

STEEPLEVUES

A Letter From The Pastor

BY PASTOR MATT

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:11-13.

BUMC Family and Friends,

I wish all of you a very happy and prosperous new year. As I reflect on the coming 12 months, I am reminded of one of my favorite passages of scripture—Jeremiah 29:11—which you can read above. As I have walked through my personal trials and tribulations, this verse has always reassured me that God walked with me and that no matter how bad things seemed, there was hope.

I think that same message applies to our congregation. We face a lot of challenges. Although we have a very vibrant and active younger group, many of us are aging. Church attendance has dropped significantly off during the past 10 years. People are worshiping differently. There have been changes to how our denomination operates and that has been difficult for some. People are extremely busy out in the world and church often takes a backseat. Things may seem bad at times, but Jeremiah 29:11 tells me that God is walking with us through all of this and that we have hope for a bright future.

The two verses that follow Jeremiah 29:11 put some of the responsibility for a hopeful future on us. We must pray and seek God with all our heart. Prayer is much more than just asking God for stuff. Prayer has more to do with opening ourselves up to the Holy Spirit and being in communion with the divine.

Seeking God with all our heart might involve doing all the things that Jesus taught us to do: Loving people, helping people, avoiding the temptation to judge others, striving to grow in our faith. All of these are ways that we seek God with all our heart.

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(Pastor's Letter cont.)

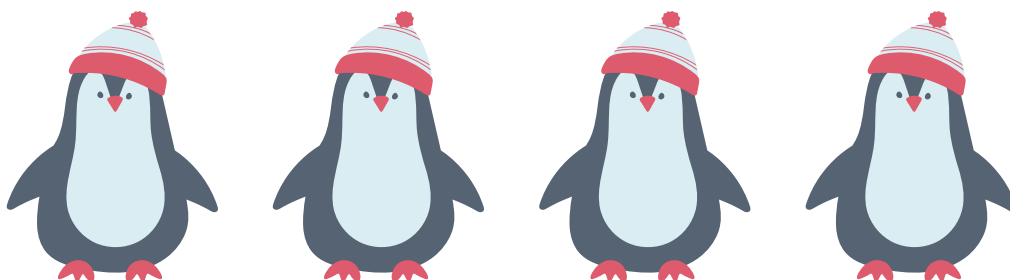
I am confident that if we work toward strong prayer lives and seek God with all our heart, our congregation will continue to see growth as we make a difference in our community and the world. God has a plan for us and we will prosper, if only we take the action that can make that future happen.

Blessings to All,
Pastor Matt



January Birthdays

- 2 Julie Yanus
- 4 Annie Merriman
- 4 Bonnie McConnell
- 4 John Mitterholzer
- 6 Phyllis Cubic
- 7 Tom Sarnovsky
- 9 Bill Radcliffe
- 9 Roger Wells
- 10 Liz Reed
- 13 Jim King
- 14 Carol Metheney
- 18 Ed Wright
- 19 Jennifer McKenzie
- 21 Jim Keister
- 23 Mel Wilk
- 25 Wendy Pettry
- 25 Jennifer Radel
- 26 Jenni Litton
- 29 Matthew Gegorski
- 31 Linda Olsen



Christmas Door Decorating Contest

If you missed the awards for the door decorating contest they are as follows:

The "Reindeers" Door is awarded for the youngest participant, Emily Chidsey.

It's "Jesus... Gift Box" is awarded the strangest door to Amanda Merriman.

The "Snowmen Decorating the Tree" gets the most creative award by Julie Buttle.

We had a tie for 3rd place: "A Baby Changes Everything" done by Susan Lausch.

"Shine for Jesus" done by Theresa Taylor & Bob Lewis.

2nd Place goes to "Triple Dog Dare Ya" done by Jennifer McKenzie.

1st Place goes to "Oh Christmas Tree" done by Amy Weinmann.

We thank all of our participants. It's amazing to see how creative and amazing our members are. This has turned into a fun event for everyone. Please consider participating next year. You have 359 days to plan.



As you are probably aware, Katie Kintop, who formerly ran our youth and children's ministries, has stepped down from her full-time position to return to school. Last semester she was able to lead Kid's Connect, our Wednesday evening children's program. However, in the coming semester she will not be able to continue in that capacity after January 22nd.

As it stands, Kids Connect will begin Wednesday, January 8 under Katie's leadership for the first 3 weeks, but we will need other volunteers to continue the program. We have one person who is willing to lead Kids Connect approximately two weeks a month. So, we are asking all of you to prayerfully consider stepping up to lead Kid's Connect once or twice a month. It's not difficult and we can help you plan your curriculum and activities. It runs an hour and is a vacation bible school type format where the kids hear a bible story, play games, do a craft or a science type station. Music can also be a part of the evening if you want.

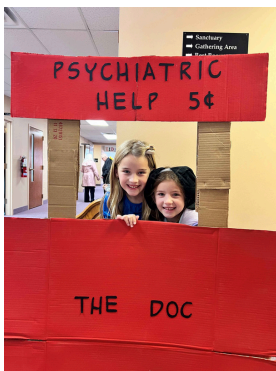
Our Kid's Connect program serves up to 20 different kids and they are a very special group. These kid's love Kids Connect and they enjoy being together. Please help us continue this vital ministry.

Sunday School

In January, we will be starting a 6 week series on the Lord's Prayer. We have been blessed to have Mallory Anglin, Sydney Beckett, Abbey Chuvilin, Rachel Hammond, and Julie Yanus to serve as Sunday school teachers. Andrea Reichel helps them when she doesn't have any children in the nursery. Thank you ladies. They provide our children with a fun lesson and creative activities every Sunday. They are providing such an integral foundation for our children's spiritual journeys.

We are always in need of nursery care volunteers during Sunday school. There is a sign-up sheet outside the church office. Please consider serving one Sunday a month in there.

Children's Pageant





Bible Study

Pastor Matt holds a bible study on Wednesday nights at 7:00pm. They will resume meeting on January 8. They are studying the Gospel of Mark.

Pastor Matt's Thursday Bible Study meets at 1:00 pm. However, they have decided to take a break and will resume for a Lenten Study. Look for details in your newsletters or the bulletin for updates.

You can drop in both studies as your schedule permits or attend each week.

Music Department Update

By Chris Chidsey



Happy New Year everyone! Thanks to all who participated in the special music during Christmas - it was wonderful. I'm looking forward to the opportunities coming up in 2025, and I hope you can be a part of it.

Choir will resume rehearsals on Wednesday, January 8th, 6:00-7:00 and the first Sunday we sing in church is January 26th. If you've never sung with us before, but would like to give it a try, I would like to personally invite you! If you cannot commit to the entire schedule, sing whichever months you are able. If you would like a full schedule, please let me know!

Other music opportunities - As we approach Easter time, the bell choir will play once again, and there will be an opportunity for the church band as well. We will communicate these practices in the Sunday bulletins and upcoming newsletters. Please look for details in them.

Contact me with any questions you have.

Chris Chidsey

christopherchidsey@gmail.com





Breakfasts are Back!

Hello Everyone,

I hope everybody had a great Christmas and New Years with their family and friends! I wanted to bring back a couple of Sunday breakfasts this winter for

January and February. It's always been a nice time to enjoy a meal with all of your church friends and make new ones. As always, you can plan on all of your favorite breakfast foods being served. The first breakfast will be held on Sunday, January 19th and another will be offered on February 16th from 8:30-12:00.

With service at 10 am, like last year, breakfast will begin an hour before service at 9 am and run through an hour after service till noon, giving everyone a choice in eating early or later.

A lot of our veteran helpers will be returning, but we're always open to new people who would like to help out with setup, food prepping, cooking, serving, bussing tables, and clean up. We would also be interested in anybody available to lead future breakfasts.

If you have any questions, ideas, or need any additional information, feel free to contact me at (216) 401-7859 or at RCuster82@AOL.com anytime! Looking forward to seeing everybody at breakfast again!

Happy New Year!

Bob and the Monthly Sunday Breakfast Team

Community Soup Dinner Thursday, January 18 5:00 p.m.



We continue to serve the community a free soup dinner on the third Thursday of the month. This month's community soup dinner will be on Thursday, January 16th, at 5:00pm. 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.

January is usually the coldest month so come enjoy a warm bowl of soup while helping others in the community. Isn't that what being a Christian is all about? Please call Lynn Miller at 216-570-5133 with any questions.



Fish Dinners

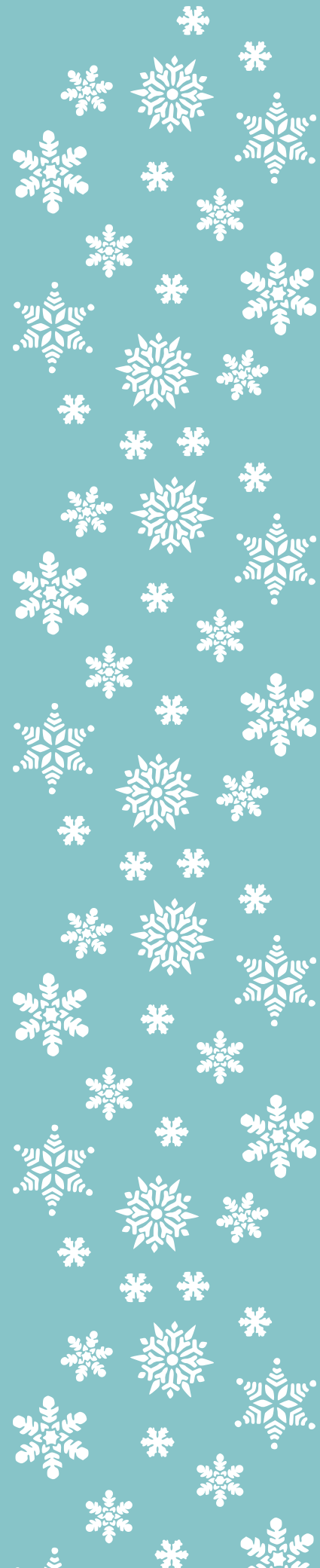
By Ruth Dodig

We will be holding 2 Fish Fry dinners this year on March 28 and April 4. Please mark your calendars. We plan to make Pierogies again this year on Martin Luther King Day, January 20th from 11:00-1:00 and 6:00-8:00 in the kitchen.

Ruth Dodig is coordinating the meal and the kitchen crew again this year. If you are interested in helping this year please let her know by calling her at (440) 292-7846 or talk to her on a Sunday morning when she is passing out bulletins..



"How short and fragile is this life! Keep reminding yourself especially with all that's going around today. Take nothing and no one for granted. Appreciate everything, do your best under any given situation. Don't give up and keep going. Most importantly, keep peace in your soul!" - Mufti Menk



Kids Hope

We continue to connect with the children at Memorial Elementary through the Kids Hope program. Everyone enjoyed themselves during the Christmas Party. Our mentors are developing relationships that sometimes last a lifetime. What a blessing our members are to these children! Enjoy some pictures from the party.

Kids Hope Family Dinner

The Kids Hope Family Dinner is just around the corner, on February 18, 2025! Kitchen and Clean-up Crews are needed from approximately 4:30-7:30 p.m. Please contact Lynn Kendrick at 813-541-6394 for further information or if you can help.





Dear Church Family,

Thank you for the cards, prayers, offers to help and support while we have been fighting health issues and Paul has been diagnosed with cancer. We truly appreciate our church family.

Blessings,
Barb and Paul Grant

We had approximately 30 members stay to help decorate the church for Hanging of the Greens. About half of those members returned to help put everything away on January 5th. We can't thank everyone enough for helping make the church look festive for Christmas. It's a lot of work but many hands make it go fast and it's fun fellowship.

Also, thank you to Hank Hartmann, Dick Beeching and Bill Radcliffe for putting up the stable and taking it down. We are blessed to have so many people who help behind the scenes.

Missions Update

Our mission is to help those in need. Many of you value the missions of the church and make donations monthly to help those in need. Besides funding the Food Pantry where we have a balance of \$24,709.69, we helped the following organizations last year. These are in addition to what we have given to the United Methodist causes.

BCPAA (Brunswick Police Dept. for hotel vouchers) - \$1000

Flat Rock - \$1000

Habitat for Humanity of Medina County - \$1000

Haven of Rest Ministries - \$1000

Love in the Name of Christ (Love Inc.) - \$1000

The City Mission - \$1000

Samaritan's Purse - \$1500.00

Youth for Christ (That Place for Teens) - \$1000

Samaritan's Purse

Hurray, the 2024 OCC shoebox goal of 150 gospel opportunities was exceeded. Thank you, again, to all of you who made this possible: workshop participants, item donors, those who donated to the shipping costs, and the 20 packing party workers. Also, thank you to the Boy Scouts for their help, and Barb Keister's family for packing the shoe boxes in the cartons. Donations for January and February include toys such as cars, trucks, baby dolls, stuffed toys, harmonics, yo-yos, and similar items. Watch for other ways to help in the February newsletter. Your generosity makes this mission possible.





Office News!

Aspire
Saturday, April 12
North Olmsted
Friends Church
6:00pm

Any women interested in attending an Aspire Women's Event, let Karen know and she will coordinate getting tickets. This might be a good Rambling Roses event.

FLOWER DEDICATIONS

The Flower Dedication chart for 2025 is up. You can sign-up and dedicate flowers in memory or in honor of a loved one. The flowers cost \$25.00 per vase and payment is due the Wednesday before the dedication. We are now ordering from Hirts Florists and so far, the arrangements have been beautiful.

Martin Luther King Day
January 20
Office Closed

Office Hours:

Please plan your trips accordingly:

Monday thru Thursday:

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Friday: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

The office is closed on Friday afternoons.

Mail

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

BUMC
PO Box 85
Brunswick, Ohio 44212



CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION:

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