



BRECKSVILLE

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***

"Let's go
to Bethlehem
and see this
thing
that has
happened,
which the Lord
has told us
about."
-- Shepherds,
Luke 2:15b



Christmas Eve, December 24th, 2021 • 10:00 PM

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 – web address: www.BrecksvilleUCC.org



DECEMBER 24TH, 2021

Meditation Music

*"The Christmas spirit is simply an honest spirit of love for all humanity. It is the force that moves us to give what we can, to help as we are able, and to always be of kind comfort." – Richelle E. Goodrich, **Slaying Dragons: Quotes, Poetry, & a few Short Stories for Every Day of the Year***

Gathering in God's Presence

(Please Stand as you are able.)

Prelude *Whence Is that Goodly Fragrance Flowing* Traditional French carol

*"Bethlehem! there in manger lying, find your Redeemer, haste away!
Run ye with eager footsteps hieing! Worship the Saviour born today!
Bethlehem! there in manger lying, find your Redeemer, haste away!"
(Text translation: A. B. Ramsay)*

Bearing the Light of Peace

Bearing the Light of Christ

*** Call to Worship:**

Leader: Though darkness has fallen, we are preparing for a great light.

People: The light of Christ is coming into the world.

Leader: The world is full of darkness and shadows, of anger and bitterness and hate. The light of Christ is coming to drive them out.

People: The Light of the World is born in our midst to give light to every person.

Leader: Let the light start shining in your heart tonight, in the midst of the darkness, and shine in your forevermore. Let us worship God!

Hymn of Praise



Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

1. Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now give heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before him bow,
asleep within the manger now.
Christ is born today, Christ is born today!

2. Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now you know of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
God has opened heaven's door,
and you are blessed forevermore.
Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!

3. Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now you need not fear the grave:
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save,
Christ was born to save!

(Music: 14th century German melody; harm. adapt. from John Stainer, 1871; text: German and Latin, 14th century; transl. John M. Neale, 1855; alt.)

*** Invocation [Unison]**

Long ago, O God, you spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways through the prophets, as the author of Hebrews tells us, but in these last days you have spoken to us by a Son. Speak to us tonight once more as we celebrate Christ's birth into the world and all the joy of Christmas floods into our hearts. Amen

Lighting the Advent Wreath and Christ Candle



Come, listen, the sounds of
God-with-us ring clear,
and signs of a cross
in the distance appear.
The Word once made flesh, yet
the Word ever near.
One candle is lit
For the Christ-birthday here.

(Music: William J. Kirkpatrick, 1895; text: Mary Anne Parrott, 1988)

[Prayer is taken from **Isaiah 52**]

Leader: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

People: Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

Leader: Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

People: The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

✧ The Christ Candle is lit ✧



First Reading

Luke 2: 1-20

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

The Carol

Angels We Have Heard on High

1. Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo! (twice)

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song? **(Refrain)**

3. Come to Bethlehem and see Christ, who comes in lowly birth.
Come adore on bended knee Jesus, joy of heav'n and earth. **(Refrain)**

4. See within a manger laid, Christ, whom choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise. **(Refrain)**

(Music: French carol melody, arr. Edward S. Barnes, 1937; harm. Austin C. Lovelace, 1964; text: Traditional French carol; transl. Crown of Jesus, 1862; alt.)

Second Reading (read by Pastor Allan) **John 1: 1-14**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.



The Carol *Once in Royal David's City*

1. Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

2. Christ came down to earth from heaven,
love incarnate for us all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, the scorned, the lowly, lived on earth
our Savior holy.

3. Jesus is our childhood's pattern; day by day like us he grew,
he was little, weak, and helpless,
tears and smiles like us he knew.
Thus he feels for all our sadness,
and he shares in all our gladness.

4. And our eyes at last shall see him,
through his own redeeming love;
for that child who seemed so helpless
lives and reigns in heaven above;
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.

(Music: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849; harm. Arthur H. Mann, 1919; text: Cecil F. Alexander; alt.)

Third Reading (read by Pastor Allan) 1 John 1: 1-3

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

The Carol

What Child Is This

1. What Child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?

**Refrain: This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.**

2. Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
(Refrain)

3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
come, rich and poor, to own him,
the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.
(Music: 16th century English melody; text: William C. Dix, c. 1865) **(Refrain)**

Homily

Seen and Heard

Pastor Allan Lane

Anthem

Carol of the Angels

Words and Music by Allen Pote

1. *Shepherds were keeping a watch o'er their sheep
when at once in the sky to their questioning eyes,
angels appearing, bearing glad tidings,
sang with a splendor of joy and surprise.*

*Refrain: "Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria," did the angels sing,
"Glory to God and peace on earth,"
the song of angels announcing the birth.
(Gloria in excelsis Deo: Glory in the highest to God.)*

2. *"Don't be afraid," said an angel to shepherds
who stood in amazement and shook with a-fright.
"For unto you is born in a manger, a baby, a Savior, ah, blest be the
sight!" (Refrain)*

3. *Hurry to Bethlehem, run to the stable,
and witness the One who was sent from above.
Kneel and adore, and worship the Christ Child,
Born of a woman, yet born of God's love. (Refrain)*

*"Gloria, Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria, Gloria, Christ the Savior is
born."*

Christmas Offering

***The Invitation:**

Leader: At Christmas we celebrate the light of the world beginning to shine among us. May that light be passed from person to person in the year to come as we share our time, our talent, and our treasure with you for the good of your people and the communities in which we live. Let us present our gifts and offerings to God!

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]**

There is darkness in the world, but where the light of Christ shines, the darkness is driven away. May these gifts lighten much darkness, O God. Amen



- † **The Invitation**
- † **Prayer of Consecration**
- † **Words of Institution**
- † **Receiving the Bread and Cup**

***Prayer of Thanksgiving: [Unison]**

You came first in the stable, O Holy One, and now you have come in the bread and the wine. In all things we thank you for your presence in the world for our sake. Amen



Musical Offering

O Holy Night

Kate Klonowski, Soloist

Adam

Going with God's Love

***The Carol**

Silent Night, Holy Night

1. Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child, holy infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!
3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, loves pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

(Music: Franz Gruber, 1818; text: Joseph Mohr, 1818; transl. John F. Young, 1863)

† Benediction

Postlude

Sussex Carol

English traditional carol

*"On Christmas night all Christians sing,
to hear the news the angels bring;
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
news of our merciful King's birth."*

(Collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1872-1958)

OUR OFFERING TONIGHT will go to The UCC Christmas Fund. This fund is used by the United Church of Christ Board of Pensions to assist retired clergy and lay workers, and to support an emergency fund for UCC pensioners, retired lower-income clergy, and lay employees. THANK YOU for your generous gifts tonight, and throughout the year.

SPECIAL THANKS:

HEAD USHER: JON THOMPSON

LAY READER: DIANE GRESSLEY

GREETER: BRIDGET SPROUL

COUNTERS: JANET RENOVETZ

FLOWERS: JANET RENOVETZ
SUE STENZEL

SNOW HERDER: DAN STEWART

