**Change to Church Committee Structure**

At the January Administrative Board meeting, Pastor Clark presented a proposal for a new way of doing business at Brecksville United Methodist Church.

We have been functioning under a two board system. The Administrative Board, which meets quarterly, is a business meeting. Council on Ministries, which meets on the months Administrative Board does not, discusses the ministries of the church.

Pastor Clark presented a plan which would move us away from meetings toward action, which would help us focus on ministry, and which would help connect people with their areas of passion. The new structure would also help us make best use of time. The solution he proposed?

Create a new Church Council, combining Council on Ministries and Administrative Board.

- The new committee would consist of all committee chairs, six at large members, all members of the church program staff, and a recording secretary.

- Committee reports will be submitted prior to each meeting and distributed to all members of Church Council to be read prior to the meeting.

- The committee will meet four to six times a year to discuss visioning, questions, old and new business.

The plan was discussed among those in attendance at the meeting and was adopted, with the agreement that some thought be given to the dates the new committee will meet.

Administrative Board also approved the creation of two new committees, Outreach and Fellowship. (Read more about them in the *Leaning In and Reaching Out* article inside!)

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**CHILI COOK OFF RECAP**

The Great Chili Cook Off is one of our favorite winter events. On January 21, fourteen different families brought chilies for this year’s tasting fun and there were about 75 in attendance. Through your donations, the United Methodist Women raised over $250 for the Brookside Food Center! Doug Huth won crowd favorite chili, Linda Schmidt was second, and Monica Kotnik third. Pastor Clark’s trivia challenge was great fun and tested general trivia, Bible and music knowledge. The winning team’s score was 37 (out of 50) and our Bible Study team took top honors. Coincidence? We think not! *Were you there? We’d love to see your pictures!*
Worship With Us

Sunday Morning Worship
8:45 Contemporary Worship
10:00 Coffee & Classes for All Ages
11:15 Traditional Worship
The Crib and Toddler Room is open throughout the morning!

Our Staff
Phone: 440-526-8938
Pastor:
   Rev. Clark Stein
   pastor@brecksvilleumc.com
Associate Pastor, Visitation:
   Rev. Barbara Bartholomew
   associatepastor@brecksvilleumc.com
Director of Christian Education:
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   education@brecksvilleumc.com
Dir. of Outreach & Development:
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   outreach@brecksvilleumc.com
Director of Music:
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To Start A Fire
Rev. Clark Stein, Senior Pastor

“We’ve come to start a fire on this earth—how I wish it were blazing right now! I’ve come to change everything, turn everything rightside up—how long for it to be finished! Do you think I came to smooth things over and make everything nice? Not so….. Read Luke 12: 51-53

We have witnessed much change over the past month. A new President and administration and congress, a New Year, the end of one tax year (which is necessarily the beginning of another), and many more starts and finishes.

Now, as February begins, perhaps it is time to take a deep breath, to settle in for the long winter grip, which will eventually loosen with Easter and the return of flowers and Spring. But just for now, it would be nice to be left alone, given time to process all of this change, and to sort out, in the dog days of winter, just what all of the implications are for each and every one of us.

As we become insulated a bit from the world around us, hoping for peace and quiet, some steadying influence, we may be tempted to shuffle that same attitude into our faith. Looking for ways to slide differing attitudes and beliefs into the same box, not willing or even able to deal with how our culture reflects our faith.

However, as we look at the society that now surrounds us, let us not hibernate, choosing to become active in the spring, and miss opportunities that present themselves to us now to raise our voice, and continue to speak for peace and justice, equality, and concern for others beyond ourselves. It is in the times of beginnings that new voices should be raised hoping for change from the onset. Change that can begin to impact others now.

I don’t know where you all are on various issues, but I do know that things concern you. Please take these beginning times seriously enough to raise your voice, and be heard. Dr. Oppenheimer, the atomic scientist, once said, “The best way to send an idea is to wrap it up in a person.” It is the story of our faith. It is what we are called to do. May God give us all courage to give voice to our faith, in hopes that the world just might change, and we would live to see more of God’s Kingdom realized in our lifetimes.

Grace and Peace,

[Signature]

OLD CELL PHONES WANTED

Have an old cell phone collecting dust and using up space in your junk drawer? Why not recycle it? Bring your old phone to the coat room collection bin for safe recycling, and earn money for our church Missions Fund!

Fish Stories

Coffee Hour Hosts for February
Finance Committee
Stop by the Parlor during the 10 o’clock Sunday Education Hour for a treat and say hello!
March Hosts: Trustees
This new year is off to an awesome and busy start. Throughout the fall, we got Back to Basics, and that theme continues into the winter and spring months ahead. Part of getting Back to Basics is reflecting on our core values as United Methodists and as members of Brecksville United Methodist Church and working to reflect those values in every part of our work and ministry together.

Our newly formed Outreach Committee is committed to building long-term, sustainable partnerships both in the community and around the world so that we might invest not only our money but also our time, energy, and presence in ministry to and with our brothers and sisters. These core values guided our end-of-year mission giving as well as the choice of recipients for our Christmas Eve offering. In the early days of January, I had the opportunity to personally deliver financial gifts as well as gifts of hats and mittens to Ohio Guidestone and Nehemiah Mission. I was able to sit down with staff at both organizations and continue a dialogue about how our church can partner with individuals in the community who share the same needs we do for friendship, conversation, and community.

Our Board of Church & Society is also hard at work in the new year, focused on 3 tracks for 2017. The first target area is Addiction Awareness & Response. Members of the group are working alongside others in the community to explore ways we can participate in the fight against the brain disease of addiction. The second target area is Inclusion & LGBT Awareness. We want to make sure that our congregation is known as a safe and welcoming environment for all people. The third target area is Refugee Response & Support. We continue to educate ourselves on the challenges facing refugees in the Cleveland area and are seeking ways we can support and care for those individuals and families.

YOU ARE INVITED to be a part of these exciting ministries!! You don’t need to be on an official committee member to help us get to work on making a difference in the community. You are welcome! If you have a passion for one of these issues, or if you have a passion for an organization in the community, or if you have an idea for a meaningful community partnership, I would love to sit down and talk with you. Together as a community of faith, we have a daily opportunity to change the world, one person or family at a time. I’m excited about it, and I hope you are, too!

In faith, hope and love,
Joy Parker, Director of Outreach & Development

Evening Circle February 1
Want to be a part of a great service project? Come to the church at 6:30 pm to help assemble gift bags for the women at the Rahab Safe House, a ministry helping victims of human trafficking in Akron. Then, mark your calendar for March 1 when the Evening Circle will meet to make soup, bread, and cookies for our shut ins and others in our congregation who may need a little TLC. Everyone is welcome to come share in community and join in our service projects.

UMW Meeting February 2
We have a special guest speaker this month—Pastor Clark! Come hear about our church’s 2016 trip to the Holy Land. It should prove to be an interesting morning! Continental breakfast and fellowship begins at 9:30 am followed by the 10:00 am program. Everyone is welcome. See you there!

New Asbury Bremeth Study Begins February 9
Mark your calendar for the second Thursday of each month and join the ladies of Asbury Bremeth for lots of fun and fellowship. We start a new study this month called “In the Meantime” by Andy Stanley. We all like to think of ourselves as ‘fixers’ of problems, but sometimes life throws us into a situation for which there is no solution. Over the next few months we will take a look at the question: What do you do when nothing you can do? Join the discussion. Everyone is welcome!!

Thank you for the Cookies!
Thanks to your incredible generosity, the Brecksville United Methodist Women collected over 100 dozen cookies for the USO Canteen at Cleveland Hopkins airport! Thank you!
As people of faith, we find God’s presence in those who have been blessings to us. At our weekly staff meetings this month, we lifted up the following people in prayer, thanking God for them and the way they touch the lives of others. People like Joanie Olszko who put so much heart, soul and talent into the creation of the gingerbread church, and her helpers Quinn Slifeck, Kathy Stein, Melanie Smith, Adrienne Leska, and Jessica Agostine. It is truly a work of art! George Gee and Stacy Parker make a mean pancake! Thank you both for the wonderful Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast. Did you see the wonderful video “Dear Church…” that Jenny Gee and Michael Pace put together, featuring kids from our church? It’s beautiful. There’s a link to it in the slideshow on the homepage of our website: www.brecksvilleumc.com. Without Ruth Herman, one of our favorite events, the Chili Cook Off, would not have happened. Thanks for all you do, Ruth! We are thankful for each of you and the ways, spoken and unspoken, in which you use your talents and time for the glory of God!
## Important Dates

**Mark your calendar!**

- Feb 5 Youth Board. No All Youth Dinner or High School Youth Group
- Feb 10 Community Art Night
- Feb 12 Main Event: Dinner at Cozumel’s
- Feb 18-19 Confirmation Retreat
- Feb 19 No High School Youth Group

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### No February All Youth Dinner

Due to the Super Bowl we will not be gathering for an all youth dinner in February. We will start back up in March!

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### Community Art Night: Express Yourself!

**Friday, February 10: The Parlor 7-10 pm**

We’re preparing a night of fun and creative expression for all of the youth in our community. Will you be there? Come share a piece of art work, spoken word creation, or favorite song. Enjoy a hot chocolate bar, craft table and more! The event is free, but donations will be accepted. Questions?

Contact Adrienne Leska: 440-526-8938 ext. 231 or music@brecksvilleumc.com

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### Confirmation Retreat

**Camp Wanake**

Our confirmation class is taking a 'time-out' and heading to Camp Wanake for a weekend retreat!

We will be exploring spiritual practices and what it means to connect with God in our everyday lives. It’s going to be a weekend of fun, faith, and friends!

If you will be joining us RSVP to Dana or Jenny by Feb 11.

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### Main Event: Dinner at Cozumel

**Sunday, February 12 from 6-7:30 p**

Delicious food, good friends!

Meet us at Cozumel in Broadview Heights for a fun night out.

RSVP to Dana by Feb 10!
Meet the Teacher
A monthly feature highlighting our Sunday School Teachers!

Don and Cathy Krolikowski

Our kids loved Sunday school at Brecksville United Methodist Church and we have been involved with one aspect of the Education program or another here for the last 20 years! We love getting to know the kids of the church and to watch them grow and learn about Christ's love! We have been attending here for 21 years and we pray that the kids here learn to serve in love and be disciples of Jesus for the rest of their lives.

Favorite Bible verse:
1 John 3:18
Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

Favorite Bible character: Queen Esther because she was brave and risked her very comfortable life with the King to make sure her people (the Jews) were saved from an evil but powerful person in the King's court. And Luke because he wrote the most detailed accounts of the life of Jesus so we owe much of our understanding to him.

Music Ministry

Join a Sisterhood or Brotherhood of Song!
We are excited to announce that Men’s and Women’s ensembles will now meet on alternating Thursdays from 8:30 to 9 pm in the choir room. This new schedule will start February 2 with Men’s Ensemble. Singers of all (or no!) ability are welcome and encouraged to come lift their voice in song! Want to learn more? Contact Adrienne Leska at 440-526-8938 ext. 230 or music@brecksvilleumc.com.

Music With A Mission
It’s Hip to Be Square
Save the date for a Brecksville United Methodist Church favorite event, Music with a Mission! This year’s theme is “It’s Hip to Be Square” and our show will feature songs about shapes. Have an idea for a song? We’d love to hear it! Want to perform in the show? We need you! Contact Adrienne Leska for more information:
440-526-8938 ext 231 or music@brecksvilleumc.com

Add Your Voice

Tuesdays
Children’s Ensemble at 4:15

Wednesdays
Youth Ensemble at 4:00

Thursdays
Bell Choir at 6:15
Chancel Choir at 7:30
Men’s/Women’s Ensemble 8:30

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Souper Bowl Food Drive
When you’re shopping for snacks for the big game, consider adding a can of soup or two to your cart. Let’s fill the shelves of Brookside Food Pantry with delicious and filling soups for our hungry brothers and sisters in Cleveland.

Bring your donations to the soup bin in the coat room (on the first floor of the church) by Thursday, February 16. Together, we CAN fight hunger!

Other much needed items include personal hygiene products, household cleaners and detergents, and paper products (all items excluded from government food assistance programs.)

Thank you for your support of this ongoing ministry!

❤️ GIVE WHAT YOU CAN ❤️
“Say NO” to Styrofoam

We all know that Styrofoam (or polystyrene) cups, plates and storage containers are bad for the environment. Did you know that it’s also a risk for your health? Styrofoam contains the chemical styrene, which has been linked to cancer, vision and hearing loss, impaired memory and concentration, nervous system effects and more.

When hot foods or liquids sit in Styrofoam plates and cups, the styrene can leach out of the container, into your food and body. We know about chemical health effects from worker exposures. Prolonged effects of styrene exposure have been blamed for depression, chronic headaches, fatigue, weakness, and impaired kidney function.

As if the public health impact of polystyrene isn’t enough, its environmental effects are well documented. It takes 500 years to decompose, and consumes 25-30% of our world’s landfills. Fifty-seven chemical byproducts are released during the manufacturing process of polystyrene, polluting the air, land, water and communities nearby. In addition our lakes, waterways and oceans are suffering due to Styrofoam waste. Styrofoam is no longer manufactured with CFC (a notorious ozone-depleting chemical), but still uses hydrofluorocarbons which are linked to depleting our earth’s ozone layer.

As a church family let’s opt for re-usable plates, cups and utensils before purchasing disposables. This cuts back on waste and reduces our exposure to toxic chemicals. Consider doing this at home, too! If you need to use disposable products, safe alternatives include bamboo plates and re-useable utensils, recycled paper, and corn or potato-based products. These products are now widely available in retail stores. According to Earth Resource, every ton of 100% post-consumer waste recycled paper products we buy saves:

- 12 trees
- 1,087 pounds of solid waste
- 1,560 kilowatts of energy (2 months worth for the average US home)
- 1,196 gallons of water
- 1,976 lbs. of greenhouse gases (1,600 miles in the average US car)
- 3 cubic yards of landfill space
- 390 gallons of oil

What else can you do?

- Think you’re not going to be able to finish that meal when you are out to eat tonight? Take a reusable container from home! Restaurants are happy to put your food into your own clean container.
- When you’re getting food to-go, ask the restaurant or store if they have non-Styrofoam options.
- When shopping for groceries, select items that are unwrapped, or wrapped in non-polystyrene materials.
- At church, help reduce the amount of Styrofoam ending up in the waste stream by bringing a reusable mug to meetings and to worship on Sunday mornings, or use one from the kitchen and wash it before leaving.
- Educate yourself! Learn more: saferchemicals.org

Thank you! - Jenny Gee, Director of Christian Education

“All creation is the Lord’s, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it. Water, air, soil, minerals, energy resources, plants, animal life, and space are to be valued and conserved because they are God’s creation and not solely because they are useful to human beings. God has granted us stewardship of creation. We should meet these stewardship duties through acts of loving care and respect.”

- United Methodist Social Principles
Finance Committee is offering a special opportunity for BUMC members, friends and family to participate in Financial Peace University, by Dave Ramsey.

If you are fed-up being controlled by your money, and want to learn to take control of it, this course is for you. If you need to know how to get out of debt, this course is for you. If you wonder ‘will we ever have enough money?’ this course is for you. It’s estimated that the average family who participates in the course pays off $5,300 in debt and saves $2,700 in the first 90 days!

During each 90 minute session, we will view a video lesson on how to take control of our personal finances, followed by small group discussions. Dave Ramsey does the teaching and you start taking the baby steps to take back control.

The lessons are very practical personal finance building blocks and also teach us what God says about money. Jesus talks about money almost more than any other subject in the Bible, because he knew it is such a struggle for us.

- The 9 week course starts **February 12 through April 9**.
- Classes are at 6 pm in the church Parlor on the main floor, near the Sanctuary. Childcare will be provided if needed.
- Curious? Preview the course online at [www.daveramsey.com/fpu](http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu)
- Cost is $99 for a membership kit. Couples can share. If you already have a kit, you can take the class again for free.
- Call the church office to register or sign up today in the Parlor. Register online at [www.daveramsey.com/fpu](http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu)

This course is for young adults through senior citizens. Couples are encouraged to attend together. Be prepared to learn new habits and leave old bad habits behind. Be prepared to learn God’s powerful lessons on how to manage money. - Finance Committee, Alan Schenfler, Chair

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Special Administrative Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 7 at 7:30 pm

For approval of 2017 Budget, etc.

Year End Statements Coming Soon!

Need it now?
Log in to [www.onrealm.org](http://www.onrealm.org)
and click the “giving” link in your profile.
Having trouble? Call Leslie 440-526-8938

February 4 5—7:30 pm

Fundraiser for the Cleveland State Medical Mission trip to the Dominican Republic in May.

Adults $12. Children under ten $6
Taste the Bread
Sixth and Seventh Grade Communion Workshop

Throughout the season of Lent, our sixth and seventh graders are invited to participate in a Communion Workshop. Each Sunday morning during their Sunday school hour we will be learning about and exploring the sacrament of communion, one of the most significant symbols of our church life. Over the course of this six week class, we will begin to understand the crucial meaning of communion. As we get involved in the story, we will see the connection between God’s old covenant with Moses and the Israelites and Jesus’ new covenant with all of us. We will see that Jesus instituted the elements of this simple meal as a way to help us remember him and as a way for us to come together in Christian fellowship.

Look for our sixth and seventh graders to serve you communion on May 7 after they spend time learning about this special celebration. Class will meet in Room 402 beginning March 5. The students will bake the communion bread during their regular Sunday school class on April 30.

Boy Scout Sunday, February 12

Boy Scout Troop 175 invites the congregation to enjoy a Pancake Breakfast of Appreciation between worship services in Fellowship Hall on Scout Sunday, February 12. Scouts will prepare and serve breakfast for which there is no charge (but donations will be accepted.)

Join us in our celebration of Scout Sunday and all of the ways that Scouting provides fun, fellowship, and training to youth in our community. Scouting emphasizes honesty, self-reliance, and respect. Through a year-round program, it affects character, citizenship, and personal fitness.

We congratulate all the kids and volunteers who are active in Scouting throughout Northeast Ohio and want to offer a special prayer and word of thanks to the leaders and members of Boy Scout Troop 175, which is 92 years old and chartered to Brecksville United Methodist Church since 1942.

I am a Christian, but not a United Methodist. Am I invited to receive Communion in a United Methodist church?

Yes indeed. It is the Lord’s Supper, not ours, and it is Christ who invites you. As our ritual puts it: “Christ our Lord invites to his table all who love him, who earnestly repent of their sin and seek to live in peace with one another.” We do not refuse any who present themselves desiring to receive. Whether you should receive Communion with us is between you and God.

We Are Thankful for Our 2017 Communion Stewards

Ann & Bill Rittman
Kristi Eberhardt & Jack Drescher
Amy Piorkowski & Kathy Goebel
Janine Telischak & Gail Huth
Happy New Year from the Trustees! While we are excited to look forward and anticipate all of the opportunities that the New Year will bring, we would also like to spend a little bit of time reflecting on all that we accomplished as a congregation in 2016. With the help of a wide array of volunteers the Trustees completed many improvement projects around the church and the parsonage last year. For instance, in the fourth quarter of 2016 we held our annual Fall/Winter grounds clean-up, we completed necessary tree trimming and maintenance at both the church and the parsonage, we had the new illuminated sign installed along Route 21, and we purchased a new dishwasher for the parsonage. Also, thanks to the amazing woodworking skills of Scott Campbell, we built and installed new doors on the cabinets in the kitchen pantry. Perhaps most importantly, and through the generous support of the congregation, we received approval from the Administrative Board for the creation of the Planned Expense Fund, which establishes for the first time a dedicated source of funds to be used to pay for repairs and replacements necessary to keep our church and parsonage buildings in great shape for many years into the future.

In 2017, we welcome three new members to the Board of Trustees. Our new members are Lori Rusterholtz, Bob Hudacek and Kim Meyer. With the addition of our new members, we must thank Scott Campbell, Jeff Fessler and Michelle Orr for their service over the past three years. All three provided immense contributions to the Trustees during their terms.

The Trustees again have a robust list of projects that we plan to complete over the next twelve months. In addition to our regular Spring and Fall clean-up days, we intend to paint the exterior entries, address the drainage issues along the eastern wall of Fellowship Hall, refurbish the cross on top of the church and complete necessary repairs at the parsonage. As in 2016, we will be prudent stewards of our funds and look for volunteers to help us complete as many of these projects as we can by leveraging the diverse talents of the congregation. We look forward to working with you in the year ahead and if you ever have any questions about the work that we are doing or how you can help, please feel free to stop any one of the Trustees before or after church or any other time that is convenient.

The Trustees are honored to be entrusted with preserving our church as a beautiful place to worship God and serve the community and we thank you for your continued support.

The Board of Trustees meets on the third Tuesday of each month. Questions? Building concerns? Ideas? Contact Chairperson, Bob Lundholm.
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<td>11:15 Worship</td>
<td>6:00 Breakfast</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6 HS Youth Group</td>
<td>6:00 Breakfast</td>
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<td>6 Financial Peace U</td>
<td>6:00 Breakfast</td>
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<td>6 HS Youth Group</td>
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<td>6 Financial Peace U</td>
<td>6:00 Breakfast</td>
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Open Doors.

Welcoming all of God's children.

Brecksville United Methodist Church is called to the ministry of reconciliation. We embrace diversity as a gift. We celebrate our human family’s diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, faith history, economic status, marital status, physical and mental ability, and education. We affirm that all people are created in the image of God and as beloved children of God, all are worthy of God’s love and grace. We welcome the full inclusion of all people in the life and ministries of Brecksville United Methodist Church as we journey toward reconciliation through Christ.