



# Brecksville

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# United Church of Christ

23 Public Square • Brecksville • Ohio • 44141 • 440-526-4364

***Loving, Serving and Accepting All People  
with God's Life-Changing Power***

"I could end this  
with a moral, as if  
this were a fable  
about animals,  
though no fables  
are really about  
animals."

—Margaret  
Atwood,  
***The Tent***



Pascall, Wayne. *Prodigal Son*. Fineartamerica.com.  
<https://fineartamerica.com/featured/prodigal-son-wayne-pascall.html?product=art-print>

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**Sunday July 25th, 2021 • 10:00 AM**

***Pastor***

• Allan Lane

***Director of Music***

• David Debick

***Financial Secretary***

• Joy Garapic

***Office Manager***

• Anne Melfo

***Ministers – All of Our Members***

## **Affirmation of Welcome**

***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!***



- *Please sign our guest book in the narthex before you leave - if you are interested in learning more about our church, please feel free to speak to our pastor.*
- *Hearing difficulty? Please talk to any usher about a Personal Sound receiver available for your use.*

**Office Hours:**

**Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs.: 9:30am - 12:30pm**

**Church Phone: 440-526-4364**

**e-mail: [buccoffice23@gmail.com](mailto:buccoffice23@gmail.com) – web address: [www.BrecksvilleUCC.org](http://www.BrecksvilleUCC.org)**

July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## Meditation Music

"I dislike certainty because it feels like truth, but it isn't. And I think I have had some inkling what it is for a whole people to become certain. "

—Daniel Abraham, *The King's Blood*

## ***Gathering in God's Presence***

*(Please Stand as you are able.)*

**Prelude**     **Ah, What Shame I Have to Bear**     12th century Japanese melody  
*Translation: "Tattered sleeves are wet with dew / when I think of home./  
Waking from my foolish dreams,/ to my home I'll go."  
(Sogo Matsumoto, 1895; transl. Esther Hibbard, 1962)*

**Bearing the Light of Peace**  
**Bearing the Light of Christ**

### **\* Call to Worship:**

Leader: If we were dogs, God would call us into worship with a scent.

**People: If we were cats, God would call us into worship with a squeak.**

Leader: But we are humans, and God calls us into worship with a promise of love, a word of forgiveness, and the offer of fellowship.

**People: Love and forgiveness and fellowship await! Let us worship God!**

**Hymn of Praise:**     ***O My Soul, Bless Your Creator***     #13, v. 1-3

1. O my soul, bless your Creator; all within me bless God's name;  
Bless your Maker, and forget not all God's mercies to proclaim.
  2. God forgives all your transgressions, all who suffer, gently heals;  
God redeems you from destruction, and with you so kindly deals.
  3. Far as east from west is distant, God has put away our sin;  
Like a mother and a father, God compassionate has been.
- (Music: attrib. to Christian F. Witt, 1715; text: anonymous paraphrase of Psalm 103)

### **\* Prayer of Confession: [Unison]**

Silence. Darkness and silence. And then came the word. God spoke. "Let there be light." And there was light. But light wasn't the first creation. It was sound. The word. The word of God constructed a world. And we live in it. We bring our own words and our own actions. Some of God's words are frozen in time, in a book, on a page. With a period. An ending. But one of those words - the Word, Jesus - lived a life, and died, and lived again. His was life with a semi-colon: a stop, and then a start again, of the same life. To him we bring our confession: Some of our words would have been better as silence. Some of our actions brought darkness back. Not good. We're sorry. Speak Your word of forgiveness to us once again, we pray. Amen

### **\* Words of Assurance:**

- Leader: Jesus' word to the woman caught in adultery is his word to us: "Your sins are forgiven. Go and sin no more!"
- People: Thanks be to God for this word of grace, that puts an end to the sentence of our sin. Amen

### **Song of Praise:**

#### ***Glory to God***

Pablo Sosa, 1988

*Glory, glory, glory –*

*Glory to God in the highest! (2X's)*

*And on earth be peace to all people,*

*For God loves us all! (2X's)*

### ***God Is Still Speaking***

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

**First Lesson**

**Galatians 4:21-31**

*The allegory of Sarah and Hagar*

**Second Lesson (Pastor Allan)**

**Luke 15: 11-32**

*The Prodigal Son*

**Contemporary Lesson**

From ***The Book of Disquiet***

By Fernando Pessoa

## Musical Offering

***Lord I Lift Your Name on High***  
Craig Ramsey, vocals and guitar

Rick Founds

## Sermon

***Should We Read The Bible Literally?***

Pastor Allan Lane

## Hymn of Reflection:

***Blessed Assurance***

#473

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
born of the Spirit, washed in Christ's blood.

**REFRAIN: This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long. (sing twice)**

2. Perfect submission, perfect delight!  
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
Angels descending, bring from above  
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. **REFRAIN**

3. Perfect submission, all is at rest,  
I in my Savior am happy and blessed;  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
filled with God's goodness, lost in Christ's love. **REFRAIN**  
(Music: Phoebe P. Knapp, 1873; text: Fanny Crosby, 1873; alt.)

## ***The Church at Prayer***

The Family and Friends of Baby Raegan, David Pastor, Sandra Lane, Lois Lorenzo, Lenore Harris, Phyllis Hassler, Dorie Gabor, Joanne Cook, Terry Heiman, Kathy Smith, Joanne K., Bill Toneff, Cindy Burton, Ann Roha, Elizabeth Gadus, Ann Klonowski, Sheila Day, Jim C., Max Roha, Betty Kaul, Anna Mary Fisher, Jan Wardlaw, Suzanne Patrick, Stan McCain, Dottie Faust, "Edna House", Jon Thompson, Tina Ortiz, Dassie Matsuoka, Kathleen Stewart & Joe Blasko (her father), 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: You can say, "I love you, God," in so many ways. One way is to say, "I love you, neighbor," through our gifts and offerings, for whenever we give to the least of these, we give to God. Let us say "I love you," to God and neighbor. Let us present our offerings.

### **Offertory Hymn:**

**We bring our gifts because we care,  
They are a part of what we share.  
Our love is strong, it heals, uplifts.  
With hearts of joy we share our gifts. Amen**

### **\* Prayer of Dedication: [Unison]**

**A word can be the beginning of action, or it can remain just a word. May the words we speak here today have echoes in the world outside our walls. May our words become actions through these gifts, and heal the world. Amen**

## Going with God's Love

Hymn of Departure: *O Jesus, I Have Promised*

#493

1. O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;  
remain forever near me, my Savior and my Friend:  
I shall not fear life's struggles if you are by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.
2. O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will!  
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control!  
O speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul!
3. O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you  
that where you are in glory your servant shall be, too;  
And, Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;  
O give me grace to follow my Savior and my Friend!  
(Music: A. H. Mann, 1883; text: John E. Bode, 1868; alt.)

## Carrying the Light of Christ into the World – Acolyte

Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja.

Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja.

† Benediction

## **BUCC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **WE WELCOME** all our guests who are worshipping with us today. Please sign our guest book before you go, and thank you for coming!
- **STAYING COOL** - Several weeks ago, three of the main air conditioner compressors ceased functioning. As a result, it was necessary to replace them at a cost of \$14,000. If you would like to help defray this unexpected expense, please consider making a gift – please mark it 'Air Conditioner Fund', so that Joy can ensure that it goes to the appropriate fund. Thank you.
- **PROCEDURES DURING SERVICES** – As promised, Spiritual Life has revisited several of the re-opening procedures initially set in place. Singing and responding is now allowed, if you feel comfortable doing so! We are going to continue to encourage congregants to sit in the socially-distanced pew areas, and to bring your own communion (BYOC). Collection plates will remain at the entrance doors. For the time being, our traditional closing circle and coffee hour remain suspended. Thank you for helping us to mindfully ease back into worship!
- **BYOC – REMINDER:** Next Sunday, 8/1 is a communion Sunday. Please bring your own bread and grape juice.
- **SUMMER MUSIC PROGRAM** - We are still recruiting singers and instrumentalists to share their musical gifts with our congregation and guests, for the month of August. If you'd like to volunteer, please let Dave Debick know, so he can mark you on the calendar. He is happy to help volunteers find music, and will rehearse as much or as little as you'd like. Dave can be contacted by cell **216-408-7949**, or emailed at **buccmusic23@gmail.com**.



## Readings

### First Lesson

**Galatians 4:21-31**

*The allegory of Sarah and Hagar*

Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. His son by the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a divine promise. These things are being taken figuratively: The women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written: "Be glad, barren woman, you who never bore a child; shout for joy and cry aloud, you who were never in labor; because more are the children of the desolate woman, than of her who has a husband."

Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise. At that time the son born according to the flesh persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. But what does Scripture say? "Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman's son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman's son." Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.

### Second Lesson (read by Pastor Allan)

**Luke 15: 11-32**

*The Prodigal Son*

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them. Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything."

"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father."

*(continued on next page)*

## Readings

### Second Lesson (continued by Pastor Allan)

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.”

“Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’”

“‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

### Contemporary Reading

From *The Book of Disquiet*, by Fernando Pessoa

“There are metaphors more real than the people who walk in the street. There are images tucked away in books that live more vividly than many men and women. There are phrases from literary works that have a positively human personality. There are passages from my own writing that chill me with fright, so distinctly do I feel them as people, so sharply outlined do they appear against the walls of my room, at night, in shadows.”

# Special Thanks:

## **JULY 25, 2021**

**Head Usher:** *Volunteer Needed*  
**Ushers:** *Gayle Jackson*  
*Evie Novak*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
**Lay Reader:** *Jon Thompson*  
**Greeter:** *Allison Colbert*  
**Counters:** *Marge Culver*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
**Acolyte:** *Volunteer Needed*  
**Peace Candle:** *Volunteer Needed*  
**A/V Team:** *Volunteer Needed*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
**Sound:** *Volunteer Needed*  
**Flowers:** *Evelyn Duffy*

## **AUGUST 1, 2021**

**Head Usher:** *Jon Thompson*  
**Ushers:** *Volunteer Needed*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
**Lay Reader:** *Cliff Cribbs*  
**Greeter:** *Sue Stenzel*  
**Counters:** *Nancy Stella*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
**Acolyte:** *Volunteer Needed*  
**Peace Candle:** *Volunteer Needed*  
**A/V Team:** *Volunteer Needed*  
*Volunteer Needed*  
**Sound:** *Volunteer Needed*  
**Flowers:** *Julie Bernard*

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[illegible]