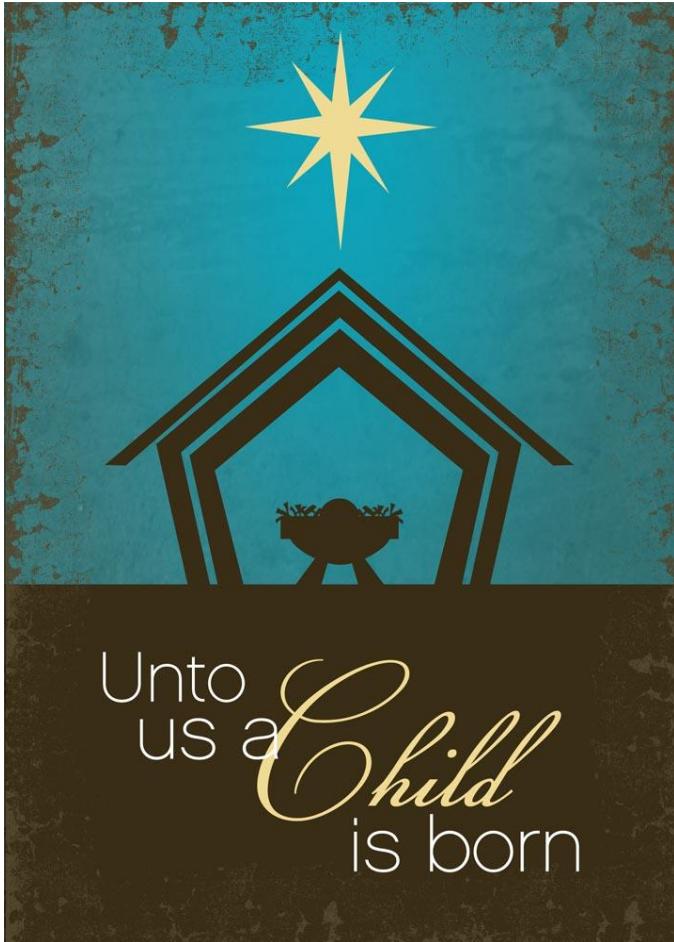


The Pillar

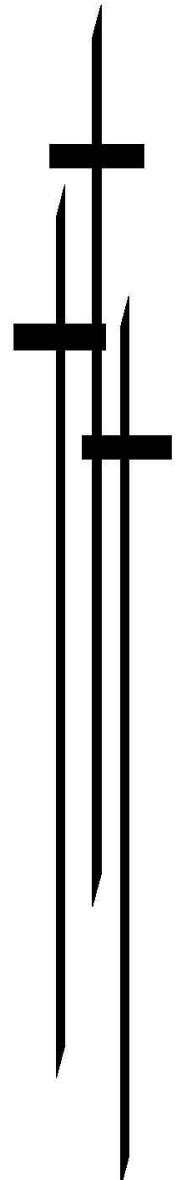
Brecksville United Church of Christ

DECEMBER, 2015



Unto
us a *Child*
is born

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





Pastor's Ponderings

...No Matter How You Say It...

Feliz Navidad!

Joyeux Noël!

Buon Natale!

Kala

Christouyenna!

When the heavenly messenger announced to the shepherds the birth of the Christ Child, that powerful Word reverberated throughout the entire world.

“Do not be afraid, for behold

I bring you good tidings of great joy that will be for *all* people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Savior who is Christ the Lord!” Today, that message of Good News continues to echo throughout every land, and in every language. And even though a lot of the “Christmas” Message gets intermingled with cultural traditions of evergreens and elves, sleigh-rides and Santas, the heart of this Holy Season is clearly that gracious gift of Divine Love.

In that newborn baby of Bethlehem, in that compassionate teacher of Galilee, and through that vulnerable man on the cross, you and I are reminded that Divine Love touches every aspect of human life. And in Christ’s rising anew, we discover that even Life’s most tragic events, can ultimately be transformed into signs of hope and rebirth. The beauty of the Christmas Message is that it reminds us that there is no one on earth, and no place on this planet, that is beyond the redemptive reach of our Divine Source. Wherever and whenever the Christmas Story is told - regardless of the language or imagery that is used - the Light and Love which was born that day will always find a way to shine-through!

This month we celebrate Christ’s birth with candles and carols, our Cantata and our Children’s Pageant, beautiful decorations and joyful *declarations* of hope and peace.

We will also keep our eyes open for those other signs of that Divine Presence among us: the smile of a newborn baby, the joy of our children, the kind words and gestures of friendship that are exchanged among us. I pray that in this Holy Season you and I will see, experience, and truly appreciate some of those marvelous wonders that surround us every day of the year. I also hope that we will look for, and find, new and creative ways to share those "Good Tidings of Great Joy" with *all* the people we meet!

Peace & Joy!
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.

HERE WE COME A'CAROLING! On Sunday, December 20th, at 2:00 pm, our youth, adults, and children will meet at the church to go caroling to our home-bound members. This is a great opportunity to sing some of our favorite Christmas carols while bringing a special Christmas greeting to those members who regularly cannot join us for worship. We will return to the church at 4:00, to warm ourselves with some hot chocolate and other goodies!

THAT PESKY PARKING PROBLEM! For the past few Sundays, our parking lot has been completely full. What a great problem to have! In an effort to be hospitable to our visitors and help those arriving late, we ask that those of you who can readily do so, park in the school lot next door. This is just another way in which we can signal our desire to be accessible and welcoming to all, particularly as the Winter weather sets in!

FROM THE MINISTRIES OF BUCC

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



Reminder: If you have a new address, please let the office know of the change, also if you have recently given up your land line and are using only a cell phone, please make us aware of your cell phone number.

OCWM



The next hunger meal will be served on Sunday, December 6th at Bethany UCC. It is anticipated that about 50 or 60 meals will be served. The menu will be ham, green beans, potatoes, salad, and dessert. Two shifts of volunteers are needed: 2:30 PM through 4:00 PM to set up and prepare, and from 4:00 PM through 6:00 PM to serve and clean up. Also volunteers to provide cookies for dessert would be nice. The sign – up board will be in the narthex, as well as directions to the church.

The Christmas Offering will be received at the Christmas Eve service, on Thursday, December 24th at 10:00 PM. This offering (formerly known as Veterans of the Cross) will be used to help meet the needs of retired and low-income clergy and lay employees of the UCC. This fund works all throughout the year, not just at Christmas time. The money goes directly to those who have served in the past or who serve the church now, especially in times of critical need. This also includes health premium supplementation and prescription medication coverage.

NOTES AND ASIDES

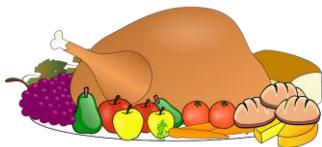
BICENTENNIAL MINISTRY



Looking For Awesome Stocking Stuffers? The Bicentennial Ministry has the perfect gift! We're offering LED magnetic, waterproof flashlights for just \$5 each (yep, just in time for Christmas!) Funds raised will help defray costs of our yearlong bicentennial celebration. Flashlights will be available for sale beginning Sunday, December 6th following worship in Fellowship Hall.

Can't wait? See George Snider! Thank you for supporting the Bicentennial Ministry!

BLESSINGS JAR



We send our sincere thanks to Sue & Cliff Stenzel for their faithful service and for their culinary skills.

The Thanksgiving dinner was delicious.

Thanks too for all the others who prepared food, and to everyone who sent the dinner for us to enjoy at home. Thanks to all that helped. We are truly blessed with a loving, caring community at BUCC.

Love, Bill & Ann Toneff

A BRIEF CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



Will be held on Sunday, December 13th, following worship. We will be presenting the preliminary 2016 budget and approving the 2016 slate of officers.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The group has concluded the set of books for 2015. Our discussions are fun but penetrating. Every member brings special insights about the books. I have thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity. When I reopened a card from the group, I was surprised to see a very generous gift card included. ☺ I will enjoy this gift but am also working on ways to share this generosity. Many thanks but the opportunity itself was a gift. Dot Bailey



FOOD PANTRY

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



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

December 4:	Jon Thompson
	Doug Fawcett
December 6:	Kevin Smith
	Jacob VanDuyne
December 12:	Betty Einhart
December 13:	Grace Hunt
	Michael VanDuyne
December 17:	Shannon West
December 19:	David Durkit
December 20:	Genny Costanzo
	Naomi Klonowski
	Jim Duffy
	Jill Black
December 21:	Bob Chandler
December 25:	Linda Kriynovich
	Jesus
December 28:	Dan Stewart
	Valerie Duffy
December 29:	Amy Coyer-Westerberg

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

GIVING TREE



This year's Giving Tree will benefit the International Newcomer's Academy @ Thomas Jefferson. Many members of our congregation have given countless hours to volunteer at this English immersion school. Since so many members of BUCC are volunteering at Thomas Jefferson, Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM) committee has heard that this unique

Cleveland school has many other needs. You can help by choosing an ornament off the Giving Tree and purchasing an item for a teacher's classroom. (***Continued next page***)

A box will be provided near the tree to collect your generous donations. There are small requests for pencils and crayons, and larger wishes for things like bean bag chairs for a reading center. All items will be delivered to the school the first week of January to give the students a great start to the New Year. Bless you all for your continued support of this special school.

HELP WANTED

The number of persons required to participate in staffing the Sunday morning Worship Services is larger than is apparent at first sight. The rosters for several participant lists need more people.



Additional **Sound** people, especially women, are welcome as well as men. Training is provided.

Nursery Angels are really needed. This is usually very easy, as it involves checking to see if our nursery worker needs help.

Occasionally Rachelle takes a Sunday off and the nursery angel fills in for her. **Peace Candle** carriers are in short supply, too. And we always need additional **Ushers** and **Greeters**.

If you can help with the jobs mentioned above, as well as ushers and greeters, please contact Caroline Chandler.

MUSIC



Christmas Cantata: This year's Christmas Cantata is scheduled for Sunday, December 13 at our regular morning worship. "Welcome to Our World," created by Claire Cloninger and Robert Sterling, features a number of memorable contemporary Christmas songs, along with a lively medley of traditional carols.

The cantata will be presented by BUCC's adult and seasonal choirs, an instrumental ensemble and narrators. We hope you can join us for this holiday tradition.

FOR RENT



Brecksville United Church of Christ has been blessed with a beautiful facility, but did you know we have affordable rooms available for rent? The church's location in the center of Brecksville is ideal, complete with a side entrance and handicap access. The lower level of the Christian Education wing has been previously rented for yoga classes, music lessons and driver's education training, among other things. It is specifically zoned for church and educational ventures. A detailed map of the rentable rooms is available in the church office, but here is a brief breakdown: Room #251: 18' x 15'; Room # 252: 18' x 28'; Room #253: 18' x 32'; and Room #254: approx. 326 sq. ft. Bathrooms are easily accessible, as is a separate outdoor entrance.

If you or someone you know would like to rent one of the rooms and need more information, please talk to Pastor Dave.

A HUGE THANK YOU



The Spiritual Life ministry would be very remiss if we didn't say "THANK YOU" to everyone involved in the writing and production of our annual Advent Devotional Book. First, thank you to everyone who wrote a passage for it. Next, thank you to our superb Office Manager Jeannette Kroeger, who kept us on a schedule and produced a beautiful book. And thank you to Pastor Dave and Jane Cribbs who proofread, and to Marge Culver who proofread and also helped assemble the book Thank you to all! May we all have a blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year! Jon Thompson

ENCORE



All of Pastor Dave's Sermons are online at our Church Website and also available in the office on audio CDs for listening at home or in your car.

Thank You.



CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH POINSETTIAS IN OUR SANCTUARY



Your Donation will buy plants which will be shared after Christmas with those who are ill or shut-in, or have recently lost a loved one. Please fill out the form at the bottom of this page, and turn it in to the Church Office

DEADLINE – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

I Enclose \$10.00 _____ or other _____ for Poinsettias

In Memory _____ or Honor _____ or _____

*Of _____

_____*

Your Name

I WILL HELP DELIVER PLANTS TO SHUT-INS _____

*****PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KEEP YOUR POINSETTIA OR LEAVE IT HERE FOR SHUT-INS AND OTHERS*****

WILL KEEP _____

WILL NOT KEEP _____

BUCC CALENDAR

DECEMBER, 2015

Tuesday, Dec. 1

Wednesday, Dec. 2

6 am Early Birds
4:30-5 Recorder/Dulc.
7 pm Spiritual Life

Thursday, Dec. 3

1 pm Bible Study
5:30 Joyful Noise
7:00 Seasonal
Choir
8:00 Choir

Friday, Dec. 4

Saturday, Dec. 5

Sunday, Dec. 6

10 am Worship
Church School
11 am Coffee Hour
11:30 am Percussion Practice
For Cantata
Hunger Meal - Bethany

Monday, Dec. 7

Tuesday, Dec. 8

Wednesday, Dec. 9

6 am Early Birds
7 pm Council

Thursday, Dec. 10

1 pm Bible Study
5:30 Pageant Rehearsal
7:00 – 9:00 pm Cantata Prac.

Friday, Dec. 11

Saturday, Dec. 12

10:00 am Cantata Rehearsal
12:00 Cantata -
Chippewa Place

Sunday, Dec. 13

10 am Worship/Cantata and
Church School
**Congregational
Meeting**
11 am Coffee Hour

Monday, Dec. 14

Tuesday, Dec. 15
PILLAR DEADLINE

Wednesday, Dec. 16

6 am Early Birds
11:30 am Women United

Thursday, Dec. 17

1 pm Bible Study
5:30 Pageant
Rehearsal

Friday, Dec. 18

Saturday, Dec. 19

Sunday, Dec. 20

10 am Worship/Pageant
11 am Coffee Hour
2 pm Caroling
5:30pm Youth
Percussion
6 pm Youth Ministry

Monday, Dec. 21

Tuesday, Dec. 22

Wednesday, Dec. 23

6 am Early Birds

Thursday, Dec. 24

Christmas Eve

9:00 pm Choir
10:00 pm Candlelight
Service

Friday, Dec. 25

Merry Christmas!
OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, Dec. 26

Sunday, Dec. 27

10 am Worship and
Church School
11 am Coffee Hour

Monday, Dec. 28

Tuesday, Dec. 29

Wednesday, Dec. 30

Thursday, Dec. 31

Participants in Worship

DECEMBER 6, 2015

Lay Reader: Cliff Cribbs
 Head Usher: Evie Novak
 Ushers: Ed Lusk, Wes Novak
 Chad & Bridget Sproul
 Acolyte: Ben Davis
 Peace Candle: Olivia Klonowski
 Sound: Max Roha
 Comns Grtr: Jane Cribbs
 Narthex Grtr: Lenore Harris
 Flowers: Dot Bailey
 Nursery: Gina Cook
 Counters: Nancy Stella, Jon Thompson
 Servers: Dottie Farwell, Joanne Cook
 Clean Up: Peg & Jim Duffy
 Snacks: Vicki Szabo, Marla Corrado
 Snow Herder: Jim Farwell

DECEMBER 13, 2015

Lay Reader: David Ritchey
 Head Usher: Caroline Chandler
 Ushers: Dorie Gabor, Sam Koch
 Beth Rehling, Dan Stewart
 Acolyte: Grace Hunt
 Peace Candle: Lily Hunt
 Sound: David Pastor
 Comns Grtr: Marge Culver
 Narthex Grtr: Linda Kriyovich
 Flowers: POINSETTIAS
 Nursery: Jon Cook
 Counters: Kathy Pastor, Jim Duffy
 Servers: Sue Stenzel, Dottie Farwell
 Clean-Up: Kathy & David Pastor
 Snacks: Marilyn Wrights, Gina Cook
 Snow Herder: Dave Bernard

DECEMBER 20, 2015

Lay Reader: Jon Thompson
 Head Usher: Bob Chandler
 Ushers: Tina Ortiz, Jim Duffy
 David & Kathy Pastor
 Acolyte: Ryan Stewart
 Peace Candle: Drew Demko
 Sound: Doug Melfo
 Comns Grtr: Wes Novak
 Narthex Grtr: George Snider
 Flowers: POINSETTIAS
 Nursery: Kara Rees
 Counters: Marge Culver, Sue Stenzel
 Caroline Chandler, Dorie
 Gabor, Robin Coyer-
 Westerberg
 Servers: (Continued Next Column)

Clean-Up:

Jan Renovetz, Pat Bailey
 Marge Culver, Annie Demko
 Matt Wolbert

DECEMBER 24, 2015

Lay Reader: Betsey Wilson
 Head Usher: Jan Renovetz
 Ushers: Carole & George Snider
 Fred Pesek, David Pastor
 Jill Zedan
 Sound: Doug Melfo
 Counters: David Pastor, Caroline Chandler
 Snow Herder: Cliff Cribbs

DECEMBER 27, 2015

Lay Reader: Diane Gressley
 Head Usher: Kathy Smith
 Ushers: Heidi Spangler, Lindsey
 Maier, Matt Wolbert, Kate
 Acolyte: Drew Demko
 Peace Candle: Garrett Demko
 Sound: Kevin Smith
 Comns Grtr: Ann Kelley
 Narthex Grtr: George Snider
 Flowers: Dorie Gabor
 Nursery: Kathy Pastor
 Counters: David Pastor, Jan Renovetz
 Servers: Joanne Cook
 Clean Up: Bridget & Chad Sproul
 Snacks: Tina Ortiz, Tia Began
 Snow Herder: Billy Harris

The Pillar

is published monthly by the

Brecksville United Church of Christ

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FIRST CLASS