



# 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's not that those  
ancient people told  
literal stories and  
now we are smart  
enough to take  
them symbolically,  
but that they told  
them symbolically  
and we are now  
dumb enough to  
take them literally."*

*- John Dominic  
Crossan*



**Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 17<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!**

# Fifth Sunday in Lent

## March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Prelude

*Forgiveness Is Your Gift*

Skye folk melody

Welcome & Announcements

Quiet Meditation

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*"It matters not who you love, where you love, why you love, when you love, or how you love. It only matters that you love." – John Lennon*

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

*\* Please Stand as you are able*

#### **\* CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: Something there is that doesn't love a wall.

**All: And yet there is something in us that wants to build walls that divide us.**

Leader: In Christ, our divisions have been reconciled, nailed to the cross.

**All: Christ tore down the wall we used to keep each other at a distance.**

Leader: Come, die to the self and live a life of service to the Living God.

**All: And God will raise us up anew. Amen.**

Hymn of Praise

*All Are Welcome (see insert)*

Haugen

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

God of grace, we gather today seeking to follow in the way of Jesus. The path he chose for his disciples was one of service and it requires of us that we lay down our hearts of stone, to love and serve with our whole heart. May our prayer this day inspire us to set down those stones of resentment, rising to new life, restored as one family in you. May it be so. 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 - Eph 2:11–22 (The Message)**

**Gospel Reading - John 8:3-11 (NRSV)**

**Continuing Testament - by Robert Frost**

## ***Time with Young Worshipers***

**Anthem**

***Build Us a Table***

True

*1. Walls mark our boundaries and keep us apart;  
walls keep the world from our eyes and our heart.  
Tables are round, making room for one more,  
welcoming friends we had not known before.*

*Refrain: So build us a table and tear down the wall!  
Christ is our host. There is room for us all! (twice)*

*2. Walls make us sure who is in and who's out;  
walls keep us safe from all question and doubt,  
but at a table in open exchange  
new ties are formed as our lives rearrange. (Refrain)*

*3. Once we were strangers, divided, alone.  
Hate and distrust built a wall stone by stone.  
Now at a table the bread that we share  
joins us to Christ in a circle of care. (Refrain)*

(Music: Lori True, b. 1961; text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947; © 2007, GIA Publications, Inc.)

**Sermon by Pastor John King**

**Hymn of Reflection**

***O Come to Me, You Weary* (solo)**

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

Phyllis Hassler, Ann Kelley, Cliff Stenzel, George Snider, Sue Renovetz, Joe Blasko, 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 THANKSGIVING: [UNISON]**

**O God who causes our lives to rise, we lay down to you the abundance you have given us and allow it to fall so that you may multiply it to give life to your world. May it be so. Amen.**

## ***Communion***

**THANKSGIVING PRAYER: [UNISON]**

Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

***Going with God's Love***

\* Hymn of Departure      *In Christ There Is No East or West*

#395

**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*****Forth in Thy Name***

Davies

## Readings

### **First Reading**

#### **Eph 2:11–22 (The Message)**

The Messiah has made things up between us so that we're now together on this, both non-Jewish outsiders and Jewish insiders. He tore down the wall we used to keep each other at a distance. He repealed the law code that had become so clogged with fine print and footnotes that it hindered more than it helped. Then he started over. Instead of continuing with two groups of people separated by centuries of animosity and suspicion, he created a new kind of human being, a fresh start for everybody.

Christ brought us together through his death on the cross. The Cross got us to embrace, and that was the end of the hostility. Christ came and preached peace to you outsiders and peace to us insiders. He treated us as equals, and so made us equals. Through him we both share the same Spirit and have equal access to God.

That's plain enough, isn't it? You're no longer wandering exiles. This kingdom of faith is now your home country. You're no longer strangers or outsiders. You belong here, with as much right to the name Christian as anyone. God is building a home. God's using us all—irrespective of how we got here—in what God is building. God used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. Now God's using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone that holds all the parts together. We see it taking shape day after day—a holy temple built by God, all of us built into it, a temple in which God is quite at home.

### **Gospel Reading**

#### **John 8:3-11 NRSV**

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him.

*(Continued on next page)*

## Readings

### Gospel Reading (*continued*)

Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground.

When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

She said, "No one, sir."

And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again."

### Continuing Testament – by Robert Frost

#### "Mending Wall"

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,  
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;  
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.  
The work of hunters is another thing:  
I have come after them and made repair  
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,  
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,  
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,  
No one has seen them made or heard them made,  
But at spring mending-time we find them there.  
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;  
And on a day we meet to walk the line  
And set the wall between us once again.  
We keep the wall between us as we go.  
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.



## Readings

### Continuing Testament (*continued*)

And some are loaves and some so nearly balls  
We have to use a spell to make them balance:  
'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'  
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.  
    Oh, just another kind of out-door game,  
    One on a side. It comes to little more:  
There where it is we do not need the wall:  
    He is all pine and I am apple orchard.  
    My apple trees will never get across  
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.  
He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'  
    Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder  
    If I could put a notion in his head:  
    'Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it  
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.  
    Before I built a wall I'd ask to know  
    What I was walling in or walling out,  
And to whom I was like to give offense.  
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,  
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,  
    But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather  
    He said it for himself. I see him there  
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top  
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.  
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,  
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.  
He will not go behind his father's saying,  
And he likes having thought of it so well  
He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'



# Announcements:

**IT IS TIME FOR GAME NIGHT!** Join us on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 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.

**HOLY WEEK** - Just as spring cannot be fully appreciated without winter, the joy and victory of Easter cannot be fully experienced without the liberating message of Maundy Thursday and the devastated disciples on Good Friday. The story of our salvation is told in all these events.

So, I encourage you to participate fully and invite your family to share in all of the events of Holy Week. This encourages us to experience the profound significance of Christ's life, death and resurrection in powerful, life-changing ways.

**Palm Sunday – Next Sunday, March 24** - Please bring the kids to participate in a joyful celebration with palms and fun percussion instruments. Then the liturgy transitions to the heartbreaking events of Jesus passion and death.

**March 28 - Maundy Thursday** - The Last Supper recalls the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, which liberated the Hebrews from slavery and death. Jesus introduced another layer of meaning to the Passover, as he broke bread and told us, "Do this in memory of me."

**March 29 - Good Friday** - Our observance of Tenebrae – gradually extinguishing candles and plunging the church into darkness – powerfully symbolizes the hour when the Light of the World was extinguished as Jesus died on the cross. Using primordial symbols of light and darkness, silence and sound, we remember the power and meaning of the Cross. Every year people are moved to tears by the unique emotional power of this service.

**March 31 - Easter Sunday** - Of course, Easter Sunday is the main event. The importance and sheer joy of that day in the Christian faith is unparalleled. Make plans now to bring your whole family on Easter morning, Sunday, March 31 at 10:00 a.m.

May participation in all the events of Holy Week be a source of blessing to you and your family. Let's journey together on the path to the empty tomb, which follows the path to the cross.

Attendance on Sunday, March 10, 2024 – Adults: 56; Kids: 8; Live Stream: 11; Total: 75

# Special Thanks



## MARCH 17, 2024

Head Usher:	Diane Gressley
Ushers:	Evelyn Seager <b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b>
Lay Reader:	Jim Duffy
Greeter:	Peg Duffy
Flowers:	LENT
Counters:	Marge Culver Janet Renovetz
A/V Team:	Betsey Wilson
Snack:	Peg Duffy Armand Eusano
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>

## MARCH 24, 2024

Head Usher:	<b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b>
Ushers:	Evelyn Seager <b><i>Volunteer Needed</i></b>
Lay Reader:	Sherrill Witt
Greeter:	Lori Molesky
Flowers:	LENT
Counters:	Marjorie Culver Janet Renovetz Jim Duffy
A/V Team:	Lois Lorenzo
Snack:	<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>

Thank  
You

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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