



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*

"Integrity is choosing courage over comfort; choosing what is right over what is fun, fast, or easy; and choosing to practice our values rather than simply professing them."
- Brené Brown



First Sunday in Lent - February 26th, 2023 • 10:00 AM

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 in Lent February 26th, 2023

Prelude

To the Wilderness

Scheffler

Welcome & Announcements

Quiet Meditation as Peace Candle is Brought Forward

"I have one life and one chance to make it count for something. My faith demands that I do whatever I can, wherever I am, whenever I can, for as long as I can with whatever I have to try to make a difference." - Jimmy Carter

Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able.*

*** Call to Prayer:**

Leader: The ancient story of Adam and Eve reminds of the temptation to selfishness,

People: We gather to hear God's still-speaking Word,

Leader: The ancient story of Jesus' life reminds of how Jesus was tempted too,

People: Yet Jesus relied on the guidance of the Spirit.

Leader: So, we gather today in prayer to resist the temptation to take more for ourselves

People: And to celebrate that we when we have all that we need, when we share in Christ's love.

Leader: Beloved of God, let us drink deeply from the wellspring of God's Spirit, which has all we need to live fully, love deeply, and serve faithfully.

People: Thanks be to God!

*** Hymn of Praise**

Lord Jesus, Who through Forty Days

#211

*** Invocation [Unison]**

God, you are our hiding place and our refuge in the time of distress. We turn to you now, seeking comfort from the wounds of the world and power to face all our afflictions. Be present in our struggle, and help us to rest in your eternal promises, that we might be fed both with the bread of the world and the nourishment of your word, strong to resist temptation and faithful in our worship of you. Amen.

*** Assurance of God's Call**

*** Song of Praise:**

Glory to God

Pablo Sosa, 1988

Glory, glory, glory –
glory to God in the highest! (2X's)
And on earth be peace to all people,
for God loves us all! (2X's)

Readings

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

First Reading **Genesis 2:15-17 3:1-7 (NRSV)**

Gospel Reading **Matthew 4:1-11 (NRSV)**

Continuing Testament by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay

Time With Young Worshippers



Anthem

Humility

Talbot

Becky Anderson, flute

- 1. The higher that you climb in life
Humble yourself all the more.
You will be loved as a giver of gifts
You will find favor with God.
What is too sublime, do not seek -
Into things beyond you, do not reach.
Be faithful in life's little things
And you will be given the great.

Chorus: Great is the power of God.
By the humble the Lord God is glorified.
For great is the power of God -
Humble yourself all the more.*
- 2. Their own opinion leads many astray -
False reasoning, unbalanced judgment.
A stubborn man will fare badly in the end,
For the sinner heaps sin upon sin,
Yet the humble soul will find joy. (Chorus)
(Music and Words: John Michael Talbot, b. 1954)*

Sermon

“A New Strength”

by Pastor John King

Hymn of Reflection

O God, How We Have Wandered

#202

The Church at Prayer

The family and friends of Jeanne Cowden, Dorie Gabor, Caroline Chandler, Jim Brownlow (Betsey Wilson’s brother), Joanne Frable (Sue Stenzel’s sister), Suzanne Patrick, George Snider, Mac Hoppel, Dassistie Matsuoka, Kathy Smith, Phyllis Hassler, 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]

Faithful God, let these gifts be like food and drink in the wilderness for those who have suffered and longed for your presence. May these offerings strengthen those who are resisting temptation and lead us to attend to all who need your healing touch. This we pray in the name of Jesus, our example and savior. Amen.

Going with God's Love

* Hymn of Departure *Christian, Rise and Act Your Creed*

#537



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 **Hear Our Prayer, O God** (**below**). 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.

Hear our prayer, O God, Hear our prayer, O God; in -
cline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

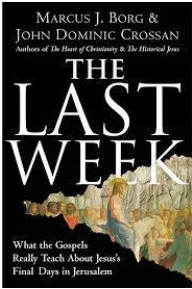
* Benediction

Postlude

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

J. C. Bach

Announcements:



LENTEN SERIES – This year’s Lenten series begins tomorrow evening at 6:30. We will cover the book *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus’s Final Days in Jerusalem* (Borg & Crossan). Registration is required, and we’ll meet every Monday evening through March 27th.

If you’d like to participate, please see the back of today’s bulletin for more information and the registration form. Prepare for the first session by reading the **Preface** and **Chapter One**.

MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION - Sessions will resume this Wednesday, March 1st at 11am, and continue every week until further notice. Hope to see you there! – Carol

SEASONAL CHOIR – It’s not too late to join us in preparing for Holy Week! Practices are on Thursday evenings, from 7:00–7:50. During Holy Week, we commemorate events that are central to our faith: Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday); the Last Supper and Institution of Holy Communion (Maundy Thursday); Christ’s crucifixion, death, and burial (Good Friday); and his miraculous Resurrection on Easter morning. If you enjoy singing in a group setting, consider joining us on this musical/spiritual journey. All are welcome to participate, including high school students.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING – A request from the OCWM (Our Church’s Wider Mission) ministry:

“Hello Everyone, I am writing this to let you know that we are going to have our annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering on Sunday, March 19 of this year. I hope that you will be able to join in our support of this very worthy cause.

Thank you,
Rob Grow”

GAME NIGHT – The following event is brought to you by the Membership Ministry:

“*WHEN?* March 24, 6:00pm. *WHERE?* BUCC. *WHY?* Why not?!”

Enjoy a night of fun & games with church family - bring a game to share (optional), a snack or appetizer to share, and a friend to enjoy the fun. Beverages will be provided, and YOU will provide the fun and fellowship!”

Attendance on Sunday, February 19, 2023 – Adults: 69; Kids: 12; Live Stream: 12; Total: 93

Readings

First Reading: "The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil"

Genesis 2:15-17 3:1-7 (NRSV)

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'"

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Gospel Reading: "The Temptation in the Desert"

Matthew 4:1-11 (NRSV)

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the adversary. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."

But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the tempter took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Again, the tempter took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

(Continued on next page)

Readings

Gospel Reading: (*continued*)

Jesus said to him, "Away with you! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Continuing Testament – By Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, UCC Minister for Worship and Theology

Have you ever told a story about an event from your childhood and had someone who was with you retort, "That's not the way it happened"? Have you ever realized that a memory had shifted and been transformed in the telling of the story? Maybe your perspective changed or you received new information. You heard the motivations of the other actors, and that insight reframed the story for you and your telling of it for others.

Sometimes the stories that are the most familiar become the least understood. The [story of Adam and Eve] falls within this category. It is a continuation of the second creation narrative that begins in Genesis 2:5. The two creation stories are told from different perspectives and with distinct emphases.

The first is transcendent, tells the orderly progression of God's creative work, and presents a completed work. The second [creation] story unfolds more gradually as creation does not have an ending point. It is ongoing. In this account, the role of humanity as creative actors assumes and maintains a prominence unexplored, if hinted at, in the first account.

When these familiar stories are retold in popular settings, they get both simplified and dramatized. That's the story that often gets embedded in our memories. When we re-read the original versions, we discovered what really happened according to the text. Simplification leaves out important details. Dramatization adds extraneous elements. Both often lead to conflating two distinct narratives as if they were one account from one source.

Reading the first sentence of this passage, however, begins to dispel some of the myths that have formed. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it." (v. 15) Apparently, life in the garden was never intended to resemble a perpetual vacation at a lavish resort with human beings lounging in leisure with everything magically, or perhaps miraculously, cared for without their participation. Work was not a punishment for bad behavior but an opportunity to participate in God's creative acts as living creatures endowed with the capacity and responsibility to nurture and sustain the rest of creation. The role of humanity in creation is not of user and consumer but caretaker and steward. Mimicking the divine-human relationship, the human-nature relationship is mutual, if unequal.

Special Thanks:

February 26, 2023

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



MARCH 5, 2023

Head Usher: ***Volunteers Needed***
Ushers: Evelyn Seager
Sue Stenzel
Lay Reader: Jim Duffy
Greeter: ***Volunteers Needed***
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: ***Volunteers Needed***
Peace Candle: ***Volunteers Needed***
A/V Team: ***Volunteer Needed***
Flowers: Julie Bernard
Snack: ***Volunteer Needed***
Set Up/Serve: ***Volunteers Needed***
Clean Up: ***Volunteers Needed***
Snow Herder: ***Volunteer Needed***

LENTEN SERIES — Mondays, February 27 – March 27 at 6:30 PM

Let's reflect on the meaning of Holy Week with the book, The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem, by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. You may be familiar with Marcus Borg; last year we studied his book The Heart of Christianity.

Using the gospel of Mark as their guide, Borg and Crossan present a day-by-day account of Jesus's final week of life. Informed, challenged, and inspired by the biblical texts, we meet the historical Jesus, who engages us and invites us to walk with him.

This study will help us to understand what happened in Holy Week and why Jesus died. This reveals that Jesus calls us to personal transformation and action on behalf of the oppressed and disadvantaged.

Sessions will be "hybrid"; you can join either in-person or online. We'll meet in-person in the Parlor and online at **[BrecksvilleUCC.org/announcements/calendar](https://www.brecksvilleucc.org/announcements/calendar)**.

If you would like to participate, please let us know so we can prepare a place for you and order books. Either fill out the registration form below and drop it in the collection plate, or email Pastor John at **buccpastor23@gmail.com**.

(To register, return the completed bottom portion in the collection plate today.)

Name(s): _____

Please order _____ book(s) (\$12 ea. – pay later)
quantity

I will get my own book(s)

How do you expect to join? In-Person Online Maybe little of both