



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*

*"It is more
important to be
kind than to be
right. Many
times, what
people need is
not a brilliant
mind that
speaks, but a
special heart
that listens."*

- F. Scott Fitzgerald



"Keep watch..."

- Matthew 25:13

Illustration by Karen Sandstrom. "Hope."

32nd Sunday of Ordinary Time, November 12th, 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 - 1:30pm

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!

Stewardship Sunday - November 12th, 2023

Prelude

Wellspring of Wisdom

Winter

*"Call to Compassion, help us bring our burning need for nurturing,
the emptiness of everything to your embrace,
as we endeavor to proclaim your holy name forever."*

(Words and Music: Miriam Therese Winter, 1987; © 1989 Medical Mission Sisters)

Welcome & Announcements

Meditation Music

We Lift Our Voices (We Are an Offering)

Liles

Betsey Wilson, flute; Dave Debick, soprano recorder;
David Pastor and Dave Shackle, guitar; Percussion Group

*"We lift our voices; we lift our hands;
we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering.
Lord, use our voices; Lord, use our hands;
Lord, use our lives; they are yours: we are an offering.
All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be,
we give to you, we give to you."*

(Text and Music: Dwight Liles, 1984; © 1984 Word Music, LLC)

*"You are the teacher of the truly learned, whose joy you grant through
Wisdom's inspiration. And so may you be praised, who are the sound of praise, the joy of
life, the hope and potent honor, and the giver of the gifts of light." - Hildegard of Bingen*

Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able*

***CALL TO WORSHIP:** *(Inspired by Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-16)*

One: Wisdom is radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
and is found by those who seek her.

**Many: We hear your Still Speaking voice. We come to you, Wisdom, seeking
knowledge and understanding.**

One: Wisdom is radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
and is found by those who seek her.

**Many: We remember your marvelous acts and faithful instruction. We come to you,
Wisdom, as you have been near to us!**

One: Wisdom is radiant and unfading, and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
and is found by those who seek her.

**Many: We trust in your guidance and place our hope in you through feast and
famine. We come to you, Wisdom, to worship and to serve.**

*** INVOCATION: [UNISON]**

Wisdom, your presence illuminates our path. Shine your light into dim spaces so that we do not stray from your teaching. Help us discern what you are calling us, your church, to do and be in this moment in time. Give us urgency to be good news in the world and for our neighbors. Let your glory reign among us and your Spirit lead us into truth, justice, and love. For your name and in your name, we pray. Amen.

*** Hymn of Praise** *Come and Seek the Ways of Wisdom (see insert)*

*** PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE: [UNISON]**

Wise God, we often seek counsel from so many sources while ignoring your guidance. Help us to navigate the tough choices we must make and to discern the circumstances of our world and our lives through your perspective. Your way is life and embodies care, compassion, and concern for all creation. May we follow your model for the flourishing of our human siblings and our home, the Earth. Amen.

*** Words 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.

WELCOME **NEW MEMBERS**

Melanie Falls & Tina Posey
Kathy Goshe
Devorah Jones-Klonowski
Mary Kidd

Invitation

Statement from Scripture

Questions of New Members

* Congregational Welcome

Pastor: I invite all in the congregation to stand as you are able. Let us, the members of Brecksville United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

People: We welcome you joyfully as members of this congregational family. We will walk this path with you. We promise you our friendship, our support and our prayers. Empowered by the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's grace and give witness to Jesus Christ by our faith, our hope and our love.

* Closing Prayer

* Greeting of Christian Love

Pastor and Representatives: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the Brecksville United Church of Christ, we welcome you as members of this church.

Readings

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

First Reading - Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-14, 17-20 (NRSVUE translation)

Second Reading - Matthew 25: 1-13 (The Inclusive Bible & NIV translation)

Continuing Testament - by Ami Bhalodkar



Time with Young Worshipers
with Carol Miller and Children's Talents



Anthem

Thanks Be to Thee

Ochs

Dave Shackle, trumpet

*Thanks be to Thee, thanks be to Thee, Thou who has made Thy people free,
all grateful thanks be to Thee.*

Like a great flock Thy hand ever led us, Lord,

Thy hand shelters us, by all Thy goodness salvation is ours.

*Thanks be to Thee, thanks be to Thee, Thou who has made Thy people free,
all grateful thanks be to Thee.*

(Words and Music: Siegfried Ochs, 1858-1929; Copyright © 1992 Hal Leonard Corp.)

Sermon by Pastor John King

Hymn for Collection of Pledges *Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ* #347



The Church at Prayer

Cliff Stenzel, Allison Colbert, Marilyn Pay, Frances Posey, Russ King, George Snider, Mac Hoppel, Dassi Matsuka, Kathy Smith, Jon Thompson, Rose Kaval, Bee 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.
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*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING: [UNISON]**

Generous God, receive our offerings and gifts for the building up of your church. Let them be a blessing to those in need of encouragement, support, and companionship. Magnify them beyond our imagining and grant us insight into the possibilities before us for ministry and witness. We are grateful to give. Amen.

Going with God's Love

* Hymn of Departure *Now Thank We All Our God* #419

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.

Benediction

Postlude

Praise Our God Above

Confucian Dacheng chant

Readings

First Reading

Wisdom of Solomon 6:12-14, 17-20 (NRSVUE translation)

Wisdom is radiant and unfading,
and she is easily discerned by those who love her
and is found by those who seek her.
She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.
One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty,
The beginning of wisdom is the most sincere desire for instruction,
and concern for instruction is love of her,
and love of her is the keeping of her laws,
and giving heed to her laws is assurance of immortality,
and immortality brings one near to God,
so the desire for wisdom leads to a kingdom.

Second Reading

Matthew 25: 1-13 (The Inclusive Bible and NIV translation)

“Then again, the reign of heaven could be likened to ten attendants who took their lamps and went to meet the bridal party. Five of them were wise; five were foolish. When the foolish ones took their lamps, they didn’t take any oil with them, but the wise ones took enough oil to keep their lamps burning. The bridal party was delayed, so they all fell asleep.

“At midnight there was a cry: ‘Here comes the bridal party! Let’s go out to meet them!’ Then all the attendants rose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise replied, ‘Perhaps there won’t be enough for us; run to the dealers and get some more for yourselves.’

“While the foolish ones went to buy more oil, the bridal party arrived; and those who were ready went to the marriage feast with them, and the door was shut. When the foolish attendants returned, they pleaded to be let in. The doorkeeper replied, ‘The truth is, I don’t know you.’

“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.”

Readings

Continuing Testament – From *Diwali - A Celebration of Our Inner Light*, by Ami Bhalodkar

Diwali (or Divali) comes from the Sanskrit word Deepavali which literally means "a row of lights." This auspicious holiday, known in English as the "festival of lights," is celebrated by Hindus around the world, and for most Hindus marks the beginning of the New Year. It historically symbolizes the victory of good over evil and celebrates light and life on both community and personal levels. On the one hand, it is a time to rejoice and feast with friends and family. Homes are cleaned and decorated with bright earthen lamps in every corner, and delicious meals are prepared and shared with all. Old accounts are closed, and arguments are settled.

On a more personal level, however, Diwali is a time to turn inward and light the lamps of knowledge and truth in our hearts and minds so that we can dispel the forces of darkness and ignorance within us and allow our innate brilliance and goodness to shine forth. For the Hindu people, Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, is the principal deity associated with this festival. During Diwali, Hindus ask her for assistance in stewardship of spiritual wealth, such as compassion, forgiveness, and loving-kindness.

Diwali is a time to reflect on and evaluate our thoughts, words, and actions over the past year. It is a time to acknowledge and better understand our prejudices, negative behaviors, and bad habits so that we may begin the process of transforming ourselves. It is a time to discover how we can be more loving, kind, and respectful towards ourselves and others. And since all wealth, be it material or spiritual, should be shared with others who are less fortunate, Diwali is also a time to reflect on the various ways we can assist others and shine our light out into the world.

Just as the flame of a lamp always points upward, Diwali is most importantly a time to celebrate and appreciate life and to look forward to the coming year with a renewed sense of purpose and passion. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, Diwali is a reminder and an opportunity to "Be the change you want to see in the world!"

Announcements:

TODAY'S FLOWERS are dedicated by Carol Miller & Pat Rehm, "In appreciation for all at BUCC, especially Pastor John King."

POTLUCK TODAY!! – Please join us after today's service for the annual Stewardship Sunday/Thanksgiving potluck. Everyone is welcome, even if you didn't bring a potluck item - there's always more than enough so don't be shy!

BBH PRIDE EVENT – On Thursday evening, November 16th, from 6 – 7:30 pm, there will be a presentation on "Reconciling Religion and LGBTQ+ Issues" at the Brecksville Library. Pastor John is a member of the panel, and the event will conclude with a Q & A session and refreshments. No registration is required.

HANGING OF THE GREENS refers to the practice of adding evergreen plants (live or artificial) to a congregation's worship space, as a sign of life flourishing in the dead of winter, and a symbol of the Eternal. Please join us following worship on Sunday, **November 26th**, when BUCC will ring in the holiday season with our own "Hanging of the Greens" celebration/pizza party.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE – During the four Sundays of Advent (December 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th), we'd like to invite volunteers to light the Advent Wreath candles. Please either contact the office at **buccoffice23@gmail.com** or **440-526-4364**, or sign up via the weekly email from Breeze. Sign up is open to individuals, couples and/or groups – thank you!

BUCC NURSERY – If you are thinking about utilizing the nursery on Sunday, please let Amelia Elting know prior to the start of service. We ask parents to please fill out an information form, which can be found in the Nursery in a binder near the door. Also, we are looking for several volunteers to check in with Amelia prior to the start of the service, to see if she needs help. Thank you!

Attendance on Sunday, November 5th, 2023 – Adults: 69; Kids: 7; Livestream: 7; Total: 73

Special Thanks:

Stewardship Sunday

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POTLUCK

NOVEMBER 12, 2023

Head Usher:	Peg Duffy
Ushers:	Annette Pedersen Evelyn Seager
Lay Reader:	Diane Gressley
Greeter:	Lori Molesky
Counters:	Marge Culver Janet Renovetz
Nursery Attendant:	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
A/V Team:	Jim Duffy
Flowers:	Carole Snider
Snack:	POTLUCK (Sue Stenzel)
Set Up/Serve:	<i>Volunteers Needed</i>
Clean Up:	<i>Volunteers Needed</i>



NOVEMBER 19, 2023

Head Usher:	Jill Zedan
Ushers:	Evelyn Seager Sue Stenzel
Lay Reader:	Kate Matthews
Greeter:	Michelle Rogers
Acolyte:	Cammie Rogers Ward
Counters:	Marge Culver Janet Renovetz
A/V Team:	Fred Pedersen
Flowers:	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Snack:	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Set Up/Serve:	<i>Volunteers Needed</i>
Clean Up:	<i>Volunteers Needed</i>