin Conservatory of Music. The ensemble will perform works by Mozart, Simon, and Villa-Lobos. A free-will offering will be received, and a light reception will follow the program. We hope you can join us on Feb. 16 to enjoy this highly-recommended wind ensemble from one of the nation's finest music conservatories.



Seasonal choir will begin preparing for Holy Week on Thursday March 6 from 7-8 p.m. Special music will be presented on Palm Sunday (April 13), Maundy Thursday (April 17), and Easter Sunday (April 20.) If you enjoy singing music in a group setting, but don't have time to commit to regular choir, seasonal choir provides a wonderful opportunity for music, fellowship, and spiritual preparation for Holy Week. Contact Dave Debick or any of our choir members for more information.



ENCORE

Now That's Remarkable!
(Text - John 1:43-51)

Pastor Dave Shackle
January 19, 2014

When we read about Biblical figures, or hear about contemporary people, who

claim to have received a direct call from God, we may find ourselves feeling a bit doubtful or disheartened. Don't get me wrong. I think it's fantastic that Isaiah felt that the Holy One had called him - while still in his mother's womb. I also think it's wonderful that Jesus goes to Galilee, finds Philip and says to him, "Follow me!" - and that Philip then sets-up his friend Nathanael with a face-to-face meeting with the Messiah. The problem is, those kind of exceptional encounters just don't seem to happen very often; or at least they don't happen to many people *I* know. Perhaps you yourself have thought, "If God would just give me a sign! Nothing spectacular, just something to let me know that God really is there, and that I'm on the right track."

I think most of us, at one time or another, desire some kind of personal contact with our Holy Source of Life - a vision, a dream, some form of communication that lets us know that we are connected to the Holy One. So this morning, I'd like us to think about what that might actually feel like - or be like - if you or I were literally *called* by God. How might we recognize that call? How would we know that it was really *God* speaking to us, and not just our imagination? How could we tell if it was a Divinely inspired dream, or the result of a late-night burrito-binge? One thing we *do* know, is that people like Isaiah and Nathanael initially had doubts of their own, as did *many* of the Biblical figures who experienced a close encounter of the Divine Kind. So perhaps their stories can help us grapple with our own questions concerning this notion of hearing, and responding to the call of God today.

Personally, I believe that each of us has received *some* sense of a Divine Calling in our lives - otherwise, we probably wouldn't be in this particular place, at this particular moment. I also believe that, in one way or another, the Holy One extends a call to *every person*; though certainly not everyone hears or responds to that call. In this morning's readings,

there are three specific conditions that stand-out, which I think can be helpful in allowing you and me to hear and respond to God's call in our lives. They are: *expectation, preparation, and acceptance.*

I begin with *expectation*, because what we *expect* can definitely effect what you and I will experience. I find it amazing, that when I'm having a particularly bad day, I run into so many other cranky and negative people. And in those times when I'm anticipating problems to arise, lo and behold, they usually do! Yet on my good days, almost everyone I meet seems reasonable and up-beat. And when I begin my day with an optimistic outlook and a positive purpose , that day seems to go quite smoothly. Who knows, maybe, it has something to do with my own frame of mind, and my own *expectations.*

In that regard, it's not surprising that Isaiah receives a call to proclaim God's message to Israel, and to the ends of the earth. Throughout his life, Isaiah senses that he has been created specifically to serve God. And not only does Isaiah *expect* that to happen, he also spends much of his life preparing for that day to come. Likewise for you and me, *preparation* is an important part in being sensitive to that Divine Calling in our lives. The more we prepare ourselves for Divine Possibilities, the better we will be able to recognize and embrace them when they arise before us.

Martin Luther King Jr. didn't just wake up one morning and say, "I think I'm going to lead a civil rights movement." The truth is, his entire life had been a steady preparation for that pivotal moment. By 1954, at age 25, King had graduated from college and seminary, and was called to be the pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. As the new Pastor in town, he was elected to (or stuck with) the position of President of the newly formed Montgomery

Improvement Association. Then, on December 5th, 1955, an event took place in Montgomery, which would launch a dream for Martin Luther King and for millions of others. Rosa Parks, a seamstress returning home from a long day of work, was arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man. And with her arrest, began a boycott of the Montgomery Bus Company, which would last more than a year.

Martin Luther King, as leader of that civic Improvement Association, became the leader of that boycott; and from that point forward, became a Messenger of the *Dream*: The Dream that freedom, equality, and justice might be realized by every person, regardless of race, color, or creed. King was able to envision and articulate that Dream as well as, or better, than anyone else. Much like the prophet Isaiah, King's entire life had helped him prepare for that one day when - through a unique convergence of circumstances - God would call him to step forward and say, "Yes, God, I will follow the path that is opening-up before me!"

Now, all this is not to say that you or I won't be able to hear God calling us if we're not *expecting* it, or *preparing* for it; however, we certainly improve our chances of hearing that call, by regularly practicing our faith and by seeking to increase our awareness of the Holy Presence which surrounds us each day. The critical thing, is that you and I don't miss - or ignore - that call because it comes to us in ways which seem too common or mundane to truly be *Divine*.

Nathanael was anticipating and preparing for an encounter with the Holy. As he sat under that fig tree, he was probably studying the Holy Scriptures; because, according to Jewish tradition, that was a proper place to sit and contemplate those sacred texts. Beneath that fig tree, Nathanael searched and prepared, with hope and expectation, for a Divine Revelation.

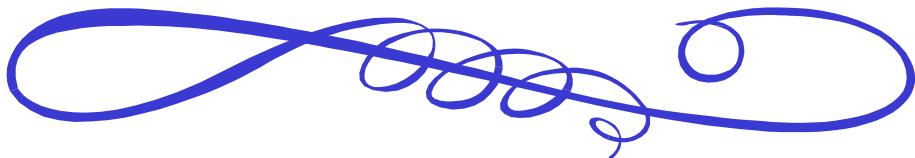
However, he almost missed it, because God's message came to him in a very *ordinary* way: not in a booming voice from heaven, or lightening flashing across the sky, but by the personal witness of his friend, Philip.

Philip says to Nathanael, "We have found the One about whom Moses and the prophets wrote. It is Jesus of Nazareth!" But Nathanael has trouble accepting that. How could God's Anointed One come from Nazareth, that little town down the road? ("Can anything good come out of... *Richfield*?"") Also, how does Philip *know* that this Jesus truly is God's Messiah? It all seems too casual, too ordinary for Nathanael to accept. Yet Philip doesn't argue with him; he simply invites him to check it out for himself. "Come and See! Come and meet this Jesus, and discover the truth for yourself!" So Nathanael accepts Philip's invitation, and Nathanael encounters the Divine, through a truly natural way - the gracious invitation of a good friend.

Oftentimes, God speaks to you and me through seemingly simple and ordinary ways: the aesthetic beauty of a sunset, or a snowfall; the inspiring message of a story, or a song; the kind words or actions of a friend, or a stranger. Yet perhaps most amazing of all, are those times when God chooses to speak *through* you and me: through *our* reaching out with compassion to those around us; through our prayers and hugs for those who are hurting; though our warm welcome to all those who come among us; and through our simply inviting our friends and neighbors to join us on this remarkable journey of faith.

Just as Philip says to Nathanael, you and I can also say to others, "Come and see! Come and meet this Living, Loving Christ - who continues to live and love in and through this seemingly ordinary, yet extraordinary Family of Faith!" For you

see, not only is God still speaking *to* us today, God also continues to speak *through* us! And that, my friends, is a remarkable thing!



Did you know that the 2002 addition of the south entry and accessible elevator required many years of planning and activity? Appointed by Lenore Harris, then Moderator, one of the first jobs of the Land-Use Task Force was the 1989 acquisition of the Elsworth property on Arlington St. This assured our accessibility of adequate parking area. With the retention of Myers Architects, several alternate plans for remodeling and/or adding to our building and siting an elevator were studied and evaluated. However, it required the acquisition of the Dixon property in 1994 to make the project viable with enough land available both for the addition and for the automobile access from both Arlington Street and Route 82. Finalizing plans, securing permits, successful fund raising, and the negotiating of construction contracts lead to the breaking of ground of our "Opening Doors" project in 2002.



BUCC CALENDAR FEBRUARY 2014

Saturday, February 1

9 am Facilities

Sunday, February 2

10 am Worship and
Church School

11 am Fellowship Hour

Monday, February 3

7 pm Spiritual Life

Tuesday, February 4

10-11:30 CWRU
7 pm Membership

Wednesday, Feb 5

6 am Early Birds

Thursday, February 6

1 pm Bible Study
5:30pm Joyful Noise
7:30 p Choir

Friday, February 7**Saturday, February 8****Sunday, February 9**

10 am Worship and
Church School
11 am Fellowship Hour
5:30 p Youth Percussion
6 pm Youth Ministry

Monday, February 10**Tuesday, February 11**

10-11:30 CWRU

Wednesday, Feb 12

6 am Early Birds
7 pm Council

Thursday, February 13

1 pm Bible Study
5:30pm Joyful Noise
7:30 p Choir

Friday, February 14**HAPPY VALENTINE'S
DAY!****Saturday, February 15**

***PILLAR
DEADLINE***

Sunday, February 16

10 am Worship Church
School
11 am Fellowship Hour
4 pm ***FREE
CONCERT***
“Third Rail Wind
Trio”

Monday, February 17***Presidents day*****Tuesday, February 18**

10-11:30 CWRU

Wednesday, Feb 19

6 am Early Birds

5 pm Recorder/Dulc.

Thursday, February 20

1 pm Bible Study
5:30p Joyful Noise
7:30 p Choir

Friday, February 21**Saturday, February 22****Sunday, February 23**

10 am Worship
11 am Fellowship Hour
1pm Bowling Party

Monday, February 24**Tuesday, February 25**

10-11:30 CWRU

Wednesday, Feb 26

6 am Early Birds

5 pm Recorder/Dulc.

Thursday, February 27

1 pm Bible Study
5:30pm Joyful Noise
7:30 p Choir

Friday, February 28

Participants in Worship

FEBRUARY 2, 2014

Lay Reader: Jon Thompson
 Head Usher: Caroline Chandler
 Ushers: Diane Gressley, Linda Kriyovich, David Ritchey, Jill Zedan
 Acolyte: Ian Stewart
 Peace Cndl: Lily Hunt
 Sound: Doug Fawcett
 Commons: Ann Kelly
 Narthex: Marge Culver
 Flowers: Betty Gifford
 Nursery: Peg Duffy
 Counters: Nancy Stella, Sam Koch
 Servers: Darlene, Emily, Celia Kelly
 Clean Up: Bridget & Chad Sproul
 Snacks: Ruth Thorp & Lenore Harris
 Snow Herder: Bob Chandler

FEBRUARY 9, 2014

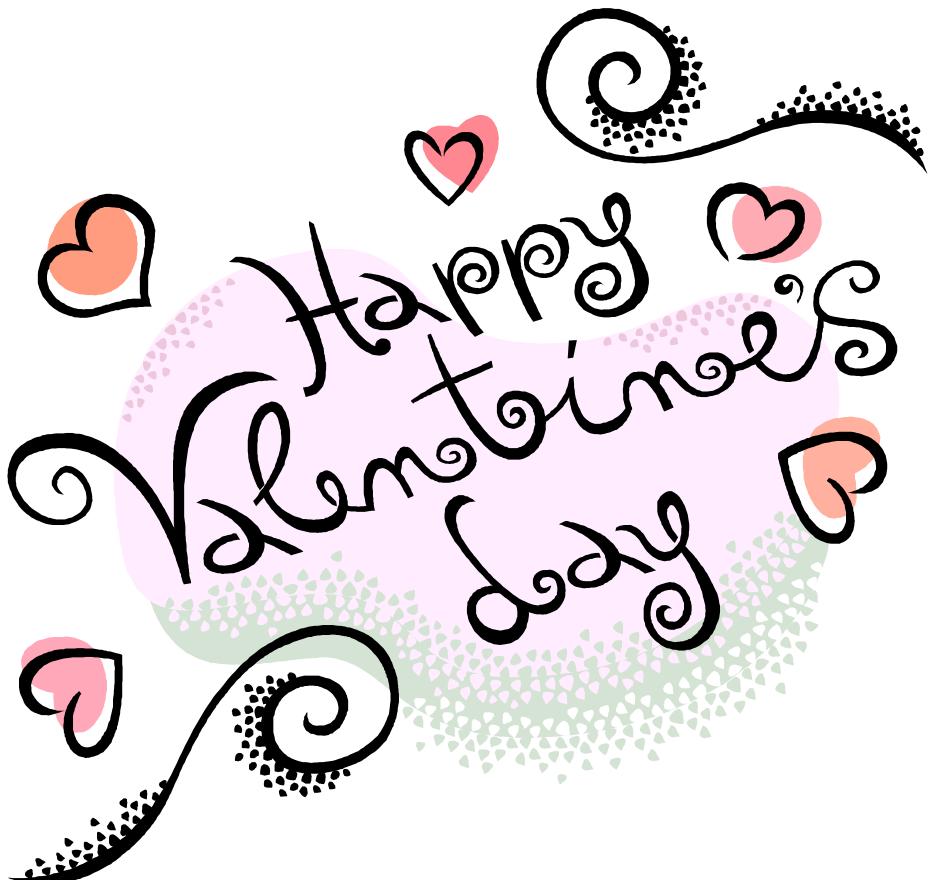
Lay Reader: Kate Klonowski
 Head Usher: Max Roha
 Ushers: Sue Stenzel, Val Duffy, Beth Rehling, Fred Pesek
 Acolyte: Lindsey Maier
 Peace Cndl: Ryan Stewart
 Sound: Mike Westerberg
 Commons: Betty Gifford
 Narthex: David Pastor
 Flowers: Lenore Harris
 Nursery: Robin Coyer-Westerberg
 Counters: Bruce McCain, Anna Mary Fisher
 Servers: Carole & George Snider
 Clean Up: Jill Zedan, Pat Bailey
 Snacks: Marilyn Wrights, Betsey Wilson
 Snow Herder: Doug Fawcett

FEBRUARY 16, 2014

Lay Reader: Kathy Smith
 Head Usher: Jill Zedan
 Ushers: Spencer Whyte, Drew Wilson, Kathy Pastor, Betsey Wilson
 Acolyte: Ben Rehling
 Peace Cndl: Carli Began
 Sound: David Bernard
 Commons: Carole Snider
 Narthex: Sue Stenzel
 Flowers: Jan Renovetz
 Nursery: Val Duffy
 Counters: Jan Renovetz, Carole Snider
 Servers: Joanne Cook, Sue Stenzel
 Clean Up: David & Kathy Pastor
 Snacks: Jane Cribbs & Anne Melfo
 Snow Herder: Jim Demko

FEBRUARY 23, 2014

Lay Reader: David Pastor
 Head Usher: Bob Candler
 Ushers: Kate Klonowski, Matt Wolbert, Joanne Cook, Jane Cribbs
 Acolyte: Carrie Coyer-Westerberg
 Peace Cndl: Amy Coyer-Westerberg
 Sound: Val Duffy
 Commons: Cliff Cribbs
 Narthex: Kathy Smith
 Flowers: Carole Snider
 Nursery: Kathy Pastor
 Counters: Mac Hoppel, Donn Whyte
 Servers: George & Carole Snider
 Clean Up: Jan Renovetz & Jon Thompson
 Snacks: Max Roha, Diane Gressley
 Snow Herder: Cliff Cribbs



The Pillar

is published monthly by the

Brecksville

United Church of Christ

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Office Hours: (Mon – Fri)
9:00 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.

Deadline for copy: The fifteenth day
of the month prior to publication.
Editor reserves the right to edit for
content and space.

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FIRST CLASS

