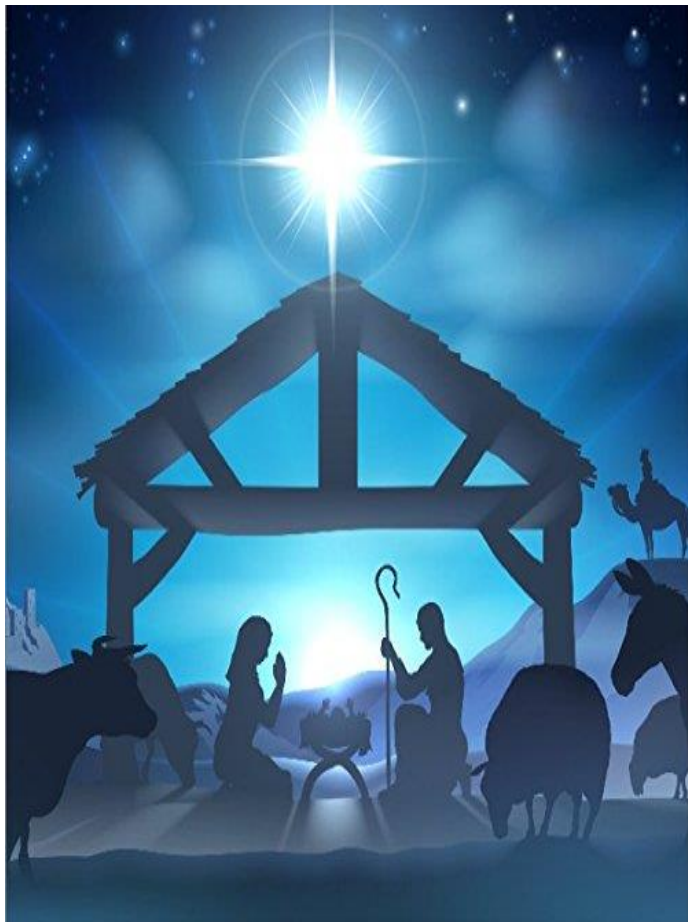


# The *Pillar*

Brecksville United Church of Christ

***December 2019***



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

## ***Pastor's Ponderings.....***

The snow is here, and December is here, and Advent is upon us once again. The word 'Advent' comes from the Latin *adventus*, and it means 'the arrival.' So arrival time it is, and we celebrate Jesus as the one who was prophesied to come, who actually came, and who has promised to come again.

The season of Arrival starts with the anticipation of the Messiah's coming. Generations were hoping, praying, living for the day when God would set things right, when all those who found themselves on the bottom looking up would find themselves on the top looking down, or at least, on a level playing field looking out on fair treatment and a just way of making a living.

People were looking for a time when God would stop their oppressors from oppressing them, stop their exploiters from exploiting them, and stop the powerful from overpowering them. When the Messiah came, it was to be a time of peace, when swords would be beaten into plowshares, and the lion would lie down with the lamb, when creation would be at rest. This was their hope: the arrival of the Messiah would be the arrival of a golden age of justice and peace.

When Jesus did finally arrive, it was into a time of criminal injustice, both from foreign overlords, the Romans, and the domestic puppets the Romans had put in place to rule over Judea, the Herodian dynasty. The first experience Jesus had in this world was that of being a refugee running for his life from a murderous dictator. That was the story of his whole life: a life not exempted from the trials and tribulations of others. He lost his father, Joseph, early, and responsibility for his mother and brothers and sisters was thrust upon him. He worked with his hands as a carpenter's or, more accurately, a cabinet maker's son, and he had little or no wealth to fall back on. He was rejected in his home synagogue and lived on the road from the generosity of others, notably some wealthy women who followed him. He taught and healed and fed and confronted the powerful. In the end, he was put to death because his presence in the world was so disturbing to the powers that be that they were afraid of becoming powers that weren't.

Christian faith has proclaimed that Jesus' death wasn't really the end, that his departure was a prelude to another arrival, next time not in humility, but in power and glory.

And that brings the story to us: the long-awaited Messiah has come, lived, died and gone. But prophecy and Jesus' own words promise that he will come again, and then, finally, at this second arrival, love will triumph over hate, grace will triumph over sin, and life will triumph over death for everyone, and not just for him. This is the story into which we are currently writing our chapter. We are practicing love and grace and life so that we can make ourselves ready for his new arrival, as so many of the parables enjoin us to do. It's unlikely to happen any time soon, of course, but by preparing ourselves to live in a world of justice and love, we make the world a better place for everyone as we wait once more for the Arrival of the Messiah. May Advent be a time of blessing to us all!

*If you would like to have a pastoral visit in your home, or simply need to talk, please call Pastor Allan Lane at the church office [440-526-4364] or call him on his cell at [513-417-1537] Please leave a message if he doesn't answer as he may be driving. He will be glad to meet with you*



## **FROM THE MINISTRIES OF BUCC**

### **FROM THE MODERATOR:**

### **CONGREGATION IN TRANSITION**

Dear fellow members,

The next task in our transition is to develop a Congregational Vision: a series of statements about "who we are" and "where are we going" in order to provide input to our Pastoral Search.

This work will be done in parallel with our other ministries, so we realize that it will take time to properly discern our vision.

Your Congregational Council, and Pastor Allan will lead us through the process following this timeframe:

- Throughout the process: During “Prayers of the Church”, Pastor Allan will pray for us as we seek to discern and articulate our vision
- By the end of 2019: We will gather all the existing source materials: Previous Congregation Profiles, BUCC Mission Statements, Affirmation of Welcome, Ministry Descriptions & previous Surveys
- In January 2020: We will gather demographic information about our membership, local and wider community, nearby churches, as well as nearby UCC churches. We will ask “what is our boundary?”
- February & March 2020: We will “poll” our congregation on various topics: our assets & resources, needs and service opportunities. Asking questions: what would excite us if we did it, why we are here, what are we about? To gather this input, we will hold “focus groups” at church or in people’s homes.
- April 2020: We will combine all the inputs into a draft Vision statement, which will be validated by the Council, revising as we go.
- May 2020: We will share this draft with the Congregation and discuss through similar Focus Groups, revising as needed.
- Pentecost 2020: As we celebrate the “beginning of the Church”, we will celebrate and approve our vision document at a Congregational meeting.

In parallel with the later parts of the visioning process, we will form the Pastoral Search Committee, so that they can start searching for someone to help us fulfill our newly affirmed vision as soon as it is approved.

I am excited to be working with all of you as we continue our journey as a congregation.

May the Peace of Christ be with us, Jim Duffy 216-644-2784

## **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**



The Christmas Pageant, “Our Gifts to Jesus” will be taking place during the service on Sunday, December 15th. If you are a parent or student and would like more information, please email Kate Klonowski, CE Chair at [keightykay@gmail.com](mailto:keightykay@gmail.com) or call/text (216) 534-3498.

The CE Students are invited to host a table at the “Drum up the Gifts” BUCC Holiday Bazaar happening after church on December 1st. All are welcome to help! All proceeds will be going to support the Cleveland Roots Urban Farm!

We welcome everyone to seriously consider if they would be willing to serve on the Christian Education Ministry for 2020. We can use both teachers and others who would like to support the ministry in other ways (i.e. helping to plan and host educational events at the church, organize fun field trips and activities, etc.)

CE is so much more than church school on Sunday. Come find out more! Our next meeting will be Wednesday, December 11th at 7:00pm at the Panera in Brecksville.

## **FACILITIES**

### **Do you know someone looking for a nice apartment?**

BUCC has a very nice 2-bedroom unit available for rent in our Arlington Street property. The unit has an eat-in-kitchen, dining room, and living room on the first floor, and two bedrooms and bath on the second floor. The unit comes complete with a stove, fridge, washer and dryer, garage parking and cozy front porch. The unit will be available December 1st, and rents for \$850 per month. Please pass the word around! Thank you.



1. We are preparing a NEW Mission statement.
2. In the process of replacing our light fixture above the front church doors.

3. Overseeing process of repairing concrete ramp for parlor entrance.
4. Monitoring LED lighting upgrades.
5. Discussing thermostat upgrade for Narthex.
6. Seeking replacement tenant for one of two rental properties.
7. Have completed the following:
  - a. Replaced parking lock shed lock.
  - b. Prepared for winter: snow-blower, shovels & ice melt pails.
  - c. Recruited new Facilities & snow-herder members.
  - d. Oversaw hot water tank repairs.

### **FINANCE**

During 2019 the following funds have been sent to the Living Water Association:

Strengthen the Church	\$520
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$720
Neighbors in Need	\$693



In addition, three quarters of OCWM in the amount of \$11,437.50 were also paid.

When the money in the Christmas Fund and the last quarter of OCWM are sent before the end of the year, we will be 5 for 5.

An unsealed pledge envelope was received with no pledge card. If you do not receive a thank-you letter for your pledge, please contact Joy Garapic.

### **FINANCING BUCC INTO THE FUTURE**

As we look back on the progress BUCC made under Dave Shackle's guidance and look forward to what BUCC may accomplish in the future, the Finance Committee wanted to offer a few observations.

First, we celebrate a stable and relatively secure financial situation at BUCC.

Although contributions do not fully fund the church's operations, our savings still make up the shortfall, and the congregation always digs deeper when special needs (e.g., roof repairs) arise.

Yet that also poses some challenges. BUCC can maintain deficits as long as the savings hold out, but the deficits are persistent and current contributions are heavily dependent upon a few large donors. We must therefore remember that BUCC's expense levels are more assured than the current level of contributions. Although the congregation has always been good about contributing more when needed, it is much easier to do so for a one-time expenditure on property than an ongoing need for operating cash.

Even more important, perhaps, the current financial condition could limit BUCC's ability to reach out in new ways. Financially, there is a major difference between surviving and thriving. As the congregation envisions where this church will go on its next step into the future, the Finance Committee recommends that consideration of the financial wherewithal be incorporated as part of that vision.

As part of our annual stewardship drive, we emphasize all the talents and time that we can give. And while time, talent, and monetary contributions are equally valued, the reflection on our current financial status and future ministry will be an important consideration for our next called pastor. Please prayerfully consider what you can give as we provide a sustainable, stable loving church home.

### **NEWS FROM OCWM**

The next hunger meal will be served on Sunday, December first at Iglesia Emmanuel on West 41<sup>st</sup> Street. The menu will be mostaccioli with meatballs, tossed salad, bread and butter, and cookies for dessert. The usual beverages (milk, fruit drink, water, and coffee) will be served also.

The sign-up board will appear in the narthex for you to indicate your willingness to participate. Two shifts are planned. The first shift will be from 2:00 PM through 4:00 PM to set up and prepare, and the second shift will be from 3:00 PM through 5:00 PM to serve and cleanup. The sign-up board will have directions to the church.



The next offering will be received on Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> to benefit retired clergy and lay employees by supplementation of pensions, health premiums, and emergency grants. Additional interpretive Information will appear in Sunday bulletins.

Have you noticed the miracle mitten tree doing its thing in the narthex? The tree has been in place only for a short time, and already (at this writing) it is almost overflowing with hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves. These “decorations” will be taken to the hunger centers by our volunteer. This will be repeated three or four times during the cold weather.

The other tree to appear in the narthex will be used for Prentiss Autism Center of the Positive Education program located in Fairview Park. Currently over 90 students from over 30 different school districts in northeast Ohio are being served. All of these students have significant cognitive delays and severe behaviors, as well as a diagnosis of autism. Selected students are asked what would make their Christmas more enjoyable, and the item is written on a tag which is used to “decorate” the tree. The tag will indicate a student’s size where appropriate. BUCC members and friends are asked to select a “decoration” and return the desired item by the middle of December. Look for the tree in the narthex

## **OPEN & AFFIRMING MINISTRY (ONA)**

### **DECEMBER**

#### **World AIDS Day**

Celebrated on December 1<sup>st</sup>, World AIDS Day is an international day dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection and mourning those who have died of the disease. Government and health officials, non-governmental organizations, and individuals around the world observe the day, often with education on AIDS prevention and control.





## Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day is celebrated annually across the world on December 10<sup>th</sup>. The date was chosen to honor the United Nations General Assembly's adoption and proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on December 10, 1948. The day is normally marked both by high-level political conferences and meetings and by cultural events and exhibitions dealing with human rights issues.

It is also the traditional day that the five-yearly United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights and Nobel Peace Prize are awarded. Many governmental and non-governmental organizations active in the human rights field also schedule special events to commemorate the day, as do many civil and social-cause organizations.



**PFLAG** - Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. This is a local and national organization that has been in the Cleveland Area for 35 years. One of the services provided is a Monthly Support Group Meeting. The group is led by a licensed Psychologist and Social Workers. The purpose is to provide support and education to family and friends of people coming out Gay, Lesbian, Trans, Bisexual or Questioning. The group is free and meets at Trinity Cathedral on the second Tuesday of the month 6:45 pm -8:30 pm. For more information, call Mark Lehman, LISW at 330.631.4415

## SPIRITUAL LIFE

Our longtime Member Bill Toneff has recently been moved to Elmcroft of Sagamore Hills.

If you would like to send a card, please feel free to utilize our cards that we offer in The Commons area. His new Address is:

Bill Toneff  
997 W. Aurora Rd.  
Room 220  
Sagamore Hills, OH 44067



## **NOTES AND ASIDES**

### **BOOK DISCUSSION**



Our next book for discussion is *There* by Tommy Orange. It is a novel about Native American Indians. We will meet in the Parlor on Monday, December 2nd at 1 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

### **FLOWERS** **Jan Renovetz**

Flowers in the chancel area add a special touch to our Sunday morning worship. Our flower ministry is small in numbers and would welcome more members to help. Please take a moment and consider joining us. You don't have to be a florist, an artist or anyone special to come up with an original arrangement or just a vase of colorful flowers. All ideas are worth exploring to make the chancel beautiful for all of us to enjoy. You may talk to me in Pilgrim Hall on Sundays or give me a call at home 330-467-9357. Thanks.



### **FOOD PANTRY**

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



**THE MITTEN TREE** is now in the narthex, awaiting “decorations” of hats, mittens, scarves, etc. for delivery to those who will need them in the cold weather ahead. Last year, the tree filled up and was emptied at least three times. Let’s see if we can come up with at least four “fill-ups” this year.

## MUSIC

**CHRISTMAS CANTATA** - 2019 Christmas Cantata - On Sunday December 22 at our regular 10 o'clock service, BUCC's choir will present a contemporary lessons and carols program titled, *Emmanuel--God with Us!* Arranged and composed by Lloyd Larson, the program is a wonderful blend of traditional and contemporary Christmas music. The choir will be accompanied by flute, French horn, trumpet, violin, percussion, and narrators. Plan on joining us for this BUCC tradition. Bring a friend!



## MESSAGES FROM BUCC OFFICE

***A Call To Skilled Talent!*** I am looking for someone who is proficient in computers, and able to be my backup for vacation time, sick time, etc. I will teach you the Bulletin, and other important weekly tasks. If you are interested, please give me a call at the Office at 440-526-4364.



All Members, and Ministries, kindly **write your upcoming** meetings, events, or plans on the main *Church Calendar in the Office*.

Also, please send me an email when you would like correspondence to be published in our Bulletin, Pillar, or for an email blast.

[buccoh@sbcglobal.net](mailto:buccoh@sbcglobal.net) Thank you!!! Jeannette

***Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas!***

## **A NOTE OF THANKS**

Anna Mary Fisher wishes to thank you all again for your cards and phone calls, she really appreciates them.





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 Lauren Haynes
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!***

## **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 15**



**I Enclose \$12.00 \_\_\_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_\_\_**

## CALENDAR

### DECEMBER 2019

#### Sunday, DECEMBER 1

10am Worship Service  
11 am Coffee Hour  
1-4 pm **Drum Up the  
Gifts Bazaar**

#### Monday, DECEMBER 2

1 pm Book Discussion  
7 pm Facilities/Lib.

#### Tuesday, DECEMBER 3

#### Wed., DECEMBER 4

7:15 pm Council

#### Thurs., DECEMBER 5

1 pm Bible Study  
5:30-6:15 pm  
Joyful Noise  
7pm Seasonal Choir  
8pm Choir

#### Friday, DECEMBER 6

**\*OFFICE CLOSED\***

#### Sat., DECEMBER 7

#### Sunday, DECEMBER 8

10 am Worship Service  
Annual Meeting  
11 am Coffee Hour

#### Monday, DECEMBER 9

#### Tuesday, DECEMBER 10

#### Wed., DECEMBER 11

#### Thurs., DECEMBER 12

1 pm Bible Study  
4:30-5 pm Recorder/  
Dulcimer/Guitar  
5:30-6:15 pm  
Joyful Noise  
7pm Seasonal Choir  
8pm Choir

#### Friday, DECEMBER 13

**\*OFFICE CLOSED\***

#### Sat., DECEMBER 14

#### Sunday, DECEMBER 15

**\*PILLAR DEADLINE\***  
10 am Worship/  
**Children's Pageant**  
11 am Coffee Hour

#### Monday, DECEMBER 16

#### Tuesday, DECEMBER 17

#### Wed., DECEMBER 18

#### Thurs., DECEMBER 19

1 pm Bible Study  
5:30-6:15 pm **NO**  
**Joyful Noise**  
7pm Seasonal Choir  
Rehearsal for  
Cantata – with  
Instruments

#### Friday, DECEMBER 20

**\*OFFICE CLOSED\***

#### Sat., DECEMBER, 21

10 am Rehearsal for  
Cantata w/  
Instruments  
12 pm Cantata at  
Chippewa Place

#### Sunday, DECEMBER, 22

10 am Worship/  
**Cantata/Xmas  
Offering**  
11 am Coffee Hour

#### Monday, DECEMBER 23

#### Tuesday, DECEMBER 24

**Christmas Eve**  
10 pm Candlelight  
Service

#### Wed., DECEMBER 25

**Merry Christmas!**  
**\*OFFICE  
CLOSED\***

#### Thurs., DECEMBER 26

#### Friday, DECEMBER 27

**\*OFFICE CLOSED\***

#### Sat., DECEMBER 28

#### Sunday, DECEMBER 29

10 am Worship  
11 am Coffee Hour

#### Monday, DECEMBER 30

#### Tuesday, DECEMBER 31

**~WELCOME 2020!~**

## **PARTICIPANTS IN WORSHIP**

### **DECEMBER 1, 2019**

Lay Reader: Bridget Sproul  
Head Usher: Sue Maier  
Ushers: Bob & Caroline Chandler,  
David & Kathy Pastor  
Acolyte: Olivia Klonowski  
Peace Candle: Natalie Corrado  
Sound: Kevin Smith  
Comms Grtr: Max Roha  
Flowers: Julie Bernard  
Nursery: Marla Corrado  
C.E Teacher: Kate Klonowski  
Counters: Matt Wolbert, Jim Duffy  
Servers: Cliff & Sue Stenzel  
Snacks: Dorie Gabor, Marla Corrado  
Clean-up: Jill Zedan, Sue Stenzel

### **DECEMBER 8, 2019**

Lay Reader: David Ritchey  
Head Usher: Jill Zedan  
Ushers: David & Kathy Pastor,  
Kim Wallis, Kathy Smith  
Acolyte: Joshua Anderson  
Peace Candle: Amelia Tyler  
Sound: Tim Wallis  
Comms Grtr: Valerie Tyler  
Flowers: Janet Renovetz  
Nursery: Courtni Began  
C.E Teacher: Beth Rehling  
Counters: Marge Culver, Jan  
Renovetz  
Servers: Linda Kriynovich, Julie  
Bernard  
Snacks: Diane Gressley, Beth  
Rehling  
Clean-Up: Bob & Caroline Chandler

### **DECEMBER 15 2019**

Lay Reader: Kathleen Stewart  
Head Usher: Kathy Smith  
Ushers: Dave & Julie Bernard  
Dan Stewart, Diane Gressley  
Acolyte: Ryan Stewart  
Peace Candle: Peter Kucmins  
Sound: Ben Tomlinson  
Comms Grtr: Dave Bernard  
Flowers: Carole Snider  
Nursery: Erin Tomlinson  
C.E Teacher: Marla Corrado

Counters: Dave Bernard, Jim Duffy  
Servers: Cliff & Sue Stenzel  
Snacks: Children's Program  
Clean-Up: Chad & Bridget Sproul

### **DECEMBER 22, 2019**

Lay Reader: Betsey Wilson  
Head Usher: Jan Renovetz  
Ushers: George & Carole Snider  
Carrie Coyer-Westerberg,  
Micheline Fawcett  
Acolyte: Amy Coyer-Westerberg  
Peace Candle: Evelyn Kucmins  
Sound: David Pastor  
Comms Grtr: Marge Culver  
Flowers: Poinsettias  
Nursery: Courtni Began  
C.E. Teacher: Anne Melfo-Fawcett  
Counters: Kathy Pastor, Jan Renovetz  
Servers: Julie Bernard, Sue Stenzel  
Snacks: Choir Cantata  
Clean-Up: Jim & Peg Duffy

### **DECEMBER 24, 2019 – CANDLELIGHT SERVICE**

Lay Reader: Cliff Cribbs  
Head Usher: Jill Zedan  
Ushers: David Ritchey, Jon Thompson  
George & Carole Snider  
Comms Grtr: Kathy Smith  
Sound: Kevin Smith

### **DECEMBER 29, 2019**

Lay Reader: Matt Wolbert  
Head Usher: Caroline Chandler  
Ushers: Diane Gressley, David  
Ritchey  
Beth Rehling, Heidi Spangler  
Acolyte: Olivia Klonowski  
Peace Candle: Gabriella Gagliano  
Sound: Doug Fawcett  
Comms Grtr: Fred Pesek  
Flowers: Poinsettias  
Nursery: Kathy Pastor  
C.E Teacher: Kate Klonowski  
Counters: Marge Culver, Jon  
Thompson  
Servers: Cliff Stenzel, Carole Snider  
Snacks: Susan Snyder, Pat Rehm  
Clean-up: Sue Stenzel, Jan Renovetz

*continued next column ►*

# *The Pillar*

is published monthly by the

Brecksville

United Church of Christ

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FIRST CLASS

