



THE
Pillar
BRECKSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

NOVEMBER 2022



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

Pastor's Ponderings.....

Christian nationalism is a poisonous ideology. It has moved from a fringe belief system to one now openly advocated by prominent leaders. Christian nationalism is increasing and that should alarm us. But what is "Christian Nationalism? How is it different from nationalism or patriotism?

Patriotism is the love of one's country. I am a patriotic U.S. veteran. Patriots uphold the constitution, engage in productive dialogue and, most importantly, we vote.

Nationalism privileges a particular cultural identity into law; in some cases (e.g. Germany 1933) it dangerously enshrines some ethnicities and religions, while suppressing the civil liberties of others. Albert Einstein said, "Nationalism is an infantile disease. It is the measles of humanity."

Christian Nationalism is the belief that the U.S. is and should always be a "Christian nation." It is packaged with white supremacy, authoritarianism, patriarchy, and militarism. Writers like Samuel Huntington argue that white Anglo Saxon Protestants have had a privileged position in the public square and he's part of a "culture war" to keep it that way.

Christian Nationalism holds that the U.S. was appointed by God to be a Christian nation. It holds that all other religions and races would submit to white Christians. Studies correlate it to distrust of minorities and immigrants. It erases the line that separates church and state. In fact, last summer, one congressperson stated publicly, "I'm tired of this separation of church and state junk."

Junk?

The founders of the U.S. tended to be people of faith. But they were adamant about avoiding any appearance of merging Christianity with governance. This mattered so much that while George Washington was president, he declined to receive communion. Jefferson and Madison wrote of the separation of church and state. It was not "junk" to them for they had witnessed the deadly consequences of life without that separation. So, I find it disconcerting to see Christian nationalism surging again.

(continued)

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

Amanda Tyler is the lead organizer of Christians Against Christian Nationalism. She states bluntly, “Christian nationalism is NOT Christianity... it takes Christianity’s central message, which is a Gospel of love, and turns it into a false idol of power.” Rev. Jim Wallis said, “White Christian Nationalism is the single greatest threat to democracy in America – and to the integrity of the Christian witness.”

We can be deeply patriotic without being narrowly nationalist. Our faith is personal, but it is not private. We can and should march and write for legislation that reflects our moral priorities.

Christian - But let's be clear. The words and actions of Jesus challenge us to seek the common good in a way that builds a bigger table, not a bigger wall. Jesus reached beyond the cultural barriers and exclusions. He reached out to Romans, Samaritans, women and many others considered taboo.

Likewise, we seek dialogue and understanding of beliefs and cultures different than our own. If that cultural “dialogue” devolves into a culture “war,” then we’ve already lost. Because, like Jesus, we don’t seek domination or defeat, but rather, understanding, growth and compassion. It’s only a war if our goal is subjugation, which I’m not seeing in Jesus’ witness.

-- Peace and blessings, Pastor John



FROM THE MINISTRIES OF BUCC

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

NEW BOOK IN LIBRARY - Thanks to Carol Miller, there is a new book in the BUCC library. The title is ***Nursing for Wellness in Older Adults***. This book is very well written, and contains many useful items, such as advance directives (page 151) and other useful bits of wisdom.

FACILITIES

PREPARING FOR WINTER - It's that time of year again when the Facilities Ministry is looking for "snow herders" to attack the winter snows. The parking lot and entrance driveways will be cleared by a plow company, so all that we need help with is clearing snow from two entry ways on Sundays. Those areas include the back doors & the side ramp. Shovels and salt will be stationed at both doors. The Facilities Ministry wants to have volunteers lined up on November 27th (first Sunday after Thanksgiving).

Please sign up for a specific Sunday using the Breeze management system - Thank you for volunteering!

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH/FINANCE

Brecksville United Church of Christ

In partnership with Tri-C Hospitality Management Program
presents

Family Fall Fest Meal Benefit

Thursday November 10, 2022
5:30 to 8:00 PM

23 Public Square, Brecksville OH
Near intersection of Routes 82 & 21

Menu: Hearty Chicken Paprikash with hand-made Spaetzle,
Seasoned Braised Cabbage with Carrots & Onions,
Festive Fall Salad, Coffee/Tea/Cider, and Warm Apple Crisp
with decadent Caramel Sauce

Vegetarian and Gluten Free Options available

Dine In: Buffet Style

Seating times: 5:30 - 6:30 (#1) and 6:30 - 8:00 (#2)

To Go: (Pre-Order Only, no Walk Ins)

Pick up times: 5:30, 6:00, 6:30, 7:00, 7:30pm –
Access to BUCC parking lot is from Arlington Street.

Order Online: www.BrecksvilleUCC.org

Dine In	Single Dinner	Pre-Order*	\$17.00 each
		Walk-In	\$20.00 each
To-Go	Single Dinner	Pre-Order*	\$17.00 each
	Family 4 Pack		\$60.00 each
Donate meals to Families in need*		Pre-Order*	Free Will Offering

* Last Day/Time to Pre-Order November 3 at 6:30 PM

** We are working with the St. Augustine Hunger Center

Call 440-526-4364 with any questions.

OCWM

FOOD FOR THOUGHT - As you probably know, our food donations have been taken to the Salvation Army food pantry. Conversations with the Salvation Army staff revealed that the need for food assistance has almost tripled over a year ago. Items particularly helpful are peanut butter, heat and eat soups, and breakfast cereal. BUCC members and friends have been donating food regularly – since July of this year, about 150 pounds of food items have been donated.

Thank you to all who have donated! – Bob & Caroline Chandler



For people of faith, voting and sharing our ideas on public policy is a way of living out Jesus' commandment to love our neighbor. Many of you participated in our postcard writing event opposing Ohio HB616.

We'll gather on November 8th, at 6:15 at Panera in Brecksville. Using names and addresses provided by VoteFWD.org, we'll add handwritten messages to a printed letter and personally encourage others to get out and vote. This is a proven method of boosting voter turnout up to 3.4%.

We'll continue to meet on the second Tuesday of each month to write to our legislators. Drawing on resources endorsed by the UCC, we'll make our voices heard on issues that matter to us.

Don't worry, we'll make this super easy, even if you've never done this before. We'll provide sample texts, address labels, stamps, postcards, even pens! This is an informal and open event. Maybe grab a drink or snack; hang out with good friends while we write. It will be a fun way to engage with others and make our voices heard.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

ADVENT IS UPON US! "Hanging of the Greens" refers to the practice of adding evergreen plants (live or artificial) to a congregation's worship space. The tradition had its origin in pagan, pre-Christian culture, but like many other traditions Christians adopted this practice and understand it to be a symbol of the eternal coming to dwell among us as Word made flesh. The greens can also be seen as a sign of life and growth overcoming and flourishing in the dead of winter.

Please join us following worship on November 20th, when BUCC will ring in the holiday season with our own "Hanging of the Greens" celebration/pizza party.

STEWARSHIP

POTLUCK RETURNS! It's time for the return of the Stewardship Sunday Turkey Dinner! On Sunday, November 13 after our 10am Stewardship service (where we make our financial pledges for 2023), we will be once again celebrating together the annual Turkey Dinner. This special potluck returns after two long years of the pandemic.

The turkeys will be roasting downstairs in the kitchen early on that morning. You are requested to bring your most wonderful dish to share. You can sign up in Breeze or let someone from Stewardship know if you're bringing guests and what dish you will share. Maybe you make the best dressing or vegetable casserole. Or maybe your pie is award winning. Mashed potatoes or cranberry salad is more your style? How about rolls and butter? Please bring it with you along with a serving utensil that morning down to Pilgrim Hall. And if you don't bring anything, don't worry. All are welcome!! There will be more than enough to share. Come enjoy the food and fellowship!!

Notes & Announcements:

This Old Church Building

By David Ritchey

The church building is special. I'm disturbed when people talk about financial problems here at Brecksville's United Church of Christ. We need to get to work and rescue the church. This old building is valuable in the here and now.

But think back...and back...and back.

How many of you were baptized in this building – and how many children? What about the weddings? We all have a wedding story - what the bride wore, the music, the sermon, the flowers.

Remember the great receptions in Pilgrim Hall? What great food and drink! The decorations made the room look posh! Sue and Cliff have cooked dozens of turkeys. It smelled so good, that we could hardly wait for final "amen." And the memorable side dishes - Chad's chili with alligator is still talked about.

On the sad side we remember the memorial services. We sill grieve for the services for parents, friends and neighbors.

We all have funny stories, sad stories and coffee stories.

What can be done to save our church? I propose three things. We need to recruit additional members. We can financially pledge or raise our pledge during this stewardship season. You can make an effort to attend all services.



FLOWERS – The following members have volunteered to provide flowers this month:

Nov 6 - Anne Melfo

Nov 13 - Sue Stenzel

Nov 20 - Janet Renovetz's cornucopia

Nov 27 – Julie Bernard



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

Miriam	Rosewicz	November 02
Mike	Westerberg	November 02
Dassie	Matsuoka	November 03
Sue	Stenzel	November 09
Amelia	Tyler	November 09
Dan	Maier	November 13
Joe	Gagliano	November 14
Caroline	Chandler	November 17
Andrew	Wilson	November 17
Tim	Wallis	November 22
Wes	Novak	November 23
Melanie	Kuzmins	November 26

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



CALENDAR

NOVEMBER 2022

Tue., NOVEMBER 1
8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)
6:30pm AA in Pilgrim Hall

Wed., NOVEMBER 2

Thu., NOVEMBER 3
5pm Recorder/Dulcimer
5:30pm Joyful Noise
7pm Seasonal Choir

Fri., NOVEMBER 4
OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., NOVEMBER 5

Sunday, NOVEMBER 6
10am Worship Service

Mon., NOVEMBER 7

Tue., NOVEMBER 8
8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)
6:30pm AA in Pilgrim Hall
6:15pm Letter Writing
(Brecksville Panera)

Wed., NOVEMBER 9

Thu., NOVEMBER 10
5pm Recorder/Dulcimer
5:30pm Joyful Noise
7pm Seasonal Choir

Fri., NOVEMBER 11
OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., NOVEMBER 12

Sunday, NOVEMBER 13
10am Worship Service

Mon., NOVEMBER 14

Tue., NOVEMBER 15
PILLAR DEADLINE
8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)
6:30pm AA in Pilgrim Hall

Wed., NOVEMBER 16

Thu., NOVEMBER 17
5pm Recorder/Dulcimer
5:30pm Joyful Noise
7pm Seasonal Choir

Fri., NOVEMBER 18
OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., NOVEMBER 19

Sunday, NOVEMBER 20
10am Worship Service
Hanging of the Greens

Mon., NOVEMBER 21

Tue., NOVEMBER 22
8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)
6:30pm AA in Pilgrim Hall

Wed., NOVEMBER 23

Thu., NOVEMBER 24
OFFICE CLOSED

Thanksgiving

Fri., NOVEMBER 25
OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., NOVEMBER 26

Sunday, NOVEMBER 27
ADVENT BEGINS
10am Worship Service

Mon., NOVEMBER 28

Tue., NOVEMBER 29
8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)
6:30pm AA in Pilgrim Hall

Wed., NOVEMBER 30

PARTICIPANTS IN WORSHIP

NOVEMBER 6, 2022

Head Usher: TBD
Ushers: Evelyn Seager
TBD
Lay Reader: Jill Zedan
Greeter: Sherrill Witt
Nursery: TBD
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: TBD
Peace Candle: TBD
A/V: Fred Pedersen
Flowers: Anne Melfo
Snack: Sue Stenzel
TBD
Setup/Serve: Sue Stenzel
Cliff Stenzel
Cleanup: Sue Stenzel
TBD

NOVEMBER 13, 2022

Head Usher: Jill Zedan
Ushers: Evelyn Seager
TBD
Lay Reader: Jim Duffy
Greeter: Dave Bernard
Nursery: TBD
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: TBD
Peace Candle: TBD
A/V: TBD
Flowers: Sue Stenzel
Snack: TBD
TBD
Setup/Serve: TBD
TBD
Cleanup: TBD
TBD

NOVEMBER 20, 2022

Head Usher: TBD
Ushers: Diane Gressley
Sue Stenzel
Lay Reader: Rose Kaval
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: TBD
TBD

NOVEMBER 27, 2022

Head Usher: TBD
Ushers: Evelyn Seager
Jill Zedan
Lay Reader: Jon Thompson
Greeter: Dave Bernard
Nursery: TBD
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: TBD
Peace Candle: TBD
A/V: TBD
Flowers: Julie Bernard
Snack: TBD
TBD
Setup/Serve: TBD
TBD
Cleanup: TBD
TBD
Snow Herder: TBD

The Pillar

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United Church of Christ

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