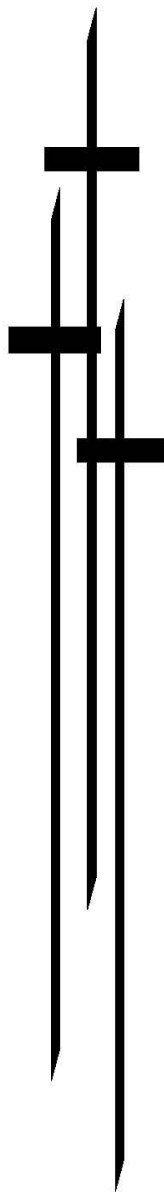
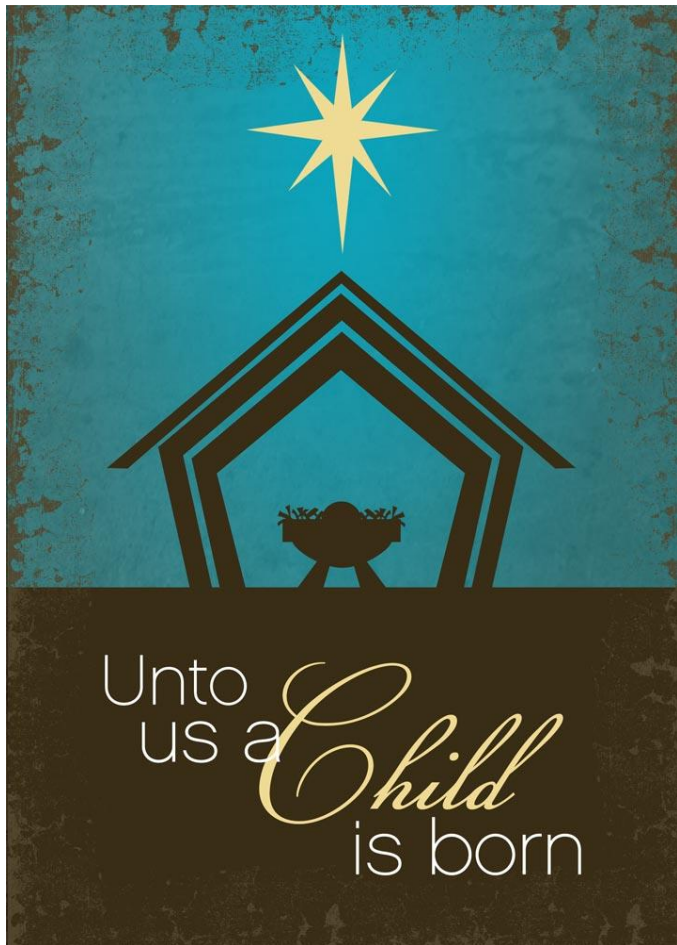


# The *Pillar*

Brecksville United Church of Christ

**DECEMBER, 2015**



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



**...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 20<sup>th</sup>, 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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 24<sup>th</sup> 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

### BICENNNTENIAL 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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**

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**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  
Comms 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  
Comms Grtr: Marge Culver  
Narthex Grtr: Linda Kriynovich  
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  
Comms Grtr: Wes Novak  
Narthex Grtr: George Snider  
Flowers: POINSETTIAS  
Nursery: Kara Rees  
Counters: Marge Culver, Sue Stenzel  
Servers: Caroline Chandler, Dorie Gabor, Robin Coyer-Westerberg  
(Continued Next Column)

Clean-Up: Jan Renovetz, Pat Bailey  
Snacks: Marge Culver, Annie Demko  
Snow Herder: Matt Wolbert

### DECEMBER 24, 2015

Lay Reader: Betsey Wilson  
Head Usher: Jan Renovetz  
Ushers: Carole & George Snider  
Fred Pesek, David Pastor  
Comms Grtr: 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  
Comms 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**

