



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***

"Christmas is
built upon a
beautiful and
intentional
paradox; that
the birth of the
homeless
should be
celebrated in
every home."

- G.K. Chesterton



December 4th, 2022 • 10:00 AM
Second 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!

Second Sunday of Advent - December 4th, 2022

Prelude/Gathering Music *Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord*

Schwartz

Welcome & Announcements

Quiet Meditation as Peace Candle is Brought Forward

Before the fields have finished,
Before the Christmas tree,
Wonder upon wonder
Will arrive to me!
- Emily Dickinson

Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able.*

*** Call to Worship:** *(based on Matthew 3: 1-12; Romans 15: 7)*

Leader: Isaiah calls from the distant past: The Reign of God is drawing near!

People: Make straight a highway for our God!

Leader: John the Baptist calls out,

People: Prepare the way of the Lord!

Leader: Welcome one another, for Christ welcomes you:

People: A just and peaceful path! For the glory of God!

Hymn of Praise

The Baptist Shouts on Jordan's Shore

#115

*** Invocation [Unison]** *(based on Matthew 11: 3-5)*

Holy God, we long for your peace, and trust in your promise; we hear your call to turn toward you, to change our lives and welcome you in. Meet us here and fill our minds with your wisdom.

Guide our hearts toward pathways of peace, that our worship together may open us to the challenge of your dream of wholeness for all.

In the Name of the One who is coming, we pray. Amen!

*** Words of Grace**

Lighting the Advent Candle

One: Last week, the first week of Advent, we lit a candle symbolizing hope. In this second week, we light another candle, the candle of peace,

All: We reflect on the proclamation of John the Baptist more than 2,000 years ago. We work to spread the good news today.

One: We light this candle of peace,

All: We cry out and work for a world where everyone's basic needs are met.

One: We light this candle of peace,

All: We smooth the rough ways and build new paths, in order to end injustice and violence.

One: We light this candle of peace,

All: We await the arrival of Jesus Christ, light of the world. There is darkness everywhere. Let us be the light. (The 2 PURPLE candles of Hope and Peace are lit.)



One Candle is Lit

*Come, quickly, shalom, teach us how to prepare
for a gift that compels us with justice to care.*

Our spirits are restless till sin and war cease.

One candle is lit for the reign of God's peace.

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

All: Eternal God, we thank you that through all the years you have given peace to your people. Help us to have your peace in our lives. In this Advent season, may our actions show your presence to the sick, to the hungry, and to the lonely, so that they, too, may have peace. Amen.

God Is Still Speaking

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

First Reading Isaiah 11:1-19 (The Message)

Gospel Reading Matthew 3:1-12 (The Inclusive Bible)

Continuing Testament by David Long-Higgins



Time With Young Worshippers



Anthem

Rise Up, Jerusalem

Schoenbachler, arr. Edell

Refrain: Rise up, rise up, rise up, rise up, Jerusalem!

Sing out, ring out, sing out, sing out, Jerusalem!

Rejoice, the day is near!

1. Sing, all you people, for the day is near.

Sing, all you people, wash away your fear.

Everyone get ready for salvation is near.

Emmanuel shall come, the long awaited One.

Emmanuel, come to us. (Refrain)

2. A voice in the desert cries, "Prepare the way."

A voice in the desert cries, "Today's the day."

Everyone get ready for the Lord is on His way.

Emmanuel shall come, the long awaited One.

Emmanuel, come to us. (Refrain)

3. Rejoice, oh Jerusalem, and start anew.

Rejoice, oh Jerusalem, He comes to you.

Everyone get ready for the Lord will light the way.

Emmanuel shall come, the long awaited One.

Emmanuel, come to us. (Refrain)

(Music and Words: Tim Schoenbachler, b. 1952; © 1975 North American Liturgy Resources)

Sermon

Bulldozers

Rev. John King

Hymn of Reflection

O Loving Founder of the Stars

#111

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**

*** 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]**

With these gifts, dear God, accept the praise and thanksgiving of our hearts. We rejoice in your goodness and love. Let our gifts point to your presence among us, and further your dream for the world through Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.



Holy Communion

Communion Hymn:

With Joy Draw Water

#109

***Prayer of Thanksgiving: [UNISON]**

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Going with God's Love

Hymn of Departure

We Hail You God's Anointed #104



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.



† Benediction

Postlude

Isaiah the Prophet Has Written of Old

Carter

*"Instead of a thorn tree, the fir tree shall grow;
the wolf shall lie down with the lamb." (Based on Is 55:13, 11:6)*

*Seek peace
and pursue it*

Psalms 34:14

Attendance on Sunday, November 27th, 2022 - Adults: 55; Kids: 9; Live Stream: 7; Total: 71

BUCC ANNOUNCEMENTS . . .

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - There will be a post-worship congregational meeting **TODAY**. 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. If you have any questions, ask Janet Renovetz or call the office.

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!

MUSIC – If you'd like to hear more contemporary music at Sunday services, please feel free to contact Dave Debeck with song titles or names of performers you're interested in. His church email is: buccmusic23@gmail.com We can't promise that sheet music will be available for every request, but your input/feedback is always welcome and appreciated.

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 11:1-19 (The Message)

A green Shoot will sprout from Jesse's stump, from his roots a budding Branch. The life-giving Spirit of GOD will hover over him, the Spirit that brings wisdom and understanding, the Spirit that gives direction and builds strength, the Spirit that instills knowledge and Fear-of-GOD. Fear-of-GOD will be all his joy and delight.

He won't judge by appearances, won't decide on the basis of hearsay. He'll judge the needy by what is right, render decisions on earth's poor with justice. His words will bring everyone to awed attention. A mere breath from his lips will topple the wicked. Each morning he'll pull on sturdy work clothes and boots, and build righteousness and faithfulness in the land.

The wolf will romp with the lamb, the leopard sleep with the kid. Calf and lion will eat from the same trough, and a little child will tend them. Cow and bear will graze the same pasture, their calves and cubs grow up together, and the lion eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will crawl over rattlesnake dens, the toddler stick his hand down the hole of a serpent. Neither animal nor human will hurt or kill on my holy mountain. The whole earth will be brimming with knowing God-Alive, a living knowledge of God ocean-deep, ocean-wide.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 3:1-12 (The Inclusive Bible)

At this time John the Baptizer appeared in the desert of Judea, proclaiming, "Change your hearts and minds, for the reign of heaven is about to break in upon you!"

It was John that the prophet Isaiah described when he said, "A herald's voice cries in the desert: 'Prepare the way of our God, make straight the paths of God!'"

John was clothed in a garment of camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist. Grasshoppers and wild honey were his food. At that time, Jerusalem, all Judea and the whole region around the Jordan, were going out to him. John baptized them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins. When he saw that many of the Pharisees and Sadducees were coming to be baptized, John said to them, "You pack of snakes! Who told you to flee from the coming wrath? Give some evidence that you mean to reform! And don't pride yourselves on the claim, 'Sarah and Abraham are our parents.' I tell you, God can raise children for Sarah and Abraham from these very stones!"

Even now the ax is laid to the root of the tree. Every tree that is not fruitful will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I will baptize you in water if you have a change of heart, but the One who will follow me is more powerful than I. I'm not fit even to untie the sandals of the Coming One! That One will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire!"

Readings

Continuing Testament – by David Long-Higgins

Loving God,
Grant me a vision
Greater than any barricade
Daring me to despair
At signs screaming out
“No possible way forward,
This road is closed.”

Yes, lift up my eyes
To Your emerging light
Stretching a horizon of hope
Bearing Your resurrection rising
Larger than any obstruction
Of the world's weary making
Or of my own despairing design.

Grant just enough light
To see beyond the moment
And all it dares to capture
In fatigue or worry or despair
Claiming to be the final word
Reserved for You alone
O Word and Way of Life.

Yes, pull me toward possibilities
Not easily seen at night
When all is hidden from my sight
Yet bearing a new beginning
Known by You for revealing
At just the right time
With the gift of dawn's surprise.



Let this rising light of You
Draw me beyond myself
And all the world resists,
Trusting Your grace to form
A new way, a new hope,
A new creation bit by bit
Luring me forward
Empowered by awe
At all You make possible
If I will lift up my eyes
My heart and my life
To Your persistent promise.

Yes, Love,
Let this of You
Be larger than any barricade
Daring me to believe
No new road is possible.

And let it be more than enough
For the journey of today.

Special Thanks:

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: Betsey Wilson
Volunteer Needed
Clean Up: ***Volunteer Needed***
Volunteer Needed
Snow Herder: ***Volunteer Needed***

December 11, 2022

Head Usher: ***Volunteer Needed***
Ushers: Dave Bernard
Evelyn Seager
Lay Reader: Jim Duffy
Greeter: Bill Witt
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: ***Volunteer Needed***
Peace Candle: ***Volunteer Needed***
A/V Team: Fred Pedersen
Flowers: Dorie Gabor
Snack: Sue Stenzel
Volunteer Needed
Set Up/Serve: Sue & Cliff Stenzel
Clean Up: Sue Stenzel
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 \$13.50_____ 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 _____