



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*

*“When
someone is
going through
a storm,
your silent
presence is
more powerful
than a million
empty words.”*

- Thema Davis



22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, September 3rd, 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!

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time - September 3rd, 2023

PreludePrelude

God's Grace

Ellis

Assisted by Percussion Group

"God's grace, God's grace, the hope by which we are fed.

God's grace, God's grace, with joy may our hearts be led."

(Words and Music: Amy Ellis, Copyright © 2006, adm. by Spirit Calling Productions)

Welcome & Announcements

Quiet Meditation as Peace Candle is Brought Forward

"Humility is the foundation of all virtues, for it allows us to approach every situation with an open mind and a willingness to learn from others." - Marcus Aurelius

Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able*

*** Call to Prayer:**

One: We who dwell in the shelter of the Most High

All: Seek God here.

One: We who come to be inspired and changed

All: Seek God's Spirit here.

One: We who know how little we know

All: Seek God's Word here.

*** Hymn of Praise**

As We Gather at Your Table

#332

*** Gathering Prayer: [UNISON]**

Eternal One, we hear your voice whispering in the rustling wind, in the silent stars, in the blazing fire that does not go out, but continues burning brightly, against all odds. We gather today to be attentive to your presence, you are as near as the love we share, and in the depths of the unknown. We meet you here. We hear your invitation. We welcome your inspiration.

Set our hearts on fire today. That we may be attentive to hear your still-speaking voice. Amen.

Assurance of Grace

***Song of Praise:**

Glory to God

Pablo Sosa, 1988



Glo - ry, glo - ry, glo - ry! Glo - ry to God in the high - est, And on earth be



peace to all peo - ple, for God loves us all.

Readings

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

Old Testament Reading - Exodus 3:1-15 (NRSV)

New Testament Reading - Matthew 16:21-26 (NRSV)

Continuing Testament by Katie MacKeigan King



Time With Young Worshippers



Musical Offering

That's the Way God Planned It

Billy Preston

David Pastor, vocals

Why can't we be humble, like the good Lord said?

He promised to exalt us, for love is the way.

How can we be so greedy, when there's so much left?

All things are God given and they all have been blessed.

REFRAIN: *That's the way God planned it, that's the way God wants it to be. (Repeat)*

Let not your heart be troubled, let mourning sobbing cease.

Learn to help one another and live in perfect peace.

If we just be humble, like the good Lord said,

He promised to exalt us, for love is the way. (REFRAIN)

I hope you get this message, and where you won't others will.

You don't understand me but we will love you still.

That's the way God planned me, that's the way God wants me to be! (REFRAIN)

Sermon by Pastor John King

Hymn of Reflection

The God of Abraham Praise

#24

The Church at Prayer

Allison Colbert, Marilyn Pay, Joanne Frable (Sue Stenzel's sister), Russ King, George Snider, Mac Hoppel, Dassie Matsuoka, Kathy Smith, Jon Thompson, Rose Kaval, Tina Ortiz, Terry Heiman, Cindy Burton, Elizabeth Gadus, Ann Klonowski, Sheila Day, Jan Wardlaw, Stan McCain, 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

*** Invitation to the Offering**

*** 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.**

*** Dedication Prayer: [UNISON]**

In your Creation, O God, we stand on the holiest of ground. May these gifts be a blessing to all that you have made. May the church, organizations and people that receive them act as your hands. May needs be seen and met, and may the giving fit the need.

Through Christ, who models infinite giving. Amen.

Communion

*Communion Hymn

Come to the Table of Grace

Hamm

♩=90



1. Come to the ta - ble of grace. _____
 2. Come to the ta - ble of peace. _____
 3. Come to the ta - ble of love. _____
 4. Come to the ta - ble of joy. _____



Come to the ta - ble of grace. _____
 Come to the ta - ble of peace. _____
 Come to the ta - ble of love. _____
 Come to the ta - ble of joy. _____



This is Christ's ta - ble not just yours or mine.
 This is Christ's ta - ble not just yours or mine.
 This is Christ's ta - ble not just yours or mine.
 This is Christ's ta - ble not just yours or mine.



Come to the ta - ble of grace. _____
 Come to the ta - ble of peace. _____
 Come to the ta - ble of love. _____
 Come to the ta - ble of joy. _____

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

As we have been shown the hospitality of Jesus, may we take on the mantle of hospitality in our own lives, eating and drinking and inviting others to the welcome table. We have been fed. We have been nourished. We have been transformed. It is with Great Thanks that we have come to this table. Amen!

Going with God's Love

* Hymn of Departure

Be Now My Vision

#451

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.

The musical notation consists of two staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff has chords A, E, A, D, Bm, and E. The second staff has chords A, C#7, F#m, Bm, E7sus4, E7, and A. The lyrics are: 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

Dance into Joy

Camp

Readings

Old Testament Reading Exodus 3:1-15 (NRSV)

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed.

Then Moses said, "I must turn aside and look at this great sight and see why the bush is not burned up."

When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am."

Then God said, "Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham and Sarah, the God of Isaac and Rebecca." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the LORD said, "I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the country of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The cry of the Israelites has now come to me; I have also seen how the Egyptians oppress them. So come, I will send you to Pharaoh to bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt."

But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

God said, "I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you that it is I who sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain."

But Moses said to God, "If I come to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is God's name?' what shall I say to them?"

God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." and said further, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

God also said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham and Sarah, the God of Isaac and Rebecca, has sent me to you': This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations."

Readings

New Testament Reading Matthew 16:21-26 (NRSV)

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God forbid it! This must never happen to you."

But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?"

Continuing Testament – by Katie MacKeigan King

My dad was in a pretty serious car accident a few weeks ago. While he, most thankfully, escaped life-threatening injuries, he was left bruised head to toe and with four broken ribs. Dad is a disabled combat veteran and a bit of a recluse. While his nature is inherently sociable and friendly, the wounds from Vietnam and years of untreated anxiety have caused him to create a world for himself that is very, very small.

I am very grateful to be a part of that small world.

Some years ago I figured out that I share this small world with employees of Citizens Bank, Dairy Deli, and the VA Medical Center. When one's world shrinks, the importance of each point of human contact expands exponentially.

My phone calls and visits with my Dad always include references to these places and more importantly, the people working in them. I thought it was good that my Dad was getting out of the house to run errands and keep appointments.

Readings

Continuing Testament (*continued*)

But it always made me feel sad that the highlight of his week was getting his blood pressure checked or withdrawing the cash he needed to buy cigarettes at the Dairy Deli. After the accident, Dad needed me to get him to these places.

Then I TOTALLY GOT IT.

When we walked into the bank, the tellers shouted "Colin! Where have you been? We were worried about you!?" They were visibly startled by his black and blue face and they asked every question about it with the same care and concern as a family member. They knew about his injuries in Vietnam and joked that if enemy combatants couldn't take him out, an old Kia surely wouldn't. They knew that he wanted his money in all twenties and that he wanted old, worn-out bills, as the new ones stick together. They called him Buddy and my dad called me His Girl Friday when he introduced me. It was lovely.

The next stop was the Dairy Deli. Dad went in alone, but he came out with a woman who wanted me to know how much everyone working there loves my dad, and that they were all worried when he didn't show up three days in a row. She sweetly admonished me to take care of him and sent him off with a gentle hug. We have an appointment at the VA next week and I expect nothing less than a parade to celebrate his return.

Last Sunday, John asked the congregation where God shows up. I believe God shows up in each of us. In all acts of kindness and compassion. In recognizing and responding to another's pain or loneliness. In acts of inclusion and acceptance.

People can survive war trauma and car accidents. They have a much harder time surviving loneliness and alienation.

I am so grateful that God shows up for Dad in these seemingly mundane, routine acts of kindness. These people are his lifeline, whether they know it or not. They remind me that no act of kindness is too small and that we all have the capacity for Godliness in each and every one of our interactions.

Announcements:

TODAY'S FLOWERS are dedicated by Janet Renovetz, in honor of her husband Dan's 90th birthday on 9/1, and by Laura Lucic, "In memory of Betty Kaul, on her birthday on 9/7."

RALLY DAY POTLUCK & SCHOOL SUPPLIES COLLECTION - Sunday September 10th is Rally Day – the official start of our Fall and Winter church season!

We always begin by giving back to the larger community, by providing much-needed school supplies for students at underserved schools. Sunday's service will be followed by a Potluck Dinner in Pilgrim Hall. We ask that you participate by bringing a **Main Dish** (lasagna, casserole, etc) or a **Dessert** to share AND some school supplies, which will be taken to a school in need. *We have a potluck sign-up sheet so you can indicate what kind of food you will be bringing and help us avoid too much duplication.*

NOTE: Suggested school supplies are: notebook paper, binders, notebooks, rulers, pencils, erasers, crayons, pencil pouches, glue sticks, book bags/backpacks, and anything you think would be appropriate.

Please help us make Rally Day 2023 a rousing success!!!

WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER? With Rally Day approaching - the Congregational tradition of "rallying" all back to church after summer break - we also have a bunch of new members to welcome! Pastor John has reached out to most of the new members that we know of, to ask if they are able to join a new member reception on Rally Day. If you did not hear from Pastor John yet, and you want to make your membership official at Brecksville United Church of Christ, please let us know. The more the merrier!

And if September 10th doesn't work for you, no worries. We'll find another time that fits your schedule. Feel free to call the church office or Pastor John's cell phone any time. Let's RALLY!

Special Thanks:

SEPTEMBER 3, 2023

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Head Usher: | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Ushers: | Peg Duffy Heidi Spangler |
| Lay Reader: | Rob Grow |
| Greeter: | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Counters: | Marge Culver Janet Renovetz |
| A/V Team: | Jim Duffy |
| Flowers: | Janet Renovetz |
| Snack: | Jackie Cassara Lois Lorenzo |
| Set Up/Serve: | Bob & Caroline Chandler |
| Clean Up: | <i>Volunteers Needed</i> |



RALLY DAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2023

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Head Usher: | Evelyn & Peg Duffy |
| Ushers: | Arthur & Dorothy Cook Holden & Graham Esser Jim & Peg Duffy |
| Acolyte: | Natalie Corrado |
| Peace Candle: | Mira Corrado |
| Lay Reader: | Claire Esser Cammie Rogers-Ward Rob Grow |
| Greeter: | Edison Elting Jon Thompson |
| Counters: | Marge Culver Janet Renovetz |
| A/V Team: | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Flowers: | Our CE Students |
| Snack: | <i>POTLUCK</i> |
| Set Up/Serve: | Ministries |
| Clean Up: | <i>Volunteers Needed</i> |

