



THE *Pillar*
BRECKSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
FEBRUARY 2026



LOVING, SERVING, AND ACCEPTING
OF ALL PEOPLE
WITH GOD'S LIFE-CHANGING POWER
AND GRACE

Pastor's Ponderings.....

Holding Hope and Heartbreak

It can feel heavy to hold both hope and heartbreak at the same time. Scripture is full of such moments: manna in the wilderness that appears alongside hunger, liberation that leads not to arrival but to wandering, resurrection that follows loss rather than bypassing it. The Christian story—from the wilderness to the cross and beyond—suggests that faith is often formed precisely in that tension of hope and heartbreak, not on one side of it or the other.

In recent weeks, we have already begun a number of conversations together. Through the Thriving Church discussions, the Mission Cafés, our work around place-based ministry, and the sharing of congregational survey responses, we have been paying attention—to our life together, to the patterns that have shaped us, and to the questions emerging about our future. This work has not been about fixing or finalizing. It has been about noticing what is present and learning how to speak honestly about it.

At the same time, we are not having these conversations apart from the world we inhabit. Many of us are carrying grief, anger, and deep concern in response to the murders of civilians by federal immigration agents in Minneapolis which have sparked widespread outrage and demands for accountability. These realities press in on us much like they do throughout Scripture—not as interruptions to faithful living, but as part of the context in which faith takes shape.

Throughout the biblical story, discernment rarely happens in moments of calm or certainty. More often, God's people find themselves asking hard questions while unsettled—wandering in the wilderness, lamenting in exile, struggling to recognize new life even when it stands among them. In that light, it may feel uncomfortable to speak about thriving at a moment when so much remains unresolved. But thriving, as we are exploring it, is not about ease or momentum. It is about learning how to remain rooted, responsive, and faithful when clarity is limited.

Each of the different conversations we are having is helping us attend more carefully to who we are becoming and how we are called to live in this particular place and time. They ask us to slow down, to remain in relationship, and to resist the pull toward premature clarity. This work is rarely dramatic. It is steady, demanding, and often unfinished—much like the faith we inherit from Scripture itself.

As we continue together, my hope is not that we resolve the tension between hope and heartbreak, but that we learn how to hold it with care. Faith is not formed by avoiding what is difficult, but by remaining present to it—trusting that God is at work not only in what is new and energizing, but also in what remains unsettled.

Grace and peace,

Jeff



FROM THE MINISTRIES OF BUCC

Chili Cookoff- Sunday, February 1 (the week PRIOR to the Superbowl) following worship. Compete with BUCC's best for 2026 bragging rights! Fellowship will provide shredded cheese, diced onions, sour cream and crackers. If you are not entering a chili submission, please bring a side, such as salad or cornbread. Does YOUR recipe have what it takes?



Colony Cupboard- We continue to support the Colony Cupboard, which supplies essentials to students in need within the BBH school district. A new branch of the Colony Cupboard is opening at the elementary school, and for this round of donations they have asked to support this new branch with following items: Soft sided lunch boxes, reusable water bottles (for young students), markers, Chapstick, and individually packaged snacks. The donation box remains in the back of the church.

Missions Café- We are asking congregants to attend four, one-hour sessions. These are fun, interactive gatherings designed to get everyone's input for the path forward to selecting our new minister. Simply attend one of the days in each session- Session 1, 2, 3 and 4- we've provided time and date options for each session. Mark your calendars and bring your enthusiasm... your input is invaluable!

Session 1: Choose one:

Wednesday, February 4th, 1 pm;
Sunday, February 8th after church;
Wednesday, February 11th, 6 pm

Session 2: Choose one:

Wednesday, March 4th, 1 pm;
Sunday March 8th after church,
Wednesday, March 11th, 6 pm

Session 3: Choose one:

Wednesday, April 1st, 1 pm;
Wednesday, April 8th, 6 pm;
Sunday, April 12th after church

Wrap-Up session: Choose one:

Sunday, June 7th after church;
Wednesday, June 10th, 1 pm
Wednesday, June 10th, 6 pm

Social Media and Brecksville UCC

We all enjoy connecting at BUCC every Sunday, but did you know that we are active on social media as well? We are ramping up our online presence and could really use the support of members to get the word out about our amazing church. If you want to connect with us online, here's where you can find BUCC:

Facebook Public Page

<https://www.facebook.com/BrecksvilleUCC>

Our public Facebook page is just that – public. This means that anyone who is on or off Facebook can see the information posted there. The public page is where we share and promote upcoming events, BUCC news, and connect with the surrounding community. If you see us post an event here and you plan to attend, mark yourself as “going” and your own connections will see the event. If you post something you find interesting, like it, or better yet, share it on your own page.

Facebook Private Member Group -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/buccmembership>

This is a private group for BUCC Members only. The information shared in this group can only be seen by the group members. If someone requests to join the group, they are not added to the group without membership verification. This is a place for conversation between members that may be more private or personal than our public page. Signed up to volunteer and can't make it? Post it in the member group and find a replacement. Have a reflection on the service you'd like to share? Share it in the member group.

YouTube -

<https://www.youtube.com/@brecksvilleunitedchurchofc1620>

This is our public channel. The Sunday service is streamed here. YouTube is a more popular social media platform right now and we are looking to grow our audience there by adding more short video, photos etc. If you have content that you think should go there, reach out to the Communications Ministry.

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/brecksville-ucc/>

This new page was started awhile ago and we haven't done much with it. But churches do host pages on LinkedIn and it can be a good place to attract new members. If you are on LinkedIn, find us and follow us there.

If you have any questions or ideas to share, reach out to the Communications and Outreach Ministry.

Spiritual Life / Flower ministry

Our sanctuary looked beautiful over the Christmas season. A joyous thank you to all our members who contributed with dedications this year in honor of, or in memory of your loved ones. It is nice to bring those whose love we hold dear into our BUCC community awareness during the holidays.

If you would like to provide a DEDICATION of the altar flower arrangement on a Sunday we are simplifying the process.

- 1 Sign up on Breeze for the Sunday you desire.
- 2 At least one week before that Sunday please call or email the office (Miranda) the date and wording of your dedication to be included in the Bulletin/program for your chosen Sunday.
- 3 Provide or create an arrangement on the Sunday you choose. If you need flower ministry to provide the flowers please contact Peg Duffy at least two weeks ahead, to arrange this.
- 4 Place your flowers on the ledge behind the altar by 9:45 on your chosen Sunday.
- 5 A donation is customary for dedication and may be placed in an envelope in the collection basket.

And lastly a huge thank you to our members who have signed up for FLOWERS through BREEZE. This system has worked so well for this ministry. Our members creativity in decorating the sanctuary has been a joyful blessing for all of us.

Called to Care

John 15:12 (NIV) - My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

Do you know of a church member that could use a little extra TLC? Maybe they are ill, injured, have lost a loved one, have lost a job, or are homebound. If so, please notify Pastor Jeff or send a message to Miranda in the church office. We have a group of volunteer members who would love to reach out to those in need with prayer, phone calls, cards, or a visit.

If you would like to join our team, we would love to have you. Our visiting team is currently a little short staffed and could use help, even if it is temporary. Just contact Evie Novak at 440-479-9743 or evienovak1@gmail.com

I would like to thank everyone for the gifts, cake, and good wishes on my retirement. It has been my pleasure to serve the church. The church is going forward with Rev. Jackson. Wes Novak will continue to work with Finance. The future is bright.

With best wishes -
Joy Garapic

FEBRUARY

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

Ian	Stewart	February 02
Fran	King	February 03
Julie	Bernard	February 07
Marjorie	Culver	February 08
David	Pastor	February 27
Diane	Gressley	February 29

****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!***

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2026

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

10am Worship Service
Chili Cookoff

Mon., FEBRUARY 2

5pm Fellowship
7pm Facilities

Tue, FEBRUARY 3

2pm Spiritual Life
6pm AA in Pilgrim Hall
6:30pm Social Justice

Wed., FEBRUARY 4

11am Mindfulness &
Meditation
1pm Mission Café
4pm Stewardship
Leadership

Thu., FEBRUARY 5

12pm Thriving Church
7pm Choir

Fri., FEBRUARY 6

OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., FEBRUARY 7

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8

10am Worship Service
Mission Café

Mon., FEBRUARY 9

Tue., FEBRUARY 10

6pm AA in Pilgrim Hall

Wed., FEBRUARY 11

11am Mindfulness &
Meditation
6pm Mission Café
7pm Council

Thu., FEBRUARY 12

10:30am Called to Care
12pm Thriving Church
7pm Choir

Fri., FEBRUARY 13

OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., FEBRUARY 14

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15

10am Worship Service

Mon., FEBRUARY 16

Tue., FEBRUARY 17

6pm AA in Pilgrim Hall
7:30pm Communication
and outreach

Wed., FEBRUARY 18

11am Mindfulness &
Meditation
6pm Braver Angels

Thu., FEBRUARY 19

12pm Thriving Church
7pm Choir

Fri., FEBRUARY 20

OFFICE CLOSED

6:30pm Brecksville
Squares

Sat., FEBRUARY 21

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

10am Worship Service

Mon., FEBRUARY 23

Tue., FEBRUARY 24

6pm AA in Pilgrim Hall

Wed., FEBRUARY 25

11am Mindfulness &
Meditation

Thu., FEBRUARY 26

12pm Thriving Church
7pm Choir

Fri., FEBRUARY 27

OFFICE CLOSED

Sat. FEBRUARY 28

PARTICIPANTS IN WORSHIP

FEBRUARY 1, 2026

Early Usher: Peg Duffy
Late Usher: Jim Duffy
Greeter: Lori Molesky
Lay Reader: Jill Zedan
Flowers: Peg Duffy
Counters: TBD
TBD
A/V: David Pastor
Snack: TBD
Set up/Serve: TBD
Clean up: TBD
Communion
Bread: Gayle Colbert

FEBRUARY 8, 2026

Early Usher: Evelyn Seager
Late Usher: TBD
Greeter: TBD
Lay Reader: Diane Gressley
Flowers: TBD
Counters: TBD
TBD
A/V: Jim Duffy
Snack: TBD
Set up/Serve: TBD
Clean up: TBD

FEBRUARY 15, 2026

Early Usher: Evelyn Seager
Late Usher: TBD
Greeter: Peg Duffy
Lay Reader: Jim Duffy
Flowers: Peg Duffy
Counters: TBD
TBD
A/V: David Pastor
Snack: Carole Snider
Set up/Serve: Carole Snider
Betsey Wilson
Clean up: TBD
Communion
Bread: Gayle Colbert

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

Early Usher: Evelyn Seager
Late Usher: TBD
Greeter: TBD
Lay Reader: TBD
Flowers: TBD
Counters: TBD
TBD
A/V: TBD
Snack: TBD
Set up/Serve: TBD
Clean up: TBD

The Pillar

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FIRST CLASS

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Brecksville United Church of Christ