

STEEPLEVUES

A Letter From The Pastor

BY REV. MATT MERRIMAN

“Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at Jesus’s feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks, so she came to him and asked, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her, then, to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things, but few things are needed—indeed only one. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.” Luke 10:38-42

BUMC Family and Friends,

Jesus showed up at the home of Mary and Martha with his twelve disciples and who knows how many other followers. As the hosts, Mary and Martha had to feed them. So, Martha rolled up her sleeves and got to work, building the fire, cutting up ingredients, mixing dough and all the other myriad tasks required to prepare a meal for a large party. As Martha toiled away, Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and listened to him. She loved hearing Jesus talk and she took to heart all that he said about the Kingdom of God. Martha, overwhelmed by the huge task she had taken on, asked Jesus to tell Mary to help her. It was as much Mary’s responsibility as it was hers, after all. But, Jesus would not. You can read Jesus’ response in the closing lines above.

I am the kind of person who likes to “get things done,” so I understand Martha. She was being responsible and doing the work that needed to be done to feed Jesus and his followers. It’s difficult to fault her for that. Likewise, part of me wants to nudge Mary and ask her to go help out. It’s her home, too. She is also a host. This is the conventional way of thinking in our society. There is work to do, so we get it done to the exclusion of all else.

Yet, in my heart I know that the lesson Jesus passed on is still the best answer. Mary had Jesus—God in the flesh—in her home and she wanted to learn from him. This was a rare opportunity and not to be taken lightly. Mary chose “the better part.” She blew off her work to spend time with Jesus.

(Cont. on page 3)





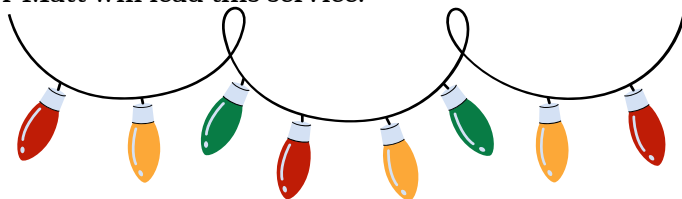
November 30	10:00	First Sunday of Advent
December 7	10:00	Second Sunday of Advent
December 14	10:00	Third Sunday of Advent
	7:00	Blue Christmas service
December 21	10:00	Children's Pageant
	6:00-8:00	Live Nativity Scene
December 24	3pm, 7pm, 11pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Services
(3:00 service will be live streamed, 11:00 service will be held in the Chapel)		
(Childcare is provided during the 3:00 and 7:00 services)		
December 28	10:00	Regular Worship Service



Longest Night Service/Blue Christmas

Saturday, December 14th 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 14, in the Ward Chapel. 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 candle lighters 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 21st

6:00pm - 8:00pm



We are organizing a Live Nativity Scene for Sunday, December 21, 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.



(Pastor’s message cont.)

This lesson should speak to us during the upcoming Christmas season. We will all be juggling things like shopping, baking, planning, church services, kid’s events, concerts, visiting family and friends, Christmas cards, wrapping, and innumerable other activities in the coming weeks. We are going to get tired and stressed out and grumpy. When this happens, let each of us think about Mary who set aside time to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn. Let’s take time to read scripture and pray. In spite of the busyness, let’s make sure we take quality time to be with our spouses, children and grandchildren. This Christmas season, choose the “better part” like Mary did and make room in your heart and in your life for Jesus.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Matt





Christmas Pageant

December 21 @ 10:00 am



Inspired by the holiday meeting scene in “The Santa Clause”, this year’s Christmas pageant imagines a gathering of familiar holiday characters—Santa, the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy, Cupid, and others—coming together for their annual “roll call” at the North Pole. As each character checks in, they suddenly realize that someone important is missing: Jesus.

The rest of the story follows the characters as they prepare excitedly for Jesus’ arrival, discovering along the way that Christmas isn’t truly complete without Him. Through humor, heart, and a joyful message, the pageant highlights the true meaning of Christmas—welcoming Christ at the center of it all.

Rehearsals are as follows:

Wednesday, November 19th at 6 pm-7 pm (Kidz Connect)

Wednesday, December 10th, at 6 pm-7 pm (Kidz Connect)

Saturday, December 20th 10 am-12 pm (with Pizza to follow)

Sunday School Update

As we celebrate Advent, we will focus on the story of Jesus’ birth through the lens of film-making. Children will see the “big picture” of Jesus’ birth as they journey through the story of Jesus coming into the world, from learning about Jesus’ genealogy to Jesus’ mother, Mary, preparing for his birth to the magi journeying to meet Jesus. The memory verse for this month is (Luke 2:10) Look! I bring good news to you-wonderful, joyous news for all people.

Important Dates

12/21 Children’s Pageant - No Sunday School

12/28 No Sunday School



Door Decorating Contest

The last two years, the door decorating contest has been a huge success! Everyone who has decorated doors had a great time and the rest of us enjoyed seeing their creations and voting on our favorite door. It has added a bit of holiday spirit and a lot of fun to the season.

We will be doing this again this year. Anyone interested in decorating a door, please contact Karen in the church office so she can assign you a door. Feel free to pair up with other members. Doors need to be completed by December 13. Ballots will be available at church on Sunday, December 14. Small prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners will be awarded during church on December 21st.



Christmas Music Opportunities



As usual during the Christmas season we have a number of new opportunities in which you can participate. I hope to see a few new faces! If you would like to join us, please let me know and I'll get you set up with what you need.

Choir - we are always accepting new members into the choir. We rehearse once a week on Wednesdays from 6-7 in the choir room and sing in church about once a month. During December, our schedule is:

- Rehearsal Wednesday, December 3 - 6-7 PM
- Rehearsal Wednesday, December 10 - 6-7 PM
- Sing in church on Sunday, December 14 - 10 AM
- Rehearsal Wednesday, December 17 - 6-7 PM
- Sing in church on Christmas Eve - 3 PM

Bell Choir - if you are interested in ringing with us, please let me know so I can be prepared with the right number of parts. There are 3 rehearsals and 1 performance in church.

- Rehearsal Wed Dec 3 - 7-8 PM
- Rehearsal Sat Dec 6 - 11AM -12
- Perform in church - Sun Dec 7 - 10 AM

Instrumental Ensemble - We typically have a small instrumental ensemble perform in church this year on December 21st. Before I schedule this group, I need to know who is wanting to participate and what instrument you play. If you'd like to play, please respond to me and let me know! I'll take the interested list and see what music will work best. There will be rehearsals after church the two weeks before we perform.

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



Counters

Did you know that every Sunday following worship, two volunteers count the day's offering and take it to the night deposit box at the bank? Many of these folks are retired and travel for a significant portion of the year and we could really use a few more volunteers to join the counters.

The job is very easy and a great way for someone with a busy life to give a little back to God. The counters are on a rotation and the entire process usually takes about an hour. Please prayerfully consider this vital service opportunity and contact Karen in the office if you are interested.

Save the Date

Pierogi Making
January 19, 2026

We are looking for volunteers to help make Pierogis on January 19th. Put the date in your 2026 calendar. Tentative time set 10:00-1:00. We had great help last year and hope to see a repeat success. Call Ruth Dodig with questions.



Upcoming Youth Events

On Sunday, December 7 from 6 pm to 8 pm there will be a Cookie Decorating event for kids from pre-school through high school. We'll watch a family friendly Christmas movie while we decorate and do crafts. When the youth (6th grade and up) are ready, they will depart to the other end of the church for more age appropriate games and fun.

Our annual youth lock-in will be Saturday, January 17 from 6 pm until 8 am on Sunday morning. Pizza will be provided and all the kids are asked to bring a snack to share. The evening will consist of games, movies, nerf gun fights, hide and seek and whatever else the kids want to do. Some kids might even find time to sleep, so bring your sleeping bag and pillow. Parents: please, please, please pick your kids up by 8 am on Sunday so Pastor Matt can go home and collapse. He's not as young as he once was.





Community Soup Dinner

Thursday, December 18
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. This fall, we're averaging serving 85 people. Last month we had 21 pots of soup. Thank you to everyone who cooked.

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?

Operation Christmas Child

By Marcia Taylor

Thank you, thank you, thank you to all of you that helped make our OCC mission a huge success. We packed over 200 opportunities for children all over the world to receive a shoebox gift and hear about Jesus' love for them. It was a team effort with people donating items for the shoeboxes and money so we could buy in bulk. Then there were those of you who faithfully came to our workshops to prepare the items for the boxes, setting up the day before our packing party, and finally coming to the packing party so the boxes were ready to go! We will take the month of December off, but watch your newsletter in January to see what we will be collecting for January.



Food
Pantry
Ministry

By Theresa Taylor

On behalf of our Food Pantry, I want to thank the congregation for the 300+ boxes of cereal that was collected in September. This will supply the pantry for 5-6 months. Also, thank you for your monetary gifts to the pantry! I purchase food from Akron Canton Regional Food Bank with this money and pay for the food delivery to the church.

We are a food pantry that is open every Thursday from 9-11 am. Our neighbors come once a month for food. They get enough to last a few days. We serve the Brunswick, Brunswick Hills, Hinckley and Valley City area.

I want to also thank our volunteers for all their dedication to help serve our neighbors throughout the year. They include: Henry Bracker, Diane Bunting, Leah Glagola, Donna Goessler, Bob Lewis, Cathy Richard, Mary Rozar, and Mark Taylor.

Again, thank you again for your support! Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Pastor's Bible Studies

The Wednesday Night Bible Study meets at 7 pm in Room 101. We have begun the Book of Isaiah, a study that will probably take us into 2026. All are welcome and may join at any time. Feel free to contact Pastor Matt with any questions.



The Thursday Afternoon Bible Study meets at 1 pm in room 101. This group has been following a curriculum that is currently working through Genesis. Anyone may join this group at any time. Contact Pastor Matt with any questions.



Rambling Roses



Miss Molly's Tearoom
Tuesday, December 16, 2025
11:30 am

The "Rambling Roses" will have lunch at Miss Molly's Tearoom on Tuesday, December 16 at 11:30. Contact Debbie Vargo at 330-242-3467 to RSVP by December 10th. She needs to make a reservation. All ladies are welcome to attend!

Check It Out!



The task of reorganizing our church library has been completed with the help of Lynn Kendrick, Mary Jane Broaddus and Debbie Vargo. Outdated books were removed and newer ones were sorted into corresponding categories.

The library is always open and ready for your visit and perusing! Come and find books on prayer, devotions, self-help, inspiration, Christianity and much more. All books and items can be checked out, including reference, teacher resources and jigsaw puzzles. Simply choose the items that you would like to take home and return them to the white bookshelf located right inside the library door. Items will be reshelfed on a weekly basis. There is no need to sign any cards or lists. Stop by and enrich your spiritual journey today!

Women's Book Study for All Ages

We meet once a month on Fridays in room 101. We are studying the book "40 Days Through the Bible". It is only \$10 on Amazon. Next meeting day is **December 5** at 6:30. Questions: call Alyssa at 440-823-8198 or Mallory at 330-749-5573.



By Darlene Beeching

We need some help with coffee hour. Dick and I will be gone traveling this winter and the other people who fill in will also be gone the month of February. 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.



Leadership Board 2026

We would like to announce our new Leadership Board for 2026. We thank the following who have volunteered to serve on the board: Sarah Crawford, Jan Kleinhenz, Vivian O'Neill, and Matt Robinson. We also thank Julie Buttle, Janet Hartmann, and Susan Lausch for serving the past 2 years.

Tristin Anglin
Sarah Crawford
Jan Kleinhenz
Jennifer McKenzie
Joel Mille
Vivian O'Neill
Chuck Porter
Matt Robinson
Frank Rzicznek
Marcia Taylor
Mark Taylor
Amy Weinmann



Finance Update

We have a sub team from the Leadership Board which includes, Tristin Anglin, Janet Hartmann, Frank Rzicznek, and John Szakacs who are working on establishing a budget for 2026. This will be the first budget the church has had in over 20 years. George Kanya who has served as Treasurer for 13 years is stepping down effective January 1st. This team has also been working on a way to make this transition. If anyone is interested in helping with our Finance Team, please contact the church office.



December Birthdays

Tex Combs	12/02
Tim Slama	12/02
Adrenne Jackson	12/03
Abbey Chuvilin	12/06
Laura Flood	12/08
Beth Myers	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 Broadus	12/16
Bill Goodyear	12/16
Dennis Bewley	12/21
Allison Mileto	12/22
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
Ray Luttner	12/31





Dear Quilters and Church Family,
 Thank you ever so much for the beautiful quilts we received. We were so surprised to get them. Thinking of all the special work and love that was put into them. They will surely come in handy for Buddy and myself this winter. Thank you again for remembering us in your thoughts and prayers. God Bless each and every one of you.

Love, Buddy and Liz Reed

Dear Church Family,
 Thank you for all the prayers, cards and visits over the past year. I know the prayers have gotten me this far. I am feeling much better and hope to make it back to church soon. Special thanks to the quilt group for the absolutely gorgeous quilt. I don't know what I would have done without the support of my church family.

Love, Barb Porter

Dear Brunswick United Methodist Church,

We want to thank you for all of your support for Brad and our family during his incredibly hard journey. We appreciate all of your prayers and appreciate the support that continues to get us through our heartbreak. We are so thankful to your congregation and prayer chain.

Sincerely, Rich and Donna Wilkison

The Missions Team wants to extend a great big thank you to all of the generous people at the Brunswick United Methodist Church. Our mission is dedicated to the message from Jesus that teaches us to reach out to others. Ten foster children in Medina will receive generous gifts because you reached out to them with love and kindness. The outpouring of love to others is so very heartwarming.

Thank you!

Hello Church Family,

I wanted to thank everyone who volunteered in one way or another or helped by decorating a car for Trunk or Treat this year. Even with fewer people attending from the community than what we normally have, I think it was a great turnout. The kids had fun. It was a beautiful day, so I would call it a win. Events like these aren't possible without your help. Thank you to all our volunteers!

Thanks, *Jessieca Paul*





Office News!



Year End Donations

In order to make sure you receive proper credit for your 2025 taxes, please make sure that if you are mailing your donations, they are received in the mail no later than December 29th 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.

The Office will be closed the week of Christmas and office hours will vary on December 29th and 30th.

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

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.