



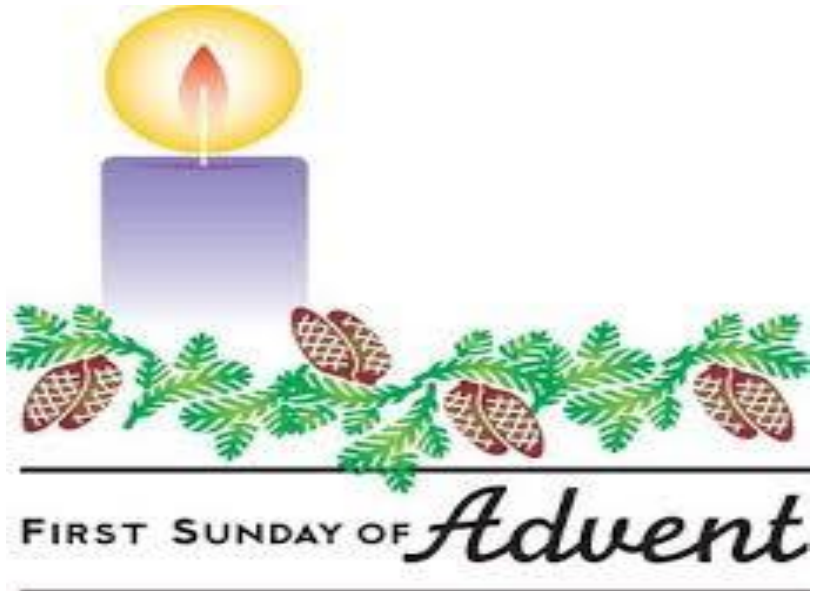
Brecksville United Church of Christ

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

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

"You have
fallen, Rip,
but if you
awaken to your
true self,
you will become
a Hallow –
a light
to the world."

~ Seth Adam
Smith, *Rip Van
Winkle and the
Pumpkin Lantern*



November 27th, 2022 • 10:00 AM
First Sunday of Advent

Pastor

• John King

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

Please submit your announcements by noon on Wednesday – Thank You!

First Sunday of Advent - November 27th, 2022

Prelude/Gathering Music *Of the Parent's Heart Begotten* Adapt. from a medieval plainsong, 1582

Welcome & Announcements

Quiet Meditation as Peace Candle is Brought Forward

"The longest journey you will ever take is the 18 inches from your head to your heart."
~ Thich Nhat Hanh

Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able.*

*** Call to Worship:**

Leader: In Advent we watch and wait, and prepare to welcome the Christ Child into the world.

People: Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Leader: In Advent we prepare for a life of discipleship, and watch faithfully for signs of God's light breaking into the world.

People: Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Leader: As we wait, dear One, we watch for signs of your action in the world, actions of compassion and grace breaking in.

People: Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Leader: Holy God, we recognize that we do not know the day or the hour, but we know that the day is near.

People: Come, Lord Jesus, come! Be born anew in our world and in our lives.

Hymn of Praise

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

#116, v. 1-3

*** Invocation [Unison]**

In this season as the days grow shorter and the shadows lengthen, we gather in eager expectation for the Light of the World to dawn. Help us, God, to lay aside all the works of night and even our cynicism as we enter this sacred season. During this hour of worship, send your Spirit to empower us to live in the light with hope. Amen.

*** Words of Grace (Pastor Only)**

Lighting the Advent Candle

One: This is the day we begin our Advent journey to the child Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the star and the manger.

All: May we kindle God's light together as we journey on.

One: It is a journey shrouded in a fading sun and a growing uncertainty as the world turns cold. And we journey anyway.

All: May we kindle God's light together as we journey on.

One: We journey because we are drawn to God's light at the end: it is God's promise, borne into our lives.

All: May we kindle God's light together as we journey on.

One: This is the day we begin our journey. May we kindle God's light within us, together, as we journey on.

All: Amen. We light this candle in HOPE. (*The candle of hope is lit.*)



One Candle is Lit

*"Come surely, Lord Jesus,
As dawn follows night,
Our hearts long to greet You, as roses, the light.
Salvation draws near us, our vision engage.
One candle is lit for the Hope of the age."*

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

One: Let us pray together.

All: Good and gracious God, God of darkness and light, God of hope and fear, help us take one step closer to you, toward the joy of unity with you. May the light of this candle remind us that the power of hope silences doubts and fears. Take this light, small but mighty, and magnify it within us until our hope chases away all shadows around our church, our community, our nations and our world. Amen.

God Is Still Speaking

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

First Reading Isaiah 2:1-4 (NRSV)

Gospel Reading Matthew 24:36-44 (NRSV)

Continuing Testament By Michael Morwood.



Time With Young Worshippers



"Maranatha Jesu" means "O Come Lord Jesus." The word "maranatha" is Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke at home. It means "O Lord, come." Maranatha is transliterated into Greek and used only once in the Bible (in 1 Cor. 16:22). It is equally possible to translate it as "Our Lord has come." And "Jesu" is simply the Latin word for "Jesus."

Based on the teachings of John Cassian (360 - 435 AD), John Main (1926 - 1982) recommended Maranatha as "the ideal Christian mantra." In meditation, it is repeated silently with each breath as four equally stressed syllables Ma-ra-na-tha: "Not only is this one of the most ancient Christian prayers, in the language Jesus spoke, but it also has a harmonic quality that helps to bring the mind to silence."

*1. Summer has faded, its warmth has left our face.
Winter has wrapped us in her frozen embrace.*

***Refrain: Maranatha, Jesu. Come, Lord Jesus, come!
Maranatha, Jesu. Come to us; we await you!***

*2. O Lord of Light, your radiance lights our way.
O Key of David, O Wisdom, guide us today. (Refrain)*

*3. As days grow shorter, lengthen our love for you.
Justice and Mercy, show us what we should do.*

Come, Lord Jesus, come! Maranatha, Jesus!

(Music and words: Kevin Keil, ASCAP; © 1996, Kevin Keil. Published by OCP Publications)

The Church at Prayer

Family and Friends of Lenore Harris, Friends of Bill Toneff, Suzanne Patrick, George Snider, Dorie Gabor, Mac Hoppel, Dassie Matsuoka, Kathy Smith, Allison Colbert, Phyllis Hassler, Jeanne Cowden, Rose Kaval, Tina Ortiz, Terry Heiman, Cindy Burton, Elizabeth Gadus, Ann Klonowski, Sheila Day, Betty Kaul, Jan Wardlaw, Stan McCain, Dottie Faust, Jon Thompson, Kathleen Stewart & Joe Blasko (her father), "Edna House", 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: [UNISON]

...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 (Pastor Only)**

*** 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]**

God of hopeful waiting, we give thanks for all of the ways in which you reveal yourself to us. Help us to clear away the many distractions of this season and offer our whole lives as gifts to you. May these offerings nurture all of the ways in which your promise is breaking into the world in acts of compassion and justice. May these gifts nurture your rule of peace. Amen.

Going with God's Love

Hymn of Departure

O How Shall I Receive You

#102



Carrying the Light of Christ into the World – Acolyte

*** Circle of Community**

As we move to form a circle around the pews, we will sing **Halle, Halle, Hallelujah (3 times) Hallelujah, Hallelujah**. After the benediction is pronounced, we will sing it once more. Our circle is open near the door as a symbol of our welcome to new people to our community of faith.

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

Postlude ***Keep Awake, Be Always Ready***

P.Nicolai, 1599; harm.J.S. Bach,1731

WISHING YOU A
BLESSED AND HEALTHY
WEEK AHEAD!

Attendance on Sunday, November 20th, 2022 - Adults: 56; Kids: 3; Live Stream: 7; Total: 66

BUCC ANNOUNCEMENTS . . .

SNOW HERDING – It's that time of year again when the Facilities Ministry is looking for "snow herders" to attack the winter snows. Please sign up through Breeze, beginning with the first Sunday after Thanksgiving (11/27). Thank you for volunteering!

MEMORIAL FOR BILL TONEFF - There will be a memorial service in the sanctuary for Bill on Saturday, December 3rd, at 1:00 pm. All are welcome!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - There will be a post-worship congregational meeting on Sunday, December 4. This is an annual meeting to approve a provisional budget and the slate of officers for the 2023 church year. This is NOT the final budget approval meeting -- that gathering will be held mid to late January, per usual. Please plan on attending; this is a congregationally led church, so your voice matters!



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS – If you'd like to buy a poinsettia dedication this Christmas, please complete the order form on the back of today's bulletin & leave it in the church office, with your payment. , to the church office. If you have any questions,



STAFF/CONGREGATION RELATIONS would like to remind everyone that if you have a request or reminder for the Church Office, there are several ways to ensure that your needs can be recognized and handled properly. Either: 1) Send an email to buccoffice23@gmail.com; or 2) Leave a note on the Church Secretary's desk. This enables us to have a written or voice record of your request and makes it easier to respond in a timely manner. It also allows Anne to enjoy her time as just a regular congregation member on Sundays.

NOTE: We're currently experiencing technical difficulties with our voicemail system, so leaving a voice message on the phone is not available right now. The congregation will be notified when that service is up and running again.

Readings

First Reading

Isaiah 2:1-4 (NRSV)

The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that God may teach us ways of compassion and pathways of peace."

For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. God shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 24:36-44 (NRSV)

"But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only our Creator. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Chosen One. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Chosen One.

Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, they would have stayed awake and would not have let their house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Chosen One is coming at an unexpected hour.

Readings

Continuing Testament – “Light”, by Michael Morwood, from *Prayers For Progressive Christians*

Thirteen and a half billion years ago, our universe began in an explosion of light and energy. The resulting cosmic wave pulsed, and continues to pulse, through everything that has ever existed, from the creation of galaxies and stars and the ongoing expansion of the universe, to the unfolding of life on this wonderful planet.

To be human is to experience this universal light and energy manifest in human form. This is the human story. It is the story of every human being. It was Jesus’ story, too, although he did not know the scientific story we can tell today. Each human being has the opportunity to uniquely reveal the still-pulsing light and energy of the universe in his or her one and only lifetime...

As we gather today, let us give thanks for the human capacity for compassion, for goodness, for truth, for ingenuity and courage. These noble human qualities enable and give rise to possibility, challenge, improvement, and progress.

We give thanks for the many people who have exemplified these qualities for us; people who have shone brightly in our lives, strengthening our minds and hearts and helping to reveal the way ahead.

We give thanks that in and through these people we encountered the light and energy of the universe in human form.

We bring to mind the light revealed in Jesus. His life was a clear and unblemished expression of the energy and light within every person.

He acts as a mirror to us that we might see ourselves as no different from him; he – and we – are human expressions of the universal light blazing in all places, at all times.

His desire was to set people free from darkness from ignorance and from fear. He preached the possibility of a better human community if only people would recognize and trust the light that emanated from within and allowed it to shine.

We, too, seek to recognize and trust the universal light and energy emanating within us and allow it to shine; we seek to be the salt of the earth, to be like springs of water that won’t run dry. We desire to keep our own light “on top of a lampstand”, strong and bright in every direction; a light that will radiate in moments of darkness and gloom infusing them with warmth and energy.

We set ourselves to be watchful, to be helpful to be hope-filled; to do all we can to ease suffering and distress and bring hope to a troubled world.

Special Thanks:

November 27, 2022

Head Usher: ***Volunteer Needed***
Ushers: Evelyn Seager
Jill Zedan
Lay Reader: Jon Thompson
Greeter: Dave Bernard
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: ***Volunteer Needed***
Peace Candle: ***Volunteer Needed***
A/V Team: Betsey Wilson
Flowers: Julie Bernard
Snack: ***Volunteer Needed***
Volunteer Needed
Set Up/Serve: ***Volunteer Needed***
Volunteer Needed
Clean Up: Dave Bernard
Volunteer Needed
Snow Herder: ***Volunteer Needed***

December 4, 2022

Head Usher: Jill Zedan
Ushers: Dave Bernard
Evelyn Seager
Lay Reader: Sherrill Witt
Greeter: Sue Stenzel
Counters: Marge Culver
Sue Stenzel
Acolyte: ***Volunteer Needed***
Peace Candle: ***Volunteer Needed***
A/V Team: Fred Pedersen
Flowers: Sherrill Witt
Snack: Dave Bernard
Volunteer Needed
Set Up/Serve: ***Volunteer Needed***
Volunteer Needed
Clean Up: ***Volunteer Needed***
Volunteer Needed
Snow Herder: ***Volunteer Needed***

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS WITH POINSETTIAS IN OUR SANCTUARY



Your Donation will buy plants which will be shared after Christmas with those who are ill, shut-in or have recently lost a loved one. Please fill out the form at the bottom of this page, and turn it in to the Church Office.

DEADLINE – MONDAY, DECEMBER 12

***I Enclose \$12.00_____ or other _____ for _____ Poinsettias
#***

In Memory of _____ or In Honor of _____

Of _____

Your Name

I WILL HELP DELIVER PLANTS TO SHUT-INS _____

*****PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KEEP YOUR POINSETTIA OR
LEAVE IT HERE FOR SHUT-INS AND OTHERS*****

WILL KEEP _____ WILL NOT KEEP _____