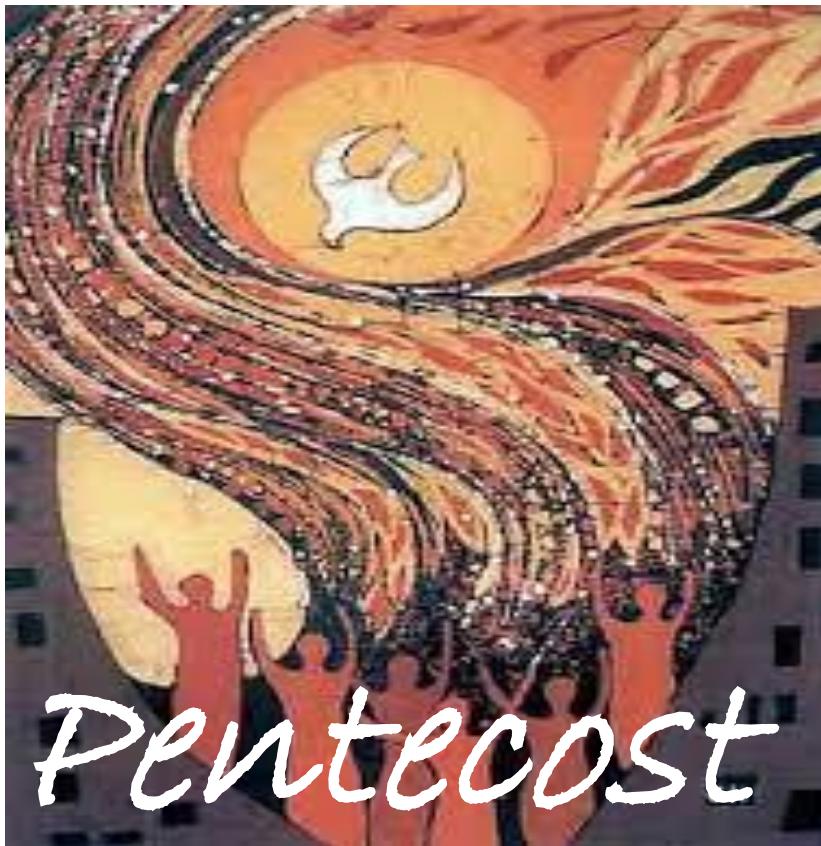


THE  
*Pillar*  
BRECKSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

JUNE 2022



*Pentecost*

TO BE LOVING, SERVING, AND ACCEPTING  
OF ALL PEOPLE  
WITH GOD'S LIFE-CHANGING POWER  
AND GRACE

## **Pastor's Ponderings.....**

The journal **Science Advances** just published a new discovery of fossils older than anything seen before. These fossils are dated from just 300 million years after Earth formed.

To put this into perspective, stretch your arms out for a handy geological timeline. Fingertip to fingertip, represents time from the formation of Earth to now – about 4.5 billion years. The length of your left middle finger represents the time that the Earth was a hot volcanic piñata, relentlessly whacked by comets and asteroids. It was an unpleasant neighborhood. No life as we know it could survive.

Then, 4.2 billion years ago, life began. It was only microscopic, but it was life. These little guys never wrote a good novel, but I am grateful for their generous contribution of oxygen to the atmosphere. But here's what I find truly astonishing: as soon as life could exist, life did exist. This era of microbial life extends all the way from your left hand to your right wrist.

Then, from your right wrist onward, everything changes very quickly. Complex life burst forth in what is called the Cambrian explosion. All modern animal phyla appeared in a geological blink of an eye. These new critters had legs and eyes; they learned to chase food and scamper away. One of them, the once ubiquitous trilobite, went extinct 200 million years before the dinosaurs even showed up. I have some trilobite fossils in my office; stop by and hold one in your hand.

I know not everyone will draw the same inspiration, but, for me, this perspective strengthens my faith in a God who loves life. Life was everywhere as soon as life could be anywhere. Life has evolved and diversified into goofy shapes, colors and sizes, with ingenious, creative abilities and defenses. Combined with the recent news from space (the discovery of thousands of new planets), I think it would be weird if extraterrestrial life does NOT exist; we just don't seem to have observed it yet.

Meanwhile, back on Earth, when one species gets out of balance, natural selection brings them back in line (usually by wiping them out) to restore balance. For example, if a shark produced as much offspring as a salmon, they would overwhelm the seas, wipe out their own food supply and die off. Balance restored, with apologies to the industrious sharks.

**(continued)**

## ***Pastor's Ponderings..... (continued)***

In our arm-to-arm timeline, all complex life is in your right hand. And in a single stroke with a nail file, you could eradicate the entire span of human existence off your timeline.

Human presence has been brief, but wildly influential. Human influence is felt everywhere from the top of the atmosphere to the bottom of the seas, usually to the dismay of other species. But the microbes can still claim victory. There are more of them than us, and they were here first.

Fossils tell the story of five mass extinction events. The Permian extinction (251 million years ago) wiped out 96% of all marine life. A Siberian volcano did it. The famous Cretaceous event (65 million years ago) wiped out the dinosaurs and 75% of all other species, thanks to an asteroid that took a vacation in Cancun.

But here's a sobering idea: a sixth mass extinction event is happening now, quietly, all around us. This one's not caused by an asteroid or volcano. It is caused by human influence. We are what is out of balance. Humans have been here but a short while. Like ill-mannered guests, we have made quite of mess of things on this planet.

I believe in a creator who loves life and diversity. Perhaps we'll be part of that progression, perhaps not. But if we love the Creator, faith compels us to respect science and care for Creation. We are but stewards of this garden, not owners. We are here, but for a time, to care for the Earth and one another.

*“Treat the Earth well:  
it was not given to you by your parents,  
it was loaned to you by your children.”*  
- Kikuyu Proverb

And yes, that will be on the test.

-- Peace and blessing, Pastor John

## Meet the Staff

### Job Title – Pastor

**Duties:** Preach the Way of Jesus, build relationships inside and outside the church, extend pastoral care and spiritual support, serve, reach out and grow the faith community in Brecksville and the wider community, prepare experiences of prayer that are meaningful and relevant, develop connections to the wider UCC denomination, cultivate spiritual leadership within the community, and of course, any other responsibilities as needed – and there are lots of those. :0)

**Your favorite part of your job:** Helping people and sharing Jesus' Way. I genuinely love and care for the people of Brecksville UCC – you really are a pleasure to work with. I enjoy the variety of work, and the fact that I'm never really finished, I just run out of time!

**When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?**  
A journalist. I started with photography, then discovered that I enjoyed writing for publication, getting some regional writing awards in high school. That gave my self-esteem a much-needed boost at the time. I was a journalism major in my first year of college, then switched to teaching, then went to seminary.

**First paying jobs:** 1) Paperboy; 2) Ferris wheel operator; 3) Pizza maker; 4) Group home for people with developmental disabilities; 5) Stone cutter; 6) English teacher; 7) U.S. Air Force.

**Favorite music genres:** Classical and other orchestral music, especially Mahler and Beethoven; most anything by U2, The Chicks, or Bruce Springsteen.

**Favorite movies:** Apollo 13, Big Fish, The Matrix, Ordinary People, 2001: A Space Odyssey, A River Runs Through It, Contact, Life of Pi, and The Mission.

**Favorite book:** Les Misérables by Victor Hugo.

**Something we don't know about you:** I live with chronic pain caused by ankylosing spondylitis. The pain varies unpredictably; some days are worse than others.

**Your favorite way to spend your free time / Hobbies:** Hiking, Scrabble, Astrophysics, Scuba.

**What three items would you take with you to a deserted island:** Les Misérables, Hiking Shoes, Coffee.



## ***FROM THE MINISTRIES OF BUCC***

### **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**ATTENTION!!!!ATTENTION!!!!** – Looking for some excitement on Sunday mornings? Love (or even like) kids? Don't feel like sitting through the sermon? Well, consider becoming a Sunday school teacher! We have openings for the middle school and high school classes. It's easy and a lot of fun. We have all of the teaching materials and supplies - and if no kids show up, you can stay in church! Please see Miss Mindy or call the church office and let me put you on the list!!

– Mindy Harris-Wade

**CLEVELAND FOOD BANK** – CE made mugs and candle holders for their Lenten project this year. They raised \$300.95, which has been donated to the Cleveland Food Bank. Thanks to our kids for their hard work, and to all who generously supported their efforts!

### **FACILITIES**

**OUTSIDE** – Lawn maintenance will be \$75 per week which is a \$25 increase over last year. The increase was due to go into effect last year, but NJM Landscaping was kind enough to hold off until this year.

The parking lot will undergo repairs, recoating and striping in August. The cost will be \$8,900, and the project will be performed by Protect-A-Cote, Inc. This should give us 3-5 more years of service. A complete resurfacing of the entire lot would run in the neighborhood of \$75,000. A capital fund drive would need to be considered at some future point.

*Continued next page*

## **FACILITIES** (continued)

The columns in the rear portico are showing deterioration, especially around the bottom area. We are seeking an estimate to wrap them in aluminum.

**INSIDE** – The sink and faucet in the flower room are being replaced. They are in bad condition and over 50 years old. Price is yet to be determined.

## **FINANCE**

A collection was taken for Edna House, which provides a safe, sober environment for those recovering from alcohol and drug addictions. A total of \$611 was received for this worthy cause.

Another \$165 was collected for Ukrainian relief.

Memorials were given in memory of Fred Pesek and Marjorie Rahnenfuehrer.

## **OCWM**

**EDNA HOUSE** – Thanks to the generosity of the BUCC congregation, we were able to give Edna House a check for \$611 this year. Many thanks to all who support this worthy effort!

## **STAFF/CONGREGATION RELATIONS**

**NURSERY** – After a long closure of the nursery due to the COVID pandemic, Council has approved the reopening and staffing of the nursery. The nursery has been thoroughly cleaned and is ready to greet our little ones. Before the Staff Congregation Relations Ministry fills the Church Nursery Attendant position with a permanent employee, we would like to assess the need. We are looking for several adult volunteers who would be willing to staff the nursery one to two Sundays over a two-month period. We would ask that the volunteer arrive 10-15 minutes before the service. If there are no children in the nursery after the Children's Sermon concludes, the volunteer is free to leave the nursery. You may sign up using Breeze or you may contact Evie Novak of the SCR Ministry or the church office if you are willing to help out.

## **SPIRITUAL LIFE**

**SUMMER MUSIC VOLUNTEER PROGRAM 2022** – Dave Debick will continue recruiting volunteer musicians for summer music, during May and early June. If you're comfortable singing or playing your instrument in public, please consider sharing your musical gifts at a Sunday service, sometime over the summer. You won't find a more affirming group of listeners than BUCC members! Dave can help you find music, and he's happy to rehearse with you as much/little as you're comfortable with. High school students are welcome to participate. Feel free to contact Dave with any questions. His number is in the church directory, or you can find him recruiting during coffee hour over the next few weeks - All are welcome!



**Happy, Happy *JUNE* Birthdays\* to the following BUCC Members! Please share in their joy and wish them a Happy Birthday!**

June 02	Bridget Sproul
June 04	Lily Hunt
June 08	Vincent Kaval
June 10	Heidi Spangler
June 15	Dot Bailey Giuliana Gagliano
June 19	Marla Corrado
June 20	Sam Koch
June 23	Marilyn Wrights
June 24	Chad Sproul
June 25	Carole Snider
June 26	Maureen Stanley Kimberly Wallis
June 27	Bruce McCain
June 29	Carli Began Evelyn Seager David Wilson

**\*If you have a *JUNE* birthday and are not included above, please contact the church office so we can add you to the BUCC Birthday List!**



# CALENDAR

## JUNE 2022

### Wed., JUNE 1

6:30pm Postcards in Pilgrim Hall

### Thu., JUNE 2

5pm Recorder/Dulcimer  
5:30pm Joyful Noise  
7pm Choir

### Fri., JUNE 3

**\*OFFICE CLOSED\***

### Sat., JUNE 4

**Sunday, JUNE 5**  
10am Worship Service

### Mon., JUNE 6

**Tue., JUNE 7**  
8:15am "Holy Grounds"  
(Brecksville Panera)

### Wed., JUNE 8

### Thu., JUNE 9

**Fri., JUNE 10**  
**\*OFFICE CLOSED\***

### Sat., JUNE 11

**Sunday, JUNE 12**  
10am Worship Service

### Mon., JUNE 13

**Tue., JUNE 14**  
8:15am "Holy Grounds"  
(Brecksville Panera)

### Wed., JUNE 15

**\*PILLAR DEADLINE\***

### Thu., JUNE 16

**Fri., JUNE 17**  
**\*OFFICE CLOSED\***

### Sat., JUNE 18

**Sunday, JUNE 19**  
10am Worship Service

### Mon., JUNE 20

### Tue., JUNE 21

8:15am "Holy Grounds"  
(Brecksville Panera)

### Wed., JUNE 22

### Thu., JUNE 23

**Fri., JUNE 24**  
**\*OFFICE CLOSED\***

### Sat., JUNE 25

**Sunday, JUNE 26**  
10am Worship Service

### Mon., JUNE 27

**Tue., JUNE 28**  
8:15am "Holy Grounds"  
(Brecksville Panera)

### Wed., JUNE 29

### Thu., JUNE 30



# PARTICIPANTS IN WORSHIP

## JUNE 5, 2022

Head Usher: Sue Maier  
Ushers: Evelyn Seager  
TBD  
Lay Reader: Jill Zedan  
Greeter: Sherrill Witt  
Nursery: TBD  
Counters: Marge Culver  
Sue Stenzel  
Acolyte: Arthur Cook  
Peace Candle: Dorothy Cook  
A/V: TBD  
Flowers: Janet Renovetz  
Snack: Gina Cook  
Jon Thompson  
Setup/Serve: TBD  
TBD  
Cleanup: TBD  
TBD

## JUNE 19, 2022

Head Usher: Jill Zedan  
Ushers: Diane Gressley  
Evelyn Seager  
Lay Reader: Paul Kuzmins  
Greeter: Jon Thompson  
Nursery: TBD  
Counters: Marge Culver  
Janet Renovetz  
Acolyte: TBD  
Peace Candle: TBD  
A/V: Jim Duffy  
Flowers: Janet Renovetz  
Snack: Jon Thompson  
TBD  
Setup/Serve: TBD  
TBD  
Cleanup: Bob Chandler  
Caroline Chandler

## JUNE 12, 2022

Head Usher: TBD  
Ushers: Evelyn Seager  
TBD  
Lay Reader: Jon Thompson  
Greeter: Caroline Chandler  
Bob Chandler  
Nursery: TBD  
Counters: Marge Culver  
Janet Renovetz  
Acolyte: TBD  
Peace Candle: TBD  
A/V: Fred Pedersen  
Flowers: Tia Began  
Snack: Diane Gressley  
TBD  
Setup/Serve: TBD  
TBD  
Cleanup: TBD  
TBD

## JUNE 26, 2022

Head Usher: Diane Gressley  
Ushers: TBD  
TBD  
Lay Reader: Rose Kaval  
Greeter: Dave Bernard  
Nursery: TBD  
Counters: Marge Culver  
Janet Renovetz  
Acolyte: TBD  
Peace Candle: TBD  
A/V: TBD  
Flowers: TBD  
Snack: Diane Gressley  
TBD  
Setup/Serve: Cliff Stenzel  
Sue Stenzel  
Cleanup: Sue Stenzel  
TBD



# *The Pillar*

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United Church of Christ

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