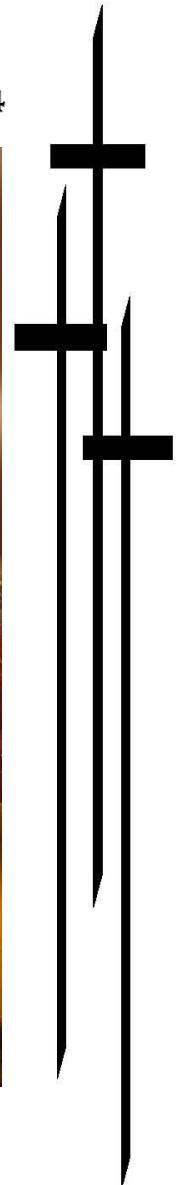


# The Pillar

Brecksville United Church of Christ

November 2014



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



One morning a pastor decided to create a "Life Ledger" as a way to track the good things he receives in Life, and the good things he gives in return. He began with Life's basic blessings: food, clothing, shelter, gravity, air, sun, warmth, light, sight, hearing, taste, aromatic delights, esthetic beauties, health, comfort, family, friends, community, joy, laughter, little kindnesses, big

favors, time and energy, the ability to think and reason, read and write, the computer he's using.... It didn't take long for him to realize that he was just beginning to scratch the surface of the "received" column. So he set that aside, to work on the "given" column.... Then he decided to give-up the Life Ledger project, after humbly including the experience as a Life Lesson "received."

While this experience reminds me of the term "an embarrassment of riches" it also reminds me that we don't have to be embarrassed because of the countless ways our lives have been blessed. Quite the contrary, all those blessings can also bless us in an additional way: by putting us in a position to have a positive impact on the world around us. Even though we can't eradicate hunger or poverty or the many other problems in this world, you and I do have the power and resources to do *something* to help other people. And as we do this, we ourselves can be energized, inspired, and "Blessed to be a Blessing"!

"Blessed to be a Blessing" is the theme of this year's Stewardship emphasis at BUCC. Throughout this month we'll continue to hear more about what this Stewardship theme and emphasis can mean

for our individual lives, and for our life as a congregation. Working and worshiping together, praying and playing together, sharing our talents, our joys and even our sorrows helps us realize some of the wonderful ways that we are simultaneously "Blessed" and "a Blessing". And as a Family of Faith, it's important that each member - of any age - be given opportunities to receive, and to share, his or her unique gifts and blessings.

On behalf of our Stewardship Ministry Team, I ask you all to consider what gifts you have to share, and what portion of your income you might contribute, to help strengthen and further the ministry of Brecksville United Church of Christ in the coming year. At our worship service on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup> , we will gather our pledge cards and present them at the altar, along with our thanks to God for the many blessing we have received. Then we will continue our celebration with our traditional Thanksgiving Feast in Pilgrim Hall - an event that you won't want to miss!

Blessed to serve with you,  
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.

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#### A WORD OF "THANKS" TO MY BUCC FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Once again, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the members and friends of BUCC who celebrated with me our 10 years of mutual ministry. I really was surprise when Darlene Kelly "hijacked" the end of our worship service and offered her moving words. Your wonderful gifts of that beautiful wooden music box and the (far from empty!) leather wallet are greatly appreciated. I will remember and treasure all of your kind and gracious words of affirmation for many years to come.

- Pastor Dave



## FROM THE MINISTRIES OF BUCC

### FACILITIES

#### Fall Yard Clean-up



Our fall leaf management and yard clean up date is Saturday morning, November 1. From 8:30 am. Until we finish about 11:30 am. Fellowship, exercise and refreshments will be provided. Please plan to come when you can and work for as long as you wish.

### FINANCE

A check in the amount of \$967 was sent to UCC Disaster Ministries to aid victims of the devastating Ebola outbreak.

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

#### Information Table

Have you ever felt that you would like more information on what is going on at BUCC? Sure, the table in the Narthex has lists of who serves on what ministry, and the mission statements of each ministry. But how many of us are familiar with the BUCC constitution? Or what goes on behind the scene, such as how do the flowers get up behind the altar, or how do the communion elements arrive at the altar on communion Sundays? For all of the



above information (and possibly more), join Leadership Development members in Pilgrim Hall on Sunday, October 26 after worship. Plans are to do the same on Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, and on Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. Members of the various ministries will be on hand to answer questions.

**WHO, WHAT, WHERE AND WHEN?**

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS - OCTOBER 26<sup>TH</sup>; NOVEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>  
AND NOVEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>.**

Leadership Development is planning to have information tables in Pilgrim Hall following services on the above noted dates. It is our hope all members of BUCC, old & new and friends thinking about joining BUCC will stop by the tables with questions for the representatives about the mission and activities of each group. There will be information packets available.

**OCTOBER 26<sup>TH</sup>**

Representatives of Christian Education, Stewardship, Facilities and Communication and Outreach will be in the hall to answer questions and listen to your suggestions.

**NOVEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>**

Delegates from Spiritual Life, Membership and Personnel will be there to answer questions and listen to suggestions.

**NOVEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup>**

You will be welcomed to talk with representatives from OCWM, Leadership Development, Finance and Women United. Also on this date any other ministries who have not had the opportunity to participate will join us.

## NEWS FROM OCWM



Last month, 37 boxes and bags of food, 2 bags of school supplies, 6 bags of toiletries, and soap and dental supplies were delivered to Community Corner. These items were very much appreciated. Thanks go to those who have been faithfully donating items. The "take a can to church" approach really works. The timing is gratifying because the need seems to be getting larger.



Looking ahead, the next hunger meal will be on December 21<sup>st</sup> at Pearl Road United Methodist Church. The menu is not yet determined, but about 120 or so meals are anticipated. More information will be provided later.



At this writing, another group of aluminum cans (and other metals) are ready to be redeemed. The funds are placed into the SARA fund at BUCC.

By the time you read this, the mitten tree will be in its accustomed place in the narthex at BUCC. This is an open invitation to decorate the tree with hats and mittens, which will be taken to one of the hunger centers to be distributed to those children who accompany their parents when they receive food items.



## NOTES AND ASIDES



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

<b>November 2:</b>	<b>Miriam Rosewicz</b>
<b>November 3:</b>	<b>Mike Westerberg</b>
	<b>Marietta Davis</b>
	<b>Eliza Jane Kolar</b>
	<b>Dassie Matsuoka</b>
	<b>Kara Rees</b>
	<b>Evelyn Duffy</b>
<b>November 4:</b>	<b>Melissa Lund</b>
<b>November 9:</b>	<b>Nancy Allenson</b>
	<b>Susan Stenzel</b>
	<b>Amelia Tyler</b>
<b>November 13:</b>	<b>Dan Maier</b>
<b>November 14:</b>	<b>Joe Gagliano</b>
<b>November 17:</b>	<b>Caroline Chandler</b>
	<b>Andrew Wilson</b>
<b>November 19:</b>	<b>Travis Anderson</b>
<b>November 23:</b>	<b>Wes Novak</b>

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

## BICENTENNIAL QUILT – HELP NEEDED

Want to help design the bicentennial quilt? Anyone interested in this project is invited to meet Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. in the church parlor. If interested contact Carole Snider (330-468-4774) or Caroline Chandler (440-526-9714).



## BOOK CLUB

Book Discussion: Monday, November 3 @ 1:00 in the Parlor. This month's book is "The 19<sup>th</sup> Wife" by David Ebershoff. Hope to see you there.



## CROP WALK

The following participants from BUCC collected pledges and walked in the CROP Walk: Doug and Nancy Allenson, Sam Koch, Briana Brown, Heidi Spangler, Anne Melfo, Victor Fawcett, Pastor Dave Shackle, and Susan Snyder. Dave Debick walked along with the group to provide moral support. The collected



slightly over \$1000 in pledges. Thank you to everyone who walked or sponsored a walker.

Susan Snyder  
CROP Walk Recruiter for BUCC

## FOOD PANTRY



**November - Small Canned Hams, Canned Sweet & White Potatoes, Cranberry Sauce, Canned Mixed Vegetables, Pie Crust Mix, Canned Pumpkin, etc.**

## LETTERS

**Dear Family and Friends,**

We are making good progress getting settled in our Idaho home. The forest of boxes and packing paper are nearly all gone, and much of our furniture is in place. We are happy to be here and especially enjoy being just about 5 minutes from Lisa and her family.



Following are important changes in contact information for your records:

**email:** Paul - [pnicholas86@centurylink.net](mailto:pnicholas86@centurylink.net); Janet - [jnicholas96@centurylink.net](mailto:jnicholas96@centurylink.net)  
**home phone:** 208-884-3418

**address:** 581 E. Cholla Hills St. Meridian, ID 83646

**Cell phones unchanged:** Paul - 440-832-6054; Janet - 440-832-6055

**Best wishes to you all, Paul and Janet**

## A LETTER OF THANKS



I wish to thank my friends at BUCC for their prayers and support during my series of medical procedures.  
Max Roha

## MUSIC

Our annual Christmas cantata is scheduled for Sunday Dec. 14 during regular morning worship. The cantata, which



recounts the Biblical story of Jesus Christ's miraculous birth among us, will feature BUCC's adult choir with seasonal choir members, several instrumentalists, and narrators. We hope you can be with us on Dec. 14 to experience this wonderful BUCC tradition.

## SAVE THE DATES! NORTH COAST MEN'S CHORUS

Organized in 1988, the North Coast Men's Chorus is entering



its 27th season. This will be my 13th season. I have been so grateful for the support the Chorus has received over the years from my friends at BUCC. But there are many more songs to be sung, and lots more fun to be had!

This season will begin with our holiday concert which again will be in the beautiful Hanna Theatre at Playhouse Square. "Baby It's Cold Outside" will take place on December 6th and 7th - three performances. You might want to get your tickets soon because this concert tends to sell out! You can order them on the Playhouse

Square website, or I can get them for you which will help you avoid surcharges.

Our spring concert is titled "Deliciously Wicked: The Music of Stephen Schwartz." Schwartz' blowout hit has been the musical "Wicked", but he's also famous for "Godspell" and "Pippin." Should be a great show!

This concert will be held at Notre Dame College's Regina Auditorium in South Euclid in two performances on April 11th and 12th.

Our June concert is "Welcome to the 60s!" What a wealth of FUN material! We'll be back at our traditional performance home, Cleveland State's Waetjen Auditorium on June 20th and 21st.

Season tickets are available. Lots of information about the group and our season can be found at [www.NCMChorus.org](http://www.NCMChorus.org).

## ENCORE



Pardon the Tacky Intro...  
(Text - Matthew 22:15-22)

Pastor Dave Shackle  
October 19, 2014

A man driving down the highway suddenly swerves to avoid a box that had fallen off the truck in front of

him, broke open and covered the road with hundreds of little nails. Moments later, a police officer pulls the man over and cites him for reckless driving. As the officer starts writing the ticket, the man points to the nails on the road. "You see, officer, I had to swerve or I would have run over all those tiny

little nails and blown a tire!" "I completely understand", the officer replies, tearing up the ticket, "But now I'm afraid I'm going to have to arrest you." "Arrest me? For what?" "For *tacks* evasion."

If you think that joke was bad, imagine how bad it would be to be forced to pay taxes to support a foreign army occupying your homeland. In Jesus' day, the people of Israel are doing just that. That's why the tax collectors are so vehemently despised. That's also why the religious authorities think that they finally have Jesus trapped, with their question about paying taxes. If he says "yes" to paying taxes to the emperor, the people will resent and reject him; but if he says "No, don't pay the tax," then the Roman officials can take him away as a subversive enemy of the state. Either way, the Pharisees figure that they're poised to ruin Jesus' ability to inspire and lead the people; however, once again, they're wrong.

In spite of their attempt to force him to give a direct "yes" or "no answer", Jesus doesn't play into their hand. He knows that their question is simply a trap, and not a sincere quest for the truth. So he's not going to give those scheming questioners anything to use against him. Nonetheless, even though Jesus side-steps their trap, he still addresses the genuine issue that's been raised - which is the issue of where one's loyalty and commitment ultimately lie. And this is a timeless issue, which challenges people of every nation and in every generation - including you and me today.

Jesus provides no easy answers to those who struggle to be faithful to God, *and* loyal to their nation; but he does *coin* a phrase (so to speak) which provides a guiding principle to apply to this endeavor. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's!" In other

words, Jesus seems to be encouraging people to figure out the implications of this issue for their own time and situation.

In an occupied land, like First Century Israel, where people have no political freedom, civil *obedience* is sometimes required in order to simply survive. However, for citizens of a free land, well-informed and conscientious civil *disobedience* may be needed - in order to be faithful to God *and* genuinely loyal to one's country. In Jesus' case, his focus is on advancing the boundless and borderless Realm of Divine love and grace; therefore the issues of Roman rule is really beside the point. Whether Caesar is in charge, or if the Hebrew King Herod suddenly took over, Jesus' way of proclaiming and showing Divine love and grace would probably look the same. And maybe this can give you and me some insight for determining where our own loyalties lie, and how those loyalties can actually be implemented in our own lives.

In this morning's Call to Worship, the Psalmist declares, "The earth is God's, and *all* that is within it; the world, and all that dwells therein." And Jesus himself is totally committed to this notion of a Divine "Eminent Domain" over all things, all people, and all of Life. Therefore Jesus doesn't allow the religious or political powers of his day to keep him from fully enjoying Life, or from enhancing the lives of those around him. And he certainly doesn't allow narrow-minded social, religious, or political prejudices to keep him from reaching out to all kinds of people, regardless of their past history or current status.

For Jesus, judging people as being either good or bad, and categorizing things as being either sacred or secular, are pointless endeavors. To him, there is no one or no thing in all of Creation that doesn't ultimately belong to the Divine Source from which they originate. And in Jesus' practical

application of that belief, there is no person on earth who cannot receive or reflect the gracious love of that Divine Source. In fact, Jesus makes a special effort to evoke that Divine Compassion and Grace from those people who many see as miserable, despicable *sinners*: foreigners and fornicators, lepers and losers, shady prostitutes and social pariahs. Jesus even recognizes the Divine worth in those Empire-employed *tax-collectors* - inviting one of them, Matthew, to be part of his closest circle of followers and friends.

Jesus has this remarkable ability to keep his focus on the Divine Presence and Preeminence in Life, regardless of where he is or who he's with; which is why he can bring-forth a Divine response from all kinds of people. Now obviously, there are some people who don't embrace or reflect Divine Goodness and Grace; just as there are some times in your life and mine when we fail to embrace or reflect Divine Light and Love. But this doesn't mean that our Divine Source is absent; it means that we are choosing to act in ways that disregard or dismiss that Divine Presence. I'll admit that for me, sometimes going the "way of the world" seems a bit more solid and sensible and secure, than trusting in the Divine Way of Compassion, Grace, and Vulnerability. So I opt for more of a *social* security, rather than a *sacred* one. I trust in the physical reality I can touch, rather than the Spiritual Reality that can touch me.

Fortunately, the Good News that Jesus Christ reveals, is that the Divine Presence is *incarnate*, and *inescapable* - that the Sacred Imprint is everywhere, and the Divine DNA is in everything! This is why Jesus can say that it's appropriate to "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Because in the final analysis, *all* things come from God, belong to God, and return to God! When you and I remember this and trust it, we will be far

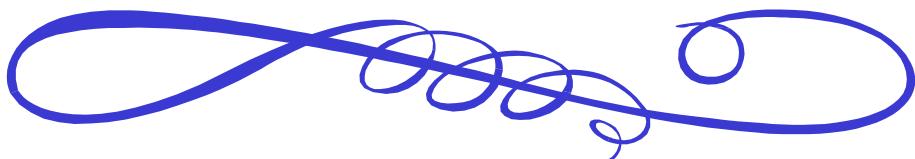
more willing to render all that we have and all that we are, toward advancing that which is good and loving and positive. And this affects every aspect of our lives, including our citizenship. For when you and I realize that we owe it to ourselves, our God and our country, to give - and to expect - the very best, we will do what we can to work for a good and just government. Because when you and I pay our taxes (assuming that we *do*) we then have a vested interest in advocating that the money be used in ways that are in line with a Holy and Wholesome purpose.

This is why it's possible and *patriotic* for American citizens to support our military troops, yet strongly protest against the way in which those troops are used. We can respect and honor the men and women who courageously serve in our armed forces, yet still speak-out against governmental policies and practices that are detrimental to our nation and to our world. For example, the fact that the U.S. spends more on military programs than the other top 19 nations in the world *combined*, just might set off an alarm in the minds of us Citizens who seek to follow the Prince of Peace! Therefore, it's appropriate as good Christians and good Americans to advocate that at least a moderate fraction of those 700 *billion* annual military dollars be diverted toward hunger relief, housing, health care, or (if we've gotta fight) combating cancer or Ebola! Regardless of where our political loyalties lie, we must remember that our ultimate allegiance belongs to the Compassionate Source of all Life, who calls you and me to honor and respect all humankind, "the earth, and all that dwells therein!"

When we do remember this, it gives us the inspiration and the courage to work for an honest, fair, and peaceful society. It keeps us from the illusion that there is *anything* in our lives, or any part of our lives, which cannot be rendered to our

Divine Source. And it empowers us to follow the Way of Jesus Christ - the One who renders himself completely to God and to others; the One who - today - graciously calls for you and me to do the same.

If we work together at this, I believe we'll find that it really doesn't have to be that *taxing!*



## BUCC CALENDAR NOVEMBER 2014

**Saturday November 1**

8:30-11:30 am  
Fall Clean-Up

**Sunday, November 2**

10 am Worship and  
Church School  
11 am Coffee Hour &  
"Ministries Fair"  
1-4:30 Lakeview Trip  
5:30 Youth Percuss.  
6 pm Youth Ministries

**Monday, November 3**

1 pm Book Club

**Tuesday, November 4**

10-11:30 CWRU  
7 pm Membership

**Wed, November 5**

6 am Early Birds  
4:30 Recorder/Dul.

**Thursday, November 6**

1 pm Bible Study  
5:30 Joyful Noise  
7 pm Seasonal Choir  
8 pm Choir

**Friday, November 7****Saturday, November 8**

9 am Facilities

**Sunday, November 9**

10 am Worship and  
Church School  
11 am Coffee Hour &  
"Ministries Fair"  
6 pm Confirmation

**Monday, November 10****Tuesday, November 11**

10-11:30 CWRU

**Wed, November 12**

6 am Early Birds  
4:30 Recorder/Dul.  
7 pm Council

**Thursday, Nov 13**

1 pm Bible Study  
5:30 Joyful Noise  
7 pm Seasonal Choir  
8 pm Choir

**Friday, November 14****Saturday, Nov. 15**  
PILLAR DEADLINE**Sunday, November 16**

10 am Worship and  
Church School  
11 am Coffee Hour –  
Stewardship  
Thanksgiving  
Banquet

**Monday, November 17****Tuesday, November 18****Wed, November 19**

6 am Early Birds  
11:30 am

Women United

2 pm Bicent Quilt  
Meeting  
4:30 Recorder/Dul.

**Thurs., November 20**

1 pm Bible Study  
5:30 Joyful Noise  
7 pm Seasonal Choir  
8 pm Choir

**Friday, November 21****Saturday, Nov.22****Sunday, November 23**

10 am Worship and  
Church School  
11 am Coffee Hour  
6 pm Confirmation

**Monday, November 24****Tuesday, November 25****Wed, November 26**  
6 am Early Birds**Thursday, November 27**  
HAPPY THANKSGIVING  
OFFICE CLOSED**Friday, November 28**  
OFFICE CLOSED**Saturday, Nov. 29****Sunday, November 30**  
10 am Worship and  
Church School  
11 am Coffee Hour  
11:30 OCWM  
5:30 Youth Percuss.  
6 pm Youth Ministries

## Participants in Worship

### NOVEMBER 2, 2014

Lay Reader: David Ritchey  
 Head Usher: Jan Renovetz  
 Ushers: Dave & Julie Bernard  
 Bob & Caroline Chandler  
 Acolyte: Courtni Began  
 Peace Cndl: Carli Began  
 Sound: Mike Westerbrg  
 Commons Grtr: Carole Snider  
 Narthex Grtr: Dorie Gabor  
 Flowers: Tina Ortiz  
 Nursery: Gina Cook  
 Counters: Nancy Stella, Kathy Lander  
 Server: Joanne Cook, Dorie Gabor  
 Clean Up: Bridget & Chad Sproul  
 Snacks: Sue Maier & Melissa Lund

### NOVEMBER 9, 2014

Lay Reader: Jill Zedan  
 Head Usher: Diane Gressley  
 Ushers: Jim Duffy, Val Duffy  
 Dan Stewart, Ian Stewart  
 Acolyte: Ryan Stewart  
 Peace Cndl: Drew Demko  
 Sound: Doug Fawcett  
 Commons Grtr: Ann Kelley  
 Narthex Grtr: George Snider  
 Flowers: Dorie Gabor  
 Nursery: Peg Duffy  
 Counters: Bruce McCain, Anna Mary Fisher  
 Servers: Joy Garapic, Caroline Chandler  
 Clean-Up: Kathy & Dave Pastor  
 Snacks: Anne Melfo, Lenore Harris

### NOVEMBER 16, 2014

Lay Reader: Betsey Wilson  
 Head Usher: Caroline Chandler  
 Ushers: Spencer Whyte, Donn Whyte  
 Dorie Gabor, Kathy Smith  
 Acolyte: Grace Hunt  
 Peace Cndl: Lily Hunt  
 Sound: Val Duffy  
 Commons Grtr: Linda Kriyovich  
 Narthex Grtr: Dot Bailey  
 Flowers: Tina Ortiz

Nursery: Marla Corrado  
 Counters: Stu Bailey, Jim Duffy  
 Servers: Dottie & Jim Farwell  
 Clean-Up: Kathy & David Pastor  
 Snacks: Thanksgiving Dinner – Cliff & Sue Stenzel

### NOVEMBER 23, 2014

Lay Reader: David Pastor  
 Head Usher: Jon Thompson  
 Ushers: Kathy Pastor, David Ritchey  
 Dot & Stu Bailey  
 Acolyte: Jillian Davis  
 Peace Candle: Garrett Demko  
 Sound: Kevin Smith  
 Commons Grtr: Fred Pesek  
 Narthex Grtr: Linda Kriyovich  
 Flowers: Carole Snider  
 Nursery: Shauna Bigelow  
 Counters: Donn Whyte, Mac Hoppel  
 Servers: Sue Stenzel, Carole Snider  
 Clean-Up: Marge Culver, Pat Bailey  
 Snacks: Gina Cook & Marilyn Wrights

### NOVEMBER 30, 2014

Layer Reader: Kathy Pastor  
 Head Usher: Bridget Sproul  
 Ushers: Dorie Gabor, Joanne Cook  
 Sam Koch, Wes Novak  
 Naomi Klonowski  
 Olivia Klonowski  
 Sound: Dave Bernard  
 Comns Grtr: Caroline Chander  
 Narthex Grtr: Sue Stenzel  
 Flowers: Kathy Pastor  
 Nursery: Kara Reese  
 Counters: David Pastor, Carole Snider  
 Servers: Darlene Kelly, Dorie Gabor  
 Clean Up: Jan Renovetz, Jon Thompson  
 Snacks: Susan Snyder, Mary Ann Hoppel

(Continued Next Column)

## *Thanksgiving Dinner Prayer*

O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker. (Psalms 95:1-6)



# *The Pillar*

is published monthly by the

**Brecksville**

**United Church of Christ**

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**FIRST CLASS**