

STEEPLEVUES

A Letter From The Pastor

BY REV. MATT MERRIMAN

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them. Luke 2:8-9

BUMC Family and Friends,

The shepherds are my favorite people in the Christmas story. They were just regular people—very poor people actually—who lived outside with their flocks. They ate with the sheep, slept near their sheep, and lived to protect the sheep in their care. However, that culture considered shepherds to be among the lowest of the low. They were just a step above homeless vagabonds.

And yet, when God chose to enter the human world as a newborn baby, the announcement was made to these poor, outcast shepherds. The King of the World sent angels to the lowest of the low to bring them into the story of Jesus' birth. God made the lowly great!

There is a lot of symbolism in the choice of announcing Christ's birth to shepherds in their fields. Joseph's ancestor, King David, was the King of all Kings in Jewish history and lore. But, before he was a king, David had been a shepherd. In David, God made the lowly great. Additionally, Jesus, the Savior of the World, is often depicted as a shepherd watching over his flock.

What we learn from this is that shepherding others—caring for people at the expense of our own wants—is among the highest callings a person can have. In Jesus, the lowly are made great and the great are made to serve all humankind. In the birth of Jesus, we see all people brought together in God's love. With that in mind, consider these questions: Who are we shepherding in our lives? Has God spoken to us through some person our culture considers lowly? Let us all take time to contemplate the shepherds this Christmas season.

Blessings,
Pastor Matt





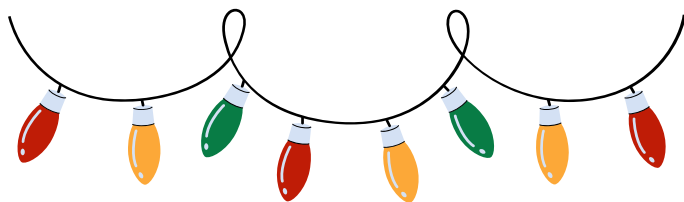
December 1	10:00	First Sunday of Advent with Communion
December 8	10:00	Second Sunday of Advent
December 15	6:00-8:00	Live Nativity Scene
December 21	7:00	Longest Night/Blue Christmas
December 22	10:00	Children's Pageant
December 24	3pm, 7pm, 11pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Services (3:00 service will be live streamed, 11:00 service will be held in the Chapel) (Childcare is provided during the 3:00 and 7:00 services)
December 29	10:00	Regular Worship Service



Longest Night Service/Blue Christmas

Saturday, December 21st at 7 pm

The holidays are times of family fun and festivity. But for those who are missing someone, experiencing some other loss, or just not happy and joyous, the holidays can be especially challenging. The Longest Night or Blue Christmas service is a contemplative worship service that provides an opportunity to be still and away from the holiday stress, even if just for a short while. The service will be held at 7 pm on Saturday, December 21, in the Ward Chapel of the Brunswick United Methodist Church. Pastor Matt will lead this service.



Advent Opportunities

There are many opportunities for families and members of the congregation to light the advent wreath during each Sunday worship service throughout Advent.

We will also be in need of greeters and readers during the Christmas Eve services at 3:00, 7:00 or 11:00. Please contact the office if you are willing to help make this Christmas season extra special.





Calling All Shepherds Live Nativity Scene

Sunday, December 15th
6:00pm - 8:00pm



We are organizing a Live Nativity Scene for Sunday, December 15, from 6-8pm. Hank Hartmann, Bill Radcliffe and Dick Beeching will help set up the stable and Dave and Howard Goodyear are supplying the animals from Spring Mist Farm. “WE” need to provide Joseph, Mary, and the three shepherds. Are you willing to help?

In past years we have had a schedule and everyone who served as an actor only sat for 30-minute shifts. We hope to have enough volunteers again this year to stick with that same schedule. All the costumes will be provided. It’s really easy and a lot of fun.

This continues to be a great outreach to the Brunswick community and grows every year with more people attending. Many people from the community stopped and visited our stable, shared a cup of hot chocolate and a cookie or two, and pet the animals. We heard parents explaining to their children who Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus are. Wow! Isn’t that fantastic? Now, that’s taking Christ into the world.

Please call Karen in the office at 330-225-3179, if you are willing to help.



Christmas Music Opportunities



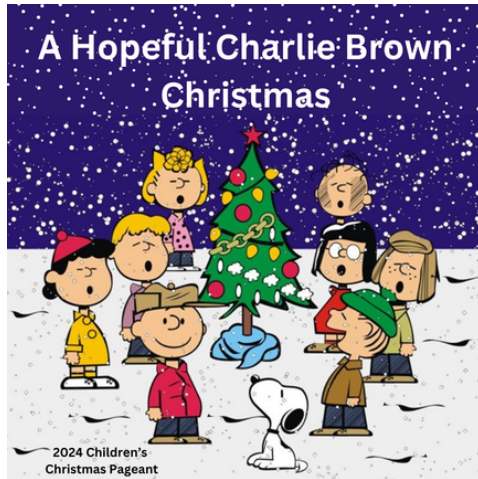
As the Christmas season approaches, I want to invite you to share your musical talents and join us for one of the Christmas music opportunities. The choir is ongoing all year, but we would love to have you for just Christmas if that is what your schedule allows. We also have a Christmas Bell Choir and a Christmas Band. If you can play an instrument, you are welcome in the band as we play music no harder than a middle school level. For bells, we would love to have you if you can read rhythms, and be able to follow one or two notes on the staff. Contact me if you are interested!

Contact Chris Chidsey for more information at 216-403-5912 or christopherchidsey@gmail.com



Christmas Pageant

December 22 @ 10:00 am



We hope that you will join us during the 10:00 am service on Sunday, December 22nd to see "A Hopeful Charlie Brown Christmas," our own personal spin on the classic movie "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Our Kidz Connect Wednesday night group has been hard at work preparing for this exciting performance, and they look forward to making you laugh, smile and sing along!

It's not too late to join us. If you have a child in preschool thru 5th grade who would like to be a part of the pageant, please join us at 6:00 pm on Wednesdays.

Sunday School Update

On behalf of all the children at BUMC we would like to thank Mallory Anglin for her generous donation of school supplies for the Sunday School room. Mallory supplied our room with dozens of crayons, markers, glue, pencils, colored pencils, and so much more. Our kids are so grateful to have nice new supplies and a Sunday School teacher who made that all possible.

The following is the Sunday school schedule for December:

- 12/1 Religious Meaning of the Candy Cane
- 12/8 The Nativity Story
- 12/15 Birthday Party for Jesus
- 12/22 Children's Pageant - No Sunday School
- 12/29 No Sunday School



Door Decorating Contest

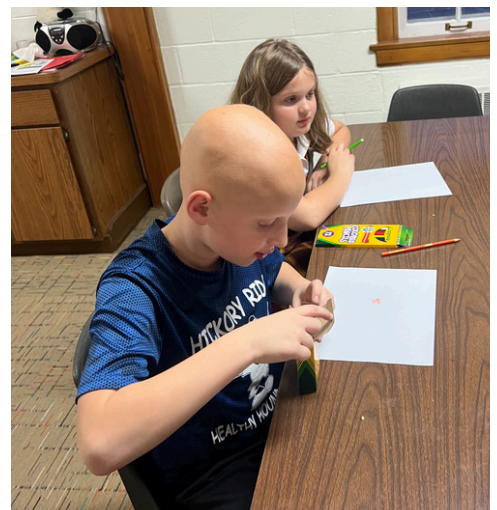
Last year, the door decorating contest was a huge success! Everyone who decorated a door had a great time and the rest of us enjoyed seeing their creations and voting on our favorite door. It added a bit of holiday spirit and a lot of fun to the season.

We are going to do this again. Anyone interested in decorating a door, please sign up at the Welcome Center. Feel free to pair up with other members. Doors need to be completed by December 14. Ballots will be available at church on December 15. Small prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners will be awarded during church on December 22nd.



Halloween Party Recap:

We had a spooky good time at our children's Halloween Party! The evening was filled with candy, music, dancing, games, crafts and Trick-or-Treating around the church! A special Thank You to those who volunteered to help pass out candy to our Trick or Treaters: Ruth Dodig, Rachel Hammond, Cindy Kintop, Chris Chidsey, Members of the BUMC Choir, Amy Weinmann, Laura Lengal, Pastor Matt, Brenda & Don Mileto, and Tristin Anglin.





CHRIST COMMUNITY CONNECT

Community Soup Dinner

Thursday, December 19

5:00 p.m.

We continue to serve the community a free soup dinner on the third Thursday of the month. Please help us by making a pot of soup this month so we can be assured to have enough food for everyone. If you can stay for fellowship and dinner, all the better.

Take a break from the hustle and bustle of Christmas and share a bowl of soup with us while helping others in the community. Isn't that what Christmas is all about? Please call Lynn Miller at 216-570-5133 with any questions.

Operation Christmas Child

By Marcia Taylor

A HUGE thank you to all of you who donated items for the shoeboxes, money for shipping, came to the workshops, carried the totes and boxes down to fellowship hall, helped set up on Friday and/or packed shoeboxes on Saturday. Big jobs well done! We were able to pack 151 boxes. That's 151 children who will be touched by your kindness and the love of Jesus.



Pastor's Bible Studies

The Wednesday night bible study will meet on December 4, 11 and 18th. We are continuing our study of the Gospel of Mark. We meet at 7:00 pm. Feel free to stop in any time.



The Thursday 1:00 pm book study will begin an Advent Study starting November 21st and it will run Dec. 5, Dec. 12, and end on Dec. 19. The book is called "On the Way to Bethlehem" by Rob Fuquay. If you are able to cover the cost of the book it is \$12.00. Feel free to drop in when you are able.



Rambling Roses



Christmas Salad Luncheon

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Noon – 2:00 pm BUMC Fellowship Hall

Please join us for some holiday festivities. Here is what is planned, if you are joining us:

1. Coffee, tea, and water will be provided.
2. Bring a salad to share with the group.
3. Bring a dozen cookies to share with the group.
4. A gift wrapped coffee mug or tea cup.
5. Please use the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center so we can plan accordingly.

Even if you have not signed up as a Rambling Rose, you are still welcome to join us. If you'd like to bring a friend, please do. If you have a question, please call Jill Arnold 440-465-2065.



Member Care



By Darlene Beeching

We need some help with coffee hour. Dick and I will be gone traveling this winter and Barb Porter will not be able to help if the weather is bad. It's not a difficult job and I will be happy to show any volunteers what to do. Unfortunately, if we don't get additional help, there will be some Sundays that we won't be able to hold coffee hour following the worship service.

Call Dick or Darlene Beeching at 440-476-4109, if you are interested in helping.

Kitchen Reminder

Please mark items in the kitchen with your name or your group's name on it. There is a freezer for coffee hour only and one for soup dinner only. Please make sure you are placing items in the correct freezer. If you are unsure, you can check with Karen in the office or Dick and Darlene Beeching. Thanks!



Teams

In the November newsletter, Pastor Matt's letter talked about the need for establishing a Missions Team and a Children's Ministry Team. Currently neither team is functioning. As 2024 winds down and we're looking forward to the beginning of a new year, we are asking members to get involved and prayerfully consider serving on one of these teams.

Where do your spiritual gifts lie? Are you using them? If so, how? What can you do to further the kingdom of God? Maybe 2025 is the year you get involved again. As Christians, we are meant to serve. Maybe this is the year you step out of your comfort zone and help serve on a team. Pray about this. God will lead you.



Finance Update



We are blessed with an amazing building. The Chapel (originally the entire church building) is beautiful and an important Brunswick historical landmark. Our kitchen, the main sanctuary, all the classrooms, the grassy open space, the fire pit, and even the parking lot are assets that we use to live out our congregational vision of Christ Community Connect. This huge facility is our mission center; it is the place from which we spring out into the world to share the love of Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, our mission center is getting old. Even the newest section has been around for more than twenty years. This amazing building is in need of some expensive repairs. The 152 year-old window frames in the chapel need restoration and the protective covering must be replaced. The floor of the fellowship hall has to be replaced. The main fire panel has to be replaced. One of the furnaces in the sanctuary was shut down for safety reasons and will be replaced in the near future. The other furnace is the same age and should probably also be replaced. Finally, we would like to build a picnic pavilion in the open space by the firepit for church picnics and other community activities.

In the coming weeks you will begin to receive information about a capital fund-raising campaign to pay for these updates and repairs. We will be asking you to donate above and beyond your current giving to our regular operating costs. Please prayerfully consider making an investment in the future of our congregation by donating to this upcoming campaign.





Dear Brunswick United Methodist Church,
Thank you for partnering with us to provide gifts for children in foster care. Your generosity brings joy to our youth and lets them know they are part of a community that cares for and supports them.

Sincerely,
Medina County Job and Family Services

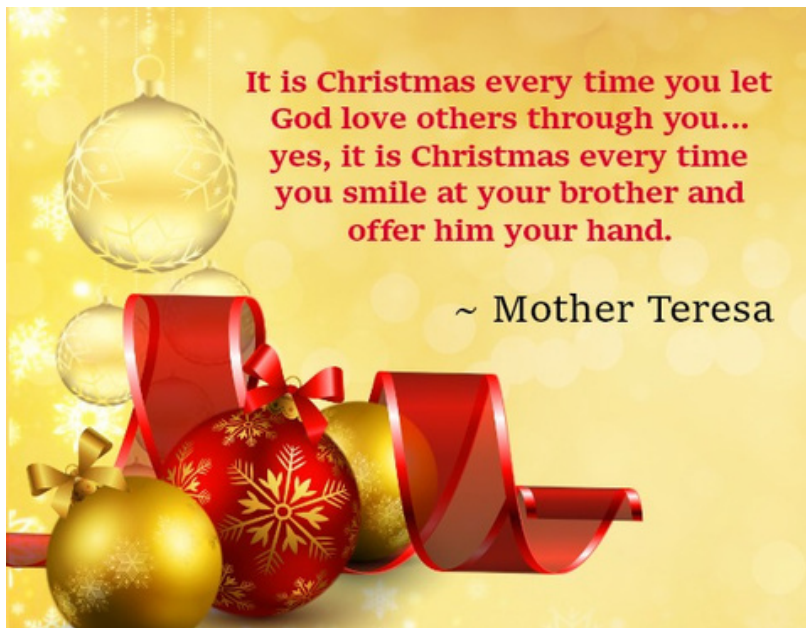
Dear Church,

I was pleasantly surprised to see how many toy donations we received for the toy drive for the Medina County Job and Family Services. With all the collections going on, we as a church provided a lot of great toys for children who are less fortunate. Thank you for your contributions.

I would also like to thank everyone who helped with Trunk or Treat. This was the first year I wasn't able to attend. It sounded like we had over 400 people in attendance and everyone had such a fun day. I heard many parents were thanking everyone for such a fun event.

So thank you to everyone who served in the kitchen, those of you who brought cars and passed out candy, to those who donated candy, to all the youth and adults who helped with face painting and the craft tables. Thank you to the Girl Scout troop who provided a craft. Thank you to everyone who helped with the planning, setup, and cleanup. It always fills my heart when so many people from the church come together to help put on a community event like this.

God Bless You,
Karen McGoughran



★
when
you
CHOOSE
joy
You feel good
& when you feel
good, YOU do good
& when YOU do good
it Reminds others
of what joy feels like
& it just
might inspire
them to do
the same.



Leadership Board 2025

We would like to announce our new Leadership Board for 2025. This is the first year in over 20 years where we are actually rolling 4 people off and bringing on 4 new people. We are adding Tristin Anglin, Jennifer McKenzie, Frank Rzicznek and Marcia Taylor who has agreed to serve as our Lay Leader. Joel Mille will move into the Chairman position. We thank Ron Chidsey, Cindy Kintop and Evert van Staden who have served too many years to count as part of Administrative Council.

Tristin Anglin
Julie Buttle
Janet Hartmann
Susan Lausch
Jennifer McKenzie
Joel Mille
Chuck Porter
Frank Rzicznek
Marcia Taylor
Mark Taylor
Amy Weinmann



Another Opportunity to Serve

Kid's Connect is a Wednesday evening, hour long program for elementary age students. The kids have a lesson, play games, and really enjoy themselves. Currently we have a strong group of kids who absolutely love attending Kid's Connect. We are in need of a person or team of parents to lead Kid's Connect in the New Year. If you have never taught Sunday School or led a program like this, we can help you identify curriculum and get set up. Please prayerfully consider helping with this important children's ministry. We have the kids, we just need adults to work with them.



December Birthdays

Tex Combs	12/02
Tim Slama	12/02
Lauren Eyssen	12/06
Abbey Chuvilin	12/06
Laura Flood	12/08
Hank Hartmann	12/09
Christopher Pettry	12/09
Sharon Fuller	12/11
Chuck Thompson	12/11
Rachel Hammond	12/12
Tom Bunting	12/13
John Youngblood	12/13
Mary Jane Broaddus	12/16
Bill Goodyear	12/16
Austin Pelot	12/19
Dennis Bewley	12/21
Carol Becka	12/23
Allen Markiewicz	12/26
Connie McKenzie	12/26
Thomas Wiatrak	12/27
Mark Robinson	12/28
Kay Wirick	12/28
Judy Ford	12/29
Cara Chidsey	12/30
Hazelle Taylor	12/30
Beverly Kovach	12/31
Ray Luttner	12/31





Office News!

Year End Donations

In order to make sure you receive proper credit for your 2024 taxes please make sure that, if you are mailing your donations, they are received in the mail no later than December 27th and that they are mailed to the PO Box 85 address.

Thank you!

Attention Snow Birds!

It's that time of year again when members start planning trips to warmer states for the winter months. Please make sure you notify the office if we need to put a hold on your church mail or if you have a forwarding address. Thank you!

Altar Flowers

The flower chart will be up in December. Members can sign-up to dedicate flowers in honor or in memory of loved ones. The cost of the flowers is \$25.00 per vase.

Mail

Please remember to mail your donations and any other correspondence to the following:

BUMC
PO Box 85
Brunswick, Ohio 44212



Office Hours:

Please plan your trips accordingly:

Monday thru Thursday:

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Friday: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

The office is closed on Friday afternoons.



CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION: 330-225-3179

Matt Merriman, Pastor (ext. 12)

Karen McGoughran, Office Manager (Ext. 10)

matt.merriman@brunswickumc.org

karen.mcgoughran@brunswickumc.org



Christmas Poinsettias!!

Order Form

We would like to decorate the sanctuary with beautiful poinsettia plants in honor or memory of friends and loved ones. To order, please complete the form below and place it in one of the offering boxes with your payment or turn it in to the church office by **Sunday, Dec. 8.** (No orders can be accepted after this date.)

Donated by: _____

Phone: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

No. of plants ____ @ \$13.25 each

Total Payment: _____ Check # _____ Cash

____ I will take my plant home after the Christmas Eve service.

____ Please donate my plant to a shut-in.