

January 31st, 2021

**Fourth Sunday
After Epiphany**

***"In this country American means white.
Everybody else has to hyphenate."
–Toni Morrison***

Announcements

WELCOME to all guests or visitors worshipping with us today in this Zoom format! We are doing everything we can to keep the service open to all, yet secure. In the eventuality of a disruption of the service, we will email information on how to re-enter the service with a password.

FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN - We encourage you to share this service with your children, as well as take part in the virtual activities with Ms. Mindy at 9:30 (1/2 hour before every service). The link for this can be found in either the email you may have received, on our Facebook page, and/or on our church website:
<https://brecksvilleucc.org/services/childrens-time-online/>

FUND RAISER! We will be hosting a Fish Dinner on Friday, March 5th, 2021. This fundraiser will be presented with the help of the Tri-C Culinary Arts Department and Stone Soup. The students have been trained in the latest COVID-19 restaurant protocols, i.e., in addition to gloves, masks and social distancing, they've studied the new "no-touch" food safety guidelines and services. It will be served "carry out" style, and all proceeds will directly benefit the BUCC. Volunteers are needed to assist with planning, coordinating and distribution to customers on the day of the event. This dinner will be open to the public, and we hope for strong congregational support. If you're interested in lending a helping hand, please call or text **Doug Fawcett** at **440-653-3572**. Thank you!

SOCK IT TO ME SUNDAY: Thank you for your generosity over the past couple months! Our last Sox donation was delivered at the end of December, to City Mission on Carnegie Ave. Because of their association with Laura's Home (a women's shelter), it's very likely that all of our women's socks will be forwarded there. We are still collecting donations until the end of the month, as the shelters we have delivered to have been very happy to receive BUCC's donations. If you wish to drop off a donation at the church, please call **Anne** at **440-526-4364**, so that she can make sure the back doors are unlocked for you. Likewise, you may contact **Elizabeth** by either phone call or text, at **440-319-6384**, or by email at elizgadus@gmail.com. *Thank you and God Bless!*

***We are an Open and Affirming
Congregation, welcoming all of God's
children.***

Whether you are single, married, divorced,
separated,
or partnered,

You Are Welcome Here!

Whatever your race, ethnicity, or age,
You Are Welcome Here!

Whatever your gender identity or sexual
orientation,

You Are Welcome Here!

Whatever your religious background, creed,
or spirituality,

You Are Welcome Here!

Whatever your social or economic
circumstances,

You Are Welcome Here!

Whatever your health conditions,
impairments, or mobility needs,

You Are Welcome Here!

***Whoever we may be, wherever we are on
our life's journey,
We welcome one another to this place, even
as God welcomes us all in
Jesus Christ!***

Announcements

SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK CLUB – The Social Justice Book Club will continue to discuss the book ***Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times***, by Bishop Michael Curry. The next Zoom meeting is on Thursday 2/4, at 7:00 pm. (Please use the same Zoom account as our Sunday service.) We will cover Chapters 6 (“It’s Not Easy”) & 7 (“Leave No One Behind”). The discussion questions will be emailed to all, at the beginning of the week. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact **Kate Klonowski** at keightykay@gmail.com or **216-534-3498** (text ok).

PASTOR SEARCH AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE: The PSNC is diligently making survey calls to everyone from the BUCC. If you have not been called yet, don’t worry – your input is essential, and no one will be “left behind”! The following are the members who are conducting the survey calls: Beth Rehling, Ben Rehling, Jon Thompson, Cliffs Cribbs, Joy Garapic, Sherrill Witt and Alan Klonowski. For more information, call **Sherrill Witt** at **216-244-6916**, or **Cliff Cribbs** at **216-970-6347**. Thank you in advance for your time and insights!

THE PASTOR IS IN – Pastor Allan is available every Tuesday, between 11 am and noon. You can contact him either by mail, email or phone - feel free to call either the church or his cell phone directly. You can also catch him online, by clicking on the same Zoom link that we use for Sunday services. He’d love to hear from you! Here’s his contact information:

- BUCC address: **23 Public Square, Brecksville OH 44141**
- Email: buccpastor@sbcglobal.net
- BUCC office phone: **(440) 526-4364**
- Pastor Allan’s cell phone: **(513) 417-1537**
- Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/4780705901>

WEEKLY COLLECTION is still happening! Please don’t forget to send in your pledges to the church by mail or (preferably) PayPal! Check out BrecksvilleUCC.org/giving for more info.

2021 PLEDGE COLLECTION ENVELOPES: The small collection envelopes for this year are available on the pew bench just inside the back doors. If you haven’t gotten yours yet, Joy has sent your envelopes for the first quarter in with your year-end statement. To pick up your envelopes, please call the church office to make arrangements for the doors to be unlocked. If you can’t pick them up, notify **Anne** and she will mail them to you. The church office phone number is: **440-526-4364**, and **Anne’s** email is buccoh@sbcglobal.net.

COFFEE HOUR! After the service, we welcome all attendees to stay on Zoom to enjoy some time and fellowship with each other. Brew your favorite fairly-traded coffee or tea and a snack and catch up with friends!

*Many thanks for all the donations of time, money,
and talent that you provide to the Church!*

Gathering in God's Presence

Meditation: *"Race doesn't really exist for you because it has never been a barrier. Black folks don't have that choice."*

– Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, from ***Americanah*** (The 2013 US National Book Critics Circle Award Winner for Fiction)

Prelude Music: ***We've Come This Far by Faith*** Goodson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNVSZ338nmQ>

Call to Worship:

- ♦ Leader (Carol): Whoever you are, however you define yourself, however the world defines you: God calls you into worship and friendship.
- ♦ **People (Pat): Whoever you are, wherever you have come from on your life's journey to bring you here: you are welcome.**
- ♦ Leader: Come join us now, as each of us has come before to join those already here. Come join us in worship. We want you here. God calls you here.
- ♦ **People: We want you here, and God wants you here, a precious part of the family of God.**
- ♦ Leader: Together we are one family of humanity, the children of God. Let us worship God!

Hymn of Praise: ***In Christ There Is No East or West*** African American melody

1. In Christ there is no East or West, in Christ no South or North;
But one community of love throughout the whole wide earth.
2. In Christ shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find;
God's service is the golden cord close-binding humankind.
3. In Christ is neither Jew nor Greek, and neither slave nor free;
For men and women live in God, and all are kin to me.
4. In Christ now meet both East and West, in Christ meet South and North;
One joyous, true community throughout the whole wide earth.
(John Oxenham, 1908, alt.; stanza 3: L. H. Stookey, 1987)

Prayer of Approach & Confession:

- ◆ **People (Pat):** O God, we are coming late to many realizations. We have not seen what all our Black fellow citizens have been trying to tell us about for a long time. “Surely it can’t really be like that,” we told ourselves. And yet it is. It’s on video. It’s real. Now we know. Forgive us our slowness to believe. Now let us not fall into a kind of learned helplessness. Let us not believe that since no single action can make much of a difference, that no action at all is really needed. Help us to act on what we know. Little actions add up to big change. Help us do little actions. Amen

Words of Assurance:

- ◆ **Leader (Carol):** Peter said, “I now realize that God does not show favoritism, but accepts from every nation anyone who fears God and does what is right.”
- ◆ **People (Pat):** Peter continued: “All the prophets testify about Jesus that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” Thanks be to God!

Song of Praise:

<p>Glory, glory, glory! Glory to God in the highest! Glory, glory, glory! Glory to God in the highest! And on earth be peace to all people, with whom God is pleased. And on earth be peace to all people, with whom God is pleased.</p>

Readings

First Reading: **Mark 1: 21-28** *Jesus drives out a demon while preaching*

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

“Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.” News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Readings (continued)

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Food sacrificed to idols

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. But whoever loves God is known by God. So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.

Contemporary Reading: From *Genuine Change*, by Audre Lord

“Those of us who stand outside the circle of this society’s definition of acceptable women; those of us who have been forged in the crucibles of difference – those of us who are poor, who are lesbians, who are black, who are older – know that survival is not an academic skill.... For the masters tools will not dismantle the master’s house. They will never allow us to bring about genuine change.”

Musical Offering:

Go Down, Moses
Jon Thompson, bass

African American spiritual

Sermon:

Eating at the Idols

Pastor Allan Lane

Hymn of Reflection: *Standing in the Need of Prayer* African American spiritual

REFRAIN: It's me, it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer!
(twice)

1. Not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer; (twice) **REFRAIN**
2. Not the preacher, nor the deacon, but it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer; (twice) **REFRAIN**
4. Not the stranger, nor my neighbor, but it's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer; (twice) **REFRAIN**

The Church at Prayer

Ann Klonowski, Lee Sanderson (in Hospice), Lenore Harris, Susan Renovetz, David Pastor, Elizabeth Gadus, Phyllis Hassler, Joanne Cook, Sheila Day (friend of the Sniders), Joanne K. and Jim C. (friends of Ed & June Puwal), Max Roha, Betty Kaul, Justin Brownlow, Anna Mary Fisher, Bill Toneff, Jan Wardlaw, Suzanne Patrick (niece of Kathy Smith), Stan McCain, Dottie Faust, "Edna House", Jon Thompson, Tina Ortiz, Dassie Matsuoka, Kathleen Stewart & Joe Blasko (her father), Cindy Burton, people who are unemployed and under employed.

Please let the office know of any additions, corrections, or changes to our prayer lists.

❖ Silent Meditation

❖ Prayers of the Church

❖ Our Lord's Prayer

(the additional use of "Mother" is optional, according to one's Theological understanding)

...Our Father-Mother, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

The Invitation:

- ♦ Leader (Carol): We give what we can, we live as well as we can, we do the best that we can to make the world live up to its promise as God's creation. Let us present our gifts and offerings to God.

BrecksvilleUCC.org/giving

Offertory Hymn:

Winter has come, it's taken hold.
The days are short, the nights are cold.
The poor need food and help and heat.
We send our gifts, their needs to meet.
Amen!

Prayer of Dedication:

- ♦ People (Pat): **You move in strange and powerful ways among us, O loving God, through ordinary and simple gifts. Receive these offerings from your grateful people, as tokens of our hearts' desire to act like children of the Holy One. Amen**

Hymn of Departure:

Renew Your Church

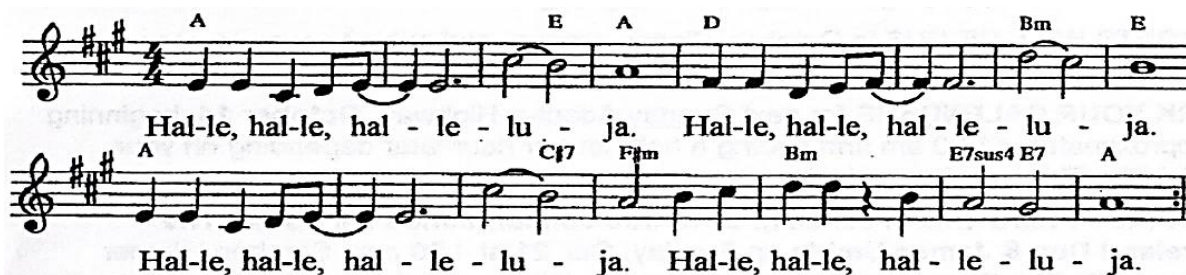
Traditional English melody

1. Renew your church, its ministries restore: both to serve and adore.
Make us again as salt throughout the land, and as light from a stand.
'Mid somber shadows of the night, where greed and hatred spread their blight,
O send us forth with power endued. Help us, God, be renewed.
3. Teach us to pray, for you are ever near; your still voice let us hear.
Our souls are restless till they rest in you; this is life, full and true.
Before your presence keep us still that we may find for us your will
And seek your guidance every day. Teach us, God, how to pray.
4. Teach us to love, with strength of heart and mind, each and all -- humankind!
Break down old walls of prejudice and hate; leave us not to our fate.
As you have loved and given your life to end hostility and strife,
Your grace we must be mindful of: Teach us, God, how to love.
(Kenneth L. Cober, 1960; alt.)

Going With God's Love

Carrying the Light of Christ Into the World

Circle of Community



❖ Benediction

Postlude:

Oh, Freedom

Post-Civil War African American freedom song

Fellowship Chorale, First Baptist Church of Glenarden, MD

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIWBq4drhfo>

Special Thanks:

January 31, 2021

Lay Reader Carol Miller

Responder Pat Rehm

CE Mindy Wade

Slide Runner Kate Klonowski

Zoom Host Heidi Spangler

February 7, 2021

Lay Reader Julie Bernard

Responder Bridget Sproul

CE Mindy Wade

Slide Runner Kate Klonowski

Zoom Host David Pastor



HAVE A GOOD WEEK!

