



# Brecksville

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# United Church of Christ

23 Public Square • Brecksville • Ohio • 44141 • 440-526-4364

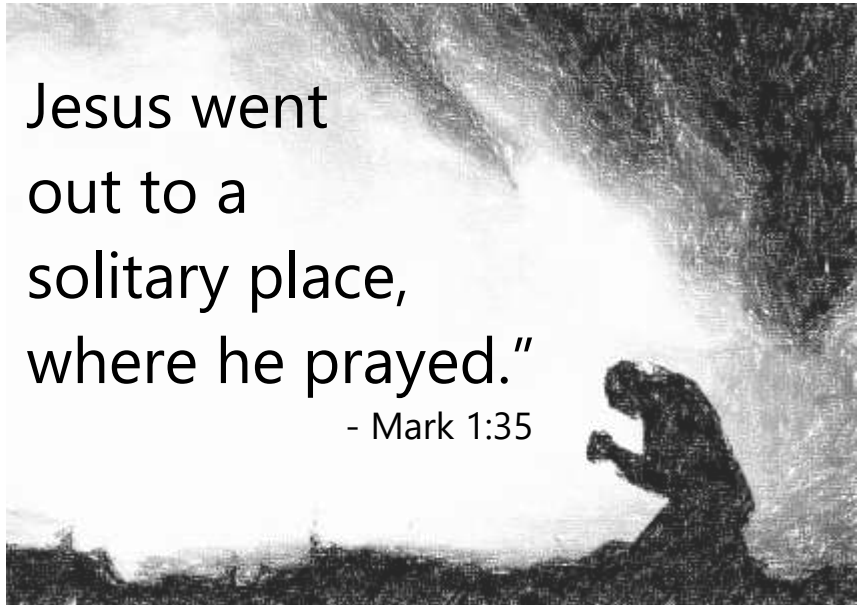
*Loving, Serving and Accepting All People  
with God's Life-Changing Power*

*"As human beings,  
our job in life is to  
help people realize  
how rare and  
valuable each one  
of us really is,  
that each of us has  
something that  
no one else has or  
ever will have,  
something inside  
that is unique  
to all time."*

- Fred Rogers

Jesus went  
out to a  
solitary place,  
where he prayed."

- Mark 1:35



**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024 • 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](mailto:buccoffice23@gmail.com) – web address: [www.BrecksvilleUCC.org](http://www.BrecksvilleUCC.org)**

**Please submit your announcements by noon on Wednesday – Thank You!**

# 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

## January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Prelude**

***Here with Me***

MercyMe

With Percussion Group

*"I fall down on my knees.*

*And I can feel Your presence here with me.*

*Suddenly I'm lost within Your beauty,  
caught up in the wonder of Your touch.*

*Here in this moment I surrender to Your love."*

(Words and Music: B. Russell, B. Millard, M. Scheuchzer, J. Bryson, R. Shaffer, N. Cochran, B. Graul, D. Muckala, and P. Kipley; Copyright 2004 Simpleville Music, ASCAP, Wordspring Music, LLC, SESAC)

## **Welcome & Announcements**

### **Quiet Meditation**

*"God is so large she requires all life to express herself."*

- Dori Grinenko Baker, adapted from her grandmother's journal

## ***Gathering in God's Presence***

*\* Please Stand as you are able*

### **\* CALL TO PRAYER:**

One: Good people of the community of Christ, lift up your eyes and see.

**All: Our God greets us here. When we are gathered in his name, Christ is among us.**

One: Good servants of the Creator, open your ears to hear.

**All: Our God is still speaking through creation, calling us to be good stewards.**

One: Good children of the light, open your hearts and know what it means to delight in the Spirit.

**All: For we have seen, heard and known from the beginning to the end, in God we live and move and have our being.**

**Hymn of Praise**

***Sweet Hour of Prayer***

#505

**\* PRAYER OF INVOCATION: [UNISON]**

**God of Love, Creator of the universe, we call on you, you who greet us here.  
We give you thanks for making it possible to gather, and to ponder your  
eternal mysteries. Make us, creatures of this time and space, ready  
collaborators with your endless grace. Amen.**

**\* Pastor's Prayer**

**\*Song of Praise:**

***Glory to God***

Pablo Sosa 1988

Glory, glory, glory – glory to God in the highest! (twice)  
And on earth be peace to all people, for God loves us all. (twice)

***Readings***

**(See back of bulletin for complete readings)**

**First Reading - Isaiah 40:28-31 (The Inclusive Bible translation)**

**Gospel Reading - Mark 1:29-39**

**Continuing Testament - by Rabbi Sharon Brous**



***Time with Young Worshipers***



**Anthem**

***Visitation Song***

Hobson

*Come away to the mountain, away from the clamor of cities and dreams  
to a place that's our own, come with me,  
and allow our visitation to be.*

*Bring yourself empty before me:  
the desert will enable love and life to be renewed.  
In silence we will celebrate the union we will share,  
oh, allow our visitation to be.*

*Step from the finely woven pattern of your life  
and recognize the reason for it all.  
For if prayer can be renewal more abundant than you'd hope for,  
overflowing, running over, blessed and filled with new life.*

*So come away to the mountain, away from the noise and haste to taste the silent joy.  
Spend time in quiet openness to me,  
and allow our visitation to be.*

*Oh, allow our visitation to be.  
(Music and Words by Mark Hobson)*

**Sermon**

*“Left Behind”*

by Pastor John King

**Hymn of Reflection**

*In Solitude*

#521

### ***The Church at Prayer***

The Snider Family, Phyllis Hassler, Ann Kelley, Cliff Stenzel, Sue Renovetz, Joe Blasko, Sister Francis Marie Seiler, Russ King, Jon Thompson, Allison Colbert, Marilyn Pay, Frances Posey, Mac Hoppel, Dassie Matsuoka, Kathy Smith, Rose Kaval, Bee Ortiz, Terry Heiman, Cindy Burton, Elizabeth Gadus, Sheila Day, Jan Wardlaw, Stan McCain, Kathleen Stewart, Ann Klonowski, “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      Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ the Word in flesh born low;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

**\* PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING: [UNISON]**

**God of all that is, all we have, all we are – we give. We give these gifts as we reach across the thresholds of our concerns. We give these gifts, knowing that they will give so much more. Through Jesus Christ. Amen.**



**Communion Music**

***Bread of Life, Hope of the World***

Farrell

Erin Tomlinson, flute

David Pastor and Dave Shackle, guitar

Percussion Group

*"We eat this living bread, we drink this saving cup:  
sign of hope in our broken world, source of lasting love."*

(Words and Music: Bernadette Farrell, b. 1957; Copyright 1982, 1987, Bernadette Farrell; published by OCP Publications)

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: [UNISON]**

**Eternal God, you have called your people from east and west and north and south, to feast at the table of Jesus Christ. We thank you for Christ's presence and for the spiritual food of Christ's body and blood. By the power of your Holy Spirit, keep us faithful to your will. Go with us to the streets, to our homes, and to our places of labor and leisure, that whether we are gathered or scattered, we may be the servant church of the servant Christ, in whose name we rejoice to pray. 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.



### \* Benediction

Postlude

*In the Palm of Your Hand*

Block

*"I'd rather be in the palm of Your hand...*

*Your grace provides for me."*

*(Copyright 1994 Moonlight Canyon Publishing, BMI)*



## Readings

### **First Reading** - *God's Strength in Times of Trouble* **Isaiah 40:28-31 (The Inclusive Bible translation)**

Do you not know? Have you not heard? YHWH is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. This God does not faint or grow weary; with a depth of understanding that is unsearchable.

God gives strength to the weary, and empowers the powerless.

Young women may grow tired and weary, young men may stumble and fall, but those who wait for YHWH find a renewed power: they soar on eagles' wings, they run and don't get weary, they walk and never tire.

### **Gospel Reading** - *Jesus Heals Many at Simon's House* **Mark 1:29-39**

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.

And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you."

He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.



## Readings

### **Continuing Testament – by Rabbi Sharon Brous\***

#### **“Train Yourself to Always Show Up”**

A somewhat obscure text, about 2,000 years old, has been my unlikely teacher and guide for the past many years, and my north star these last several months, as so many of us have felt as if we’ve been drowning in an ocean of sorrow and helplessness.

Buried deep within the Mishnah, a Jewish legal compendium from around the third century, is an ancient practice reflecting a deep understanding of the human psyche and spirit: When your heart is broken, when the specter of death visits your family, when you feel lost and alone and inclined to retreat, you show up. You entrust your pain to the community.

The text, Middot 2:2, describes a pilgrimage ritual from the time of the Second Temple. Several times each year, hundreds of thousands of Jews would ascend to Jerusalem, the center of Jewish religious and political life. They would climb the steps of the Temple Mount and enter its enormous plaza, turning to the right en masse, circling counterclockwise.

Meanwhile, the brokenhearted, the mourners (and here I would also include the lonely and the sick), would make this same ritual walk but they would turn to the left and circle in the opposite direction: every step against the current.

And each person who encountered someone in pain would look into that person’s eyes and inquire: “What happened to you? Why does your heart ache?”

“My father died,” a person might say. “There are so many things I never got to say to him.” Or perhaps: “My partner left. I was completely blindsided.” Or: “My child is sick. We’re awaiting the test results.”

Those who walked from the right would offer a blessing: “May the Holy One comfort you,” they would say. “You are not alone.” And then they would continue to walk until the next person approached.

This timeless wisdom speaks to what it means to be human in a world of pain. This year, you walk the path of the anguished. Perhaps next year, it will be me. I hold your broken heart knowing that one day you will hold mine.

**\*Sharon Brous is the founding and senior rabbi of Ikar, a Jewish community based in Los Angeles, and the author of “The Amen Effect,” from which this essay was adapted.**

**A version of this article appears in print on Jan. 21, 2024, Section SR, Page 10 of the New York edition with the headline: *Two Lessons From an Ancient Text That Changed My Life***

# Announcements:

**NEXT SUNDAY** will be our annual Mardi Gras service followed by a potluck. It's always a very festive time and a lot of fun!



**ASH WEDNESDAY** - Our annual Ash Wednesday soup supper is on Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. We'll gather in Fellowship Hall for soup at 6:30 pm, followed by our Ash Wednesday service at 7:00. Many thanks to all who have signed up for various jobs that evening, and if your last name begins with A-M, please bring a loaf of bread to share. (Those whose names begin with N-Z will be asked to contribute bread on Maundy Thursday).

**SAVE THE DATE!** – The BUCC Spring Retreat will be on Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Greenwood Village Clubhouse. More information to come!

**TODAY'S PHOTO** on the sanctuary TV was taken by Ann Thal on her morning walk. Ann recently moved to the area and visits many faith communities. She said our church's rainbow banner convinced her to move to Brecksville. Ann also shared our continuing testament reading today.

Attendance on Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – Adults: 79; Kids: 11; Live Stream: 18; Total: 108

# Special Thanks

## FEBRUARY 4, 2024

|               |                                                |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Head Usher:   | <b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b>                 |
| Ushers:       | Evelyn Seager<br>Heidi Spangler                |
| Lay Reader:   | Jill Zedan                                     |
| Greeter:      | Carol Miller                                   |
| Counters:     | Marge Culver<br>Nancy Stella                   |
| A/V Team:     | Betsey Wilson                                  |
| Flowers:      | <b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b>                 |
| Snack:        | Lois Lorenzo<br><b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b> |
| Set Up/Serve: | <b><i>Volunteers Needed</i></b>                |
| Clean Up:     | <b><i>Volunteers Needed</i></b>                |
| Snow Herder:  | <b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b>                 |



## POTLUCK FEBRUARY 11, 2024

|               |                                                   |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Head Usher:   | <b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b>                    |
| Ushers:       | <b><i>Volunteers Needed</i></b>                   |
| Lay Reader:   | Kate Matthews                                     |
| Greeter:      | Sherrill Witt                                     |
| Counters:     | Marjorie Culver<br><b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b> |
| A/V Team:     | Fred Pedersen                                     |
| Flowers:      | Katie MacKeigan-King                              |
| Snack:        | <b>POTLUCK</b>                                    |
| Set Up/Serve: | <b><i>Volunteers Needed</i></b>                   |
| Clean Up:     | <b><i>Volunteers Needed</i></b>                   |
| Snow Herder:  | <b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b>                    |

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