



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*

"And so this is
Christmas
(war is over)

And what have
we done
(if you want it)

Another year
over
(war is over)

And a new one
just begun
(now)"

- John Lennon



Christmas Eve CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

December 24th, 2022 • 10:00 PM
Christmas Eve

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!



December 24th, 2022

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Quiet Meditation as Peace Candle is Brought Forward

"We are better throughout the year for having, in spirit, become a child again at Christmastime."
— Laura Ingalls Wilder

Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able.*

*** Call to Worship: (Based on *Psalm 96* and *Luke 2:1-14*)**

Pastor: Sing to our God a new song; Sing to our God all the earth.

People: Glory to God in the highest heaven, Peace on earth to all!

Pastor: The heavens are telling the glory of God, let the earth rejoice, let trees of the forest sing for joy!

People: Glory to God in the highest heaven, Peace on earth to all!

One: Rejoice, and do not be afraid! For see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people: those who have walked in the gloom of discouragement and despair have seen a great Light.

*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.*

One: Rejoice, rejoice, and do not be afraid! For those who have lived in lands shadowed by oppression and unspeakable violence, even on them the Light has shined.

*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.*

One: Again I say, rejoice! For though the night of grief and sorrow should cover us, and the Light around us become night, still there is One for whom even the night is as bright as the day.

*Come, festively sing while awaiting the birth,
join angels in dancing from heaven to earth.*

*Wave banners of good news, lift high thankful praise.
One candle is lit for the joy of these days.*

One: And yet again I tell you, rejoice! For though hate and fear reign today, in truth the shadow is only a small and passing thing. The light of love shines even in darkness, and darkness cannot overcome it.

*Come, wander where lion and lamb gently play,
where evil is banished and faith takes the day,
a babe in a manger to fool the world's eyes.
One candle is lit for God's loving surprise.*

One: Now we light the CHRIST CANDLE. It is a symbol of the Light of Christ which has come into the world. People of God, rejoice, for a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting God, Prince of Peace.

All Sing: *O Come, All Ye Faithful* #135, v. 1-3

* Invocation [Unison]

O God of the Baby of Bethlehem, we come into your presence with praise and thanksgiving. We hear the glad tidings of the angel voices, we come to experience this good news of great joy for all the people.

As the shepherds traveled to Bethlehem, we have traveled here – some are excited, expectant, hopeful; some are mourning, some are a bit skeptical. Let the words of sacred scripture seep into our hearts, to be treasured and pondered anew. We are here; we are ready, O God!

Let the light of your love break forth! Amen.

* Words of Assurance

Lessons and Carols

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

Carol	First Reading Isaiah 9:2-6 (NRSV) Good Christian Friends, Rejoice	# 129
Carol	Gospel Reading Luke 2:1-7 (NRSV) O Little Town of Bethlehem	# 133
Carol	Gospel Reading Luke 2:8-14 (NRSV) Angels We Have Heard on High	# 125
Carol	Gospel Reading Luke 2:15-20 (NRSV) What Child Is This	# 148
Carol	Continuing Testament – By Maria Mankin Away in a Manger	# 124
Sermon	<i>Christmas in the Trenches</i>	Pastor John King
Carol	Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	# 144

The Church at Prayer

Joanne Frable (Sue Stenzel's sister), friends of Bill Toneff, family and friends of Lenore Harris, Suzanne Patrick, George Snider, Dorie Gabor, Mac Hoppel, Dassie Matsuoka, Kathy Smith, 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

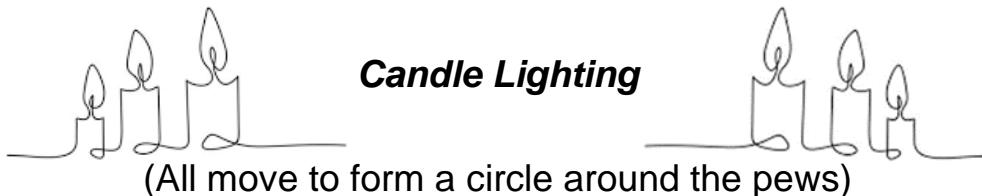
***The Invitation**

*** 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]**

O God of Hope, God of Peace, God of Joy, God of Love, we pray you bless these gifts, that they might become a blessing to this world you love so very much. May those who receive them know that you are with them, in this holy season and in all their days to come. In the name of the Child of Bethlehem, Emmanuel the Light of the World, we pray. Amen.



Hymn *Silent Night, Holy Night*

Benediction

Choir Postlude *Joy to the World* #132



**PLEASE JOIN US IN PILGRIM HALL TOMORROW MORNING,
FOR CAROLS, SHARING AND FELLOWSHIP.**



NOTE: The church's voicemail is still unavailable. The congregation will be notified when that service is up and running again.

Attendance on Sunday, December 18th, 2022 - Adults: 60; Kids: 13; Live Stream: 6 Total: 79

Readings

First Reading

Isaiah 9:2-6 (NRSV)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

(Hymn # 129)

Gospel Reading

Luke 2:1-20 (NRSV)

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered.

Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (Hymn # 133)

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom God favors!" (Hymn # 125)

(continued)

Readings

Gospel Reading (continued)

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. (Hymn # 148)

Continuing Testament – *Living Psalm for Christmas Day*, by Maria Mankin

It's a lot to ask of a baby, isn't it –
even one who has been foretold, even one
whose parents took the word of angels –
to be the savior we've longed for
all these lonely years.

Shivering, we wait around the manger
beside the woman who risked it all,
who heard God's word and was glad of it,
only to end up in a drafty barn,
resting with animals and shepherds and
the expectations of countless generations
swaddled and silent in her arms.

Beside her stands the man who believed
a dream is real enough to stake
a life on, a future, his reputation –
all on the ask of an angel
who came while he slept.
He put it all into God's hands,
himself, this baby, and the woman
he pledged to marry.

We are less welcome than the shepherds,
less than the little drummer boy (and he was very unwelcome that first night),
not because God's grace is withheld from us,
but because we don't take what is offered.
We turn from the stable as empty handed
as the Magi, desperate for another road home.

There is no other way though,
no way to go but through,
where the fear lives, and where we
must challenge those who want to
strike down
all that is good
before it has even begun.

There is only this:
faith in those frightening dreams
of angels; hope in the desperate
faces we turn from on the street
and in the mirror; joy in the strident
necessary cries of babies; and love
in the face of all that seems wrong.

It's a lot to ask of ourselves, isn't it,
to be as brave as the stories we tell?
But after all, every character was once
born, like you, and like me, with no
idea what might happen next.

(Hymn # 124)

Special Thanks:

December 24, 2022

Head Usher: *Volunteer Needed*
Ushers: Carol Miller
Jon Thompson
Lay Reader: Diane Gressley
Greeter: Pat Rehm
Counters: *Volunteer Needed*
Volunteer Needed
Acolyte: *Volunteer Needed*
Peace Candle: *Volunteer Needed*
A/V Team: Fred Pedersen
Poinsettias: Janet Renovetz &
Sue Stenzel
Snow Herder: Dan Stewart



January 1, 2023

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



2021 Poinsettia Dedication

Dedicated by:

Julie Bernard & Linda Kriynovich In Memory of Tony, Julie & Lori Gorenc.

Jane & Cliff Cribbs In Memory of Loved Ones.

Peg & Jim Duffy In Memory of Aunt Jill.

Joy Garapic In Memory of William Garapic, beloved Husband, Father, and Grandfather.

Diane Gressley In Memory of Evan & Emma Gressley, and Pauline Farina.

Rose & Vince Kaval In Memory of our Families.

Eric Rahnenfueher In Memory of Jan & Marjorie Rahnenfueher.

David Ritchey

Sherrill & Bill Witt In memory of the following: Shirley & Arch Duncan, the Witt family, the McIntosh family, and the Bishop & Pearl families. And in honor of the Light & Love that radiates from BUCC year-round.

Jill Zedan In Memory of Beloved Family and Dear Friends who are especially missed during this season.

NOTES:

