



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***

*"I have often been
threatened
with death.
I must tell you,
as a Christian,
I do not believe in
a death without
resurrection.
If am killed,
I shall arise again
in the Salvadoran
people...
A bishop will die,
but God's church,
which is
the people, will
never perish."*

*- St. Oscar Romero,
Archbishop of
San Salvador,
El Salvador*



Third Sunday in Lent, March 3rd, 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 – web address: www.BrecksvilleUCC.org

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

Third Sunday in Lent – March 3rd, 2024

Prelude *If You But Trust in God to Guide You* Neumark

Welcome & Announcements

Quiet Meditation *As the Deer* Nystrom

*"You alone are my strength and shield;
to you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship you."*

*"In the passionate strivings of love, I shall mount to the light to which no sight has
penetrated. I shall die, so as to live!" Gustav Mahler, Symphony No. 2*

Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able*

*** CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: Into the house of God we are called to enter,

All: to worship and receive the gift of grace.

Leader: As we step towards this sacred space,

All: we acknowledge all that can distract or exploit.

Leader: God calls upon us to cleanse our houses of all that does not find its
source in God's love.

**All: Together we give ourselves in worship and right relations with our
neighbor. Let us worship God.**

Hymn of Praise *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* #43

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

O God of temples and tables turned over, we enter this sacred space of
worship seeking your transformation and healing. Make us ready for the kind
of turned upside down world you are seeking to build among us. We have
come to this place of worship to be changed, so turn over our tables and
make us whole. In the name of Jesus our savior. 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 - 1 Peter 2:4–8 (The Message Translation)

Gospel Reading - John 2:13-22 (The Inclusive Bible translation)

Continuing Testament - by Karen Sandstrom



Time with Young Worshipers



Anthem

In Remembrance

Red

Erin Tomlinson, flute

In remembrance of me, eat this bread.

In remembrance of me, drink this wine.

*In remembrance of me, pray for the time
when God's own will is done.*

In remembrance of me, heal the sick.

In remembrance of me, feed the poor.

*In remembrance of me, open the door
and let your neighbors in, let them in.*

*Take, eat, and be comforted; drink, and remember, too,
that this is my body and precious blood, shed for you.*

In remembrance of me, search for truth.

In remembrance of me, always love.

*In remembrance of me, don't look above,
but in your heart, in your heart.*

Look in your heart for God.

Do this in remembrance of me.

(Music: Buryl Red; words: Ragan Courtney; © Copyright 1972 Broadman Press)

Sermon by Pastor John King

Hymn of Reflection

Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

#459

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, Gayle 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 We now are in the time of Lent,
To learn again what Jesus meant.
His life and message are so great,
We send these gifts to celebrate! Amen.**

*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION: [UNISON]**

O God, whose richness is found at the table of extravagant love for neighbor, we entrust these gifts to your care that they may abound in your steadfast love for all persons. Use them for the building of your beloved community here on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Communion

Communion Hymn *Bread of the World, in Mercy Broken*

#346

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING: [UNISON]

Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are nourished by Christ's body and blood, that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

Going with God's Love

* Hymn of Departure *Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation*

#400

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.



* Benediction

Postlude

O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High

15th century English ballad melody

"If you but trust in God to guide you,
with hopeful heart through all your ways,
You will find strength, with God beside you,
to bear the worst of evil days;
For those who trust God's changeless love
build on the rock that will not move."

(If You But Trust in God to Guide You - Words: Georg Neumark, 1641; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1863; alt.)

Readings

First Reading

1 Peter 2:4–8 (The Message Translation)

Welcome to Christ, the living Stone, the source of life. The workers took one look and threw it out; God set it in the place of honor. Present yourselves as building stones for the construction of a sanctuary vibrant with life, in which you'll serve as holy priests offering Christ-approved lives up to God. The Scriptures provide precedent:

*Look! I'm setting a stone in Zion, a cornerstone in the place of honor.
Whoever trusts in this stone as a foundation will never have cause to regret it.*

To you who trust Jesus, he's a Stone to be proud of, but to those who refuse to trust him,

the stone the workmen threw out is now the chief foundation stone.

For the untrusting he's a stone to trip over, a boulder blocking the way. They trip and fall because they refuse to obey, just as predicted.

But you are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, who do the work and speak out for Christ, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you - from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted.

Gospel Reading

John 2:13-22 (The Inclusive Bible translation)

Since it was almost the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the Temple, he found people selling cattle, sheep and pigeons, while moneychangers sat at their counters. Making a whip out of cords, Jesus drove them all out of the Temple - even the cattle and sheep - and overturned the tables of the money changers, scattering their coins. Then he faced the pigeon sellers: "Take all this out of here! Stop turning God's house into a market!" The disciples remembered the words of scripture: "Zeal for your house consumes me."

The Temple authorities intervened and said, "What sign can you show us to justify what you've done?"

(Continued on next page)

Readings

Gospel Reading (*continued*)

Jesus answered, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

They retorted, "It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you're going to raise it up in three days?"

But the temple he was speaking of was his body. It was only after Jesus had been raised from the dead that the disciples remembered this statement and believed the scripture - and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Continuing Testament – by Karen Sandstrom

I have what a chiropractor described as the beginning of a dowager's hump, but that's a misnomer. It's my grudge hump. In a subdural pocket at the base of my neck, I store all my psychic maladies, including those grudges I have carried for too many years now. I take these out on occasion to feed and water them with loving dedication. My actual house plants can only dream of being tended as lovingly as I tend my injuries. *Precious. My precious.*

Here we are, then, in the season that Christians call Lent, when the faithful sometimes ask each other what they're giving up for 40 days. Chocolate? Beer? Swearing?

But I've never been much into Lenten sacrifice. When I was young, I just figured life was hard enough, so God made Snickers. And now, as a person who abstains from highly processed food, I'm even less inclined to relinquish small pleasures. For crying out loud, I haven't had a sandwich in five years.

What more must I do?

Oh. That. Rats.

Grudges are Chinese handcuffs that become tighter the more one struggles with them. They're not responsive to reason. They don't lose potency through the retelling of the story — just the opposite! — nor do they dissolve of their own accord.

Whenever I've tried to talk myself out of a grudge and into a more benevolent attitude toward someone who I believe harmed me, I've ended up on a full-blown bitterness bender. Once we start justifying our grudges, the reasons multiply in seconds. That is some dark magic.

Readings

My grudges are indicators, too. They point out times when I relied on the esteem of others to make up for what I haven't granted myself. They show me when I have over-served myself on self-pity and under-considered the humanity of the person on the other side.

Even when we are deeply harmed, our grudges provide hints that it might be worth considering how the story could be told from another angle. What would that look like?

This brings us back to chocolate, beer and swearing.

Whether for 40 days or 40 years, the best way to relinquish the indulgences that most tempt us is not by negotiating with them. It's by noticing that they don't serve us anymore and declaring a policy of Radical No.

Today I am a person who does not eat processed food — no matter what.

Today I am a person who does not drink — no matter what.

Today I am a person who does not curse — no matter what.

OK, never mind on that last one. I will probably swear today.

But it is well past time for Radical No grudge-keeping. Not because I have never been harmed, but because I have been — and the grudge made not a single thing better.

I also have hurt others from time to time and would prefer to be held in grace.

I have held grudges against people I care deeply about. Those are really painful, and I no longer want any part of that. It occupies too much brain space. Too much heart space. It's such a squandering of love.

I don't have that kind of time anymore. Did I ever? Does anyone?

So today I am a person who holds zero grudges.

It isn't complicated. I just stop telling the story to myself and others. Stop justifying and ruminating.

I just stop holding on.

Announcements:

SAVE THE DATE - SPRING RETREAT!

When: Saturday, March 9th, from 10 am – 4 pm

Where: Greenwood Village Garden Room in Sagamore Hills

Cost: \$20 freewill offering

Join us for a time of renewal and fellowship! This retreat is designed to provide a sacred space for “THE FIVE R’s” - Rest, Reflection, Relaxation, Refreshment and Renewal.

Please call the office to register, or sign-up after worship on Sundays. We look forward to seeing you there!

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING - Share the Light!

“You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world.”

Matthew 5:14-15 (The Message)

“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine...

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine... “

If Jesus had a playlist of music, surely this familiar hymn would be among the Top Five. Jesus teaches that faith calls for action. Sharing our light, as the diverse and colorful expression of God’s love here on earth, leads to making blankets, staffing food pantries, cooking meals, building houses and schools, signing petitions for worthy causes, and protesting injustices. A simple song with a simple message - our light is on a light stand, for all to see - shine and share. On any given day, light is shining because we are there through our gifts to OGHS. Your contributions make a difference. Your dollars count. Give generously. Share the light! Our collection will be next Sunday, March 10th. Thank you!

IT IS TIME FOR GAME NIGHT! Join us on Saturday, March 23rd, at 5:00 pm in Fellowship Hall for our next game night. We will provide drinks and would love it if you’d bring a snack to share. Join us for a fun evening of games - dominoes, euchre, and/or whatever games you like! Invite a friend or come alone, and call Kathy Smith if you have any questions.

Attendance on Sunday, February 25, 2024 – Adults: 73; Kids: 7; Live Stream: 10; Total: 90

Special Thanks

MARCH 3, 2024

Head Usher: Diane Gressley
Ushers: Annette Pedersen
Evelyn Seager
Lay Reader: Karen Sandstrom
Greeter: ***Volunteer Needed***
Flowers: LENT
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
A/V Team: Fred Pedersen
Snack: Annette Pedersen
Volunteer Needed
Set Up/Serve: ***Volunteers Needed***
Clean Up: ***Volunteers Needed***
Snow Herder: ***Volunteer Needed***

Thank
You



MARCH 10, 2024

Head Usher: ***Volunteer Needed***
Ushers: Evelyn Seager
Volunteer Needed
Lay Reader: Bridget Sproul
Greeter: Lori Molesky
Flowers: LENT
Counters: Marjorie Culver
Lori Molesky
A/V Team: Jim Duffy
Snack: ***Volunteers Needed***
Set Up/Serve: Carol Miller
Volunteer Needed
Clean Up: ***Volunteers Needed***
Snow Herder: ***Volunteer Needed***



CELEBRATE EASTER WITH FLOWERS IN OUR SANCTUARY

This year we will be using azaleas as our dedication flowers. You may take your flower home after the Easter service, otherwise your plant will be shared with someone who is ill or shut-in, or has recently lost a loved one. Please fill out this form and turn it in to the Church Office or the collection basket. Thank you!

DEADLINE – March 10

I Enclose \$13.00 for an Easter Plant - cash: _____ check #: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Other: _____

Your Name(s): _____

Please check one:

I will take the flower _____ I will leave the flower for church use _____