



Brecksville United Church of Christ

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

*"We can also
use the other
"A" words for
Advent: aware,
alive, attentive,
alert, awake.*

*Advent is a call
to full
consciousness."*

- Richard Rohr



4th Sunday of Advent, December 22nd, 2024 • 10:00 AM

Pastor
• John King

Director of Music
• David Debick

Financial Secretary
• Joy Garapic

Administrative Assistant
Miranda Lacefield

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:

Monday – Thursday 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!

Sunday December 22nd, 2024

4th Sunday of Advent

Prelude Es ist ein Ros entsprungen (Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming) Brahms
Welcome & Announcements

Silent Meditation

"We are all meant to be mothers of God." - Meister Eckhart, 14th century

Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able*

CALL TO PRAYER: (Isaiah 7: 14)

*Pastor: During Advent, we are called to settle into
the exquisite darkness of the Winter Solstice,
to hibernate, rest and restore.
The prophets assure us that the darkness will not overcome us.
They call us to
watch for the light, notice the Light, and be warmed by its rays.
We are called to wait, to hope, to trust in promises made.
As we make this Advent journey,
we claim we come alive in both the light and the darkness.*

*One: We look for an extraordinary sign of hope for our world
but God's sign is most ordinary of all:*

All: A young woman is with child.

*One: We look to power for strength in our world
but God points to the most vulnerable:*

All: She gives birth.

*One: We look far and wide for a key to God's mystery,
but God points us home:*

All: She calls this child Immanuel: God-with-us!

One: Let us rejoice, and worship our God

**All: in our ordinary, vulnerable lives:
God-with-us!**

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

One: *Elizabeth had lost hope for a child. The presence of new life filled her with hope.*

All: May the light of Christ fill us with hope.

One: *Elizabeth did not know why Mary came rushing through her doors, but the leap of her unborn child filled her with the knowledge of the Lord. The knowledge of the Lord filled her with peace.*

All: May the light of Christ fill us with peace.

One: *John the Baptist, while in the womb of his mother, expressed the joy of generations to come. The faith of Mary filled the unborn babe with joy.*

All: May the light of Christ fill us with joy.

One: *In a moment filled with hope, in a moment filled with peace, in a moment filled with joy, Mary opens her mouth to sing, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior..."*

All: We have lit the Advent Candles symbolizing Hope, Peace and Joy. Now we light the candle symbolizing Love. May the light of Christ fill us with love.

The fourth verse of "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord, Emmanuel!*

Prayer of Invocation

One: Please join me in prayer.

All: God of Love, we thank you for bringing the light of Christ into the world. May the love shared by Elizabeth and Mary serve as a beacon for our own actions. May we, like Mary, create love that exalts the lowly and makes low the proud. May we all bear the light of Christ, who is coming to bring peace on Earth. Amen.

Song of Praise:

O Come, All You Faithful

#135

Readings

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

First Reading: - Isaiah 11:1-10 (The Voice Translation)

Gospel Reading: - Luke 1:26-38 (The Voice Translation)

Continuing Testament: By: Dan Sadlier

Children's Christmas Pageant:

'Twas the Night Before Christmas (see insert)

The Church at Prayer

Gayle & Allison Colbert, Cliff Stenzel, Sue Renovetz, Joe Blasko, Jon Thompson, Marilyn Pay, Frances Posey, Mac Hoppel, Rose Kaval, Bee Ortiz, Terry Heiman, Cindy Burton, Elizabeth Gadus, Sheila Day, Jan Wardlaw, Stan McCain, Kathleen Stewart, Ann Klonowski, Kathy Repko, "Edna House", people who are unemployed and under employed.

(Please let the office know of any additions, corrections, or changes to our prayer lists.)

Prayers of the Church

Silent Meditation

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**

*** Doxology: [UNISON] 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: [UNISON]**

**With these gifts, dear God,
accept the praise and thanksgiving of our hearts,
which rejoice in your goodness and love.
Let our gifts point to your presence in the world,
and further your dream for the world
through Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.**

Communion

*At Brecksville UCC, ALL are welcome to receive communion.
No exceptions. No Kidding.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving After Communion.

***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 fed
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 Go Tell It on the Mountain #154**

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.*

*** Circle of Community (continued)**

The image shows musical notation for a hymn. It consists of two staves. The top staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is written with quarter and eighth notes. Below the staff, the lyrics are: "Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja." Above the staff, there are chord symbols: A, E, A, D, Bm, E. The bottom staff also has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The melody is written with quarter and eighth notes. Below the staff, the lyrics are: "Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja." Above the staff, there are chord symbols: A, C#7, F#m, Bm, E7sus4 E7, A.

***Benediction**

Readings**First Reading Isaiah 11:1-10 (The Voice Translation)**

But on this humbled ground, a tiny shoot, hopeful and promising, will sprout from Jesse's stump; A branch will emerge from his roots to bear fruit. And on this child from David's line, the Spirit of the Eternal One will alight and rest.

By the Spirit of wisdom and discernment He will shine like the dew.

By the Spirit of counsel and strength He will judge fairly and act courageously.

By the Spirit of knowledge and reverence of the Eternal One, He will take pleasure in honoring the Eternal.

He will determine fairness and equity; He will consider more than what meets the eye, And weigh in more than what he's told. So that even those who can't afford a good defense will nevertheless get a fair and equitable judgment.

With just a word, He will end wickedness and abolish oppression. With nothing more than the breath of His mouth, He will destroy evil. He will clothe himself with righteousness and truth; the impulse to right wrongs will be in his blood. With unwavering steps and integrity uncompromised, He will establish peace.

A day will come when the wolf will live peacefully beside the wobbly-kneed lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat; The calf and yearling, newborn and slow, will rest secure with the lion; and a little child will tend them all. Bears will graze with the cows they used to attack; even their young will rest together, and the lion will eat hay, like gentle oxen.

Neither will a baby who plays next to a cobra's hole nor a toddler who sticks his hand into a nest of vipers suffer harm. All my holy mountain will be free of anything hurtful or destructive, for as the waters fill the sea, The entire earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Eternal.

Then on that day, that root from Jesse's line will stand as a signal for the peoples of the world Who will come to Him seeking guidance and direction; and glory will be restored to the land where He resides.

Gospel Reading Luke 1: 26-38 (The Voice Translation)

God sent a messenger of Good News, Gabriel to meet with a virgin named Mary, who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David himself. This heavenly messenger entered her home, saying,

“Greetings, Mary! You are favored, and God is with you! Among all women on the earth, you have been blessed.”

The heavenly messenger’s words baffled Mary, and she wondered what type of greeting this was.

Gabriel said, “Mary, don’t be afraid. You have found favor with God. Listen, you are going to become pregnant. You will have a son, and you should name “Jesus,” which means “Savior.” Jesus will become great. He will be known as the Son of the Highest God. God will give Him the throne of His ancestor David, and He will reign over the covenant family of Jacob forever.

Then Mary said, “But I have never been with a man. How can this be possible?”

Gabriel said, God’s Holy Spirit will be with you. The Most High will overshadow you. That’s why this holy child will be known, as not just your son, but also as the Son of God. It sounds impossible, but listen—you know your relative Elizabeth has been unable to bear children and is now far too old to be a mother. Yet she has become pregnant, as God willed it. Yes, in three months, she will have a son. So the impossible is possible with God.

Mary accepted this in her heart and said, “Here I am, the God’s humble servant. Let everything you have said happen.”

Continuing Testament – By Dan Sadlier

Christianity can be confusing, but the way of Jesus was pretty clear.

Move toward the poor

Empower the woman

Create space at the table

Throw parties

Widen the family boundaries

Poke holes in oppressive systems

Don’t retaliate with violence

Forgive your enemy
Don't store up wealth
Be present with people
Heal
Announce
Push back darkness
The kingdom of God is near

Announcements:

Colony Cupboard - We are collecting again for the Colony Cupboard! This resource is for students in BBH schools in need of household essentials. There will be a collection bin out and items will be donated after 12/22. Items in most need include: paper towels (packs of 1-4), toilet paper (packs of 1-4), individually wrapped snacks, umbrellas, laundry soap, hats, gloves, coats, household disinfecting wipes. Donations of cash or gift cards are also accepted.

UCC Christmas Fund- On Sunday December 29 we will be collecting a UCC Christmas Fund which is used on a local and national basis as a Special Fund for retired staff and clergy who are facing financial difficulties. There will be collection envelopes that Sunday or online, you can designate an offering for the Christmas Fund.

Hunger Meal- On Sunday December 29, we will participate in a Hunger Meal at Pearl Road United Methodist Church from 3pm to 6pm. There is a sign up board in the narthex, for servers and items needed.

Congregational Meeting on January 26th: The BUCC Congregational Meeting will be on January 26, 2025 directly after our worship service. We hope that all members can attend this important meeting where we approve and vote on our Officers for the year 2025 as well as approve our Operating Budget. The slate of officers and the list of Ministry heads and members along with the Budget will be sent out via email by January 10th for your review, and there will be hard copies of these items available at that time for those who prefer paper copies for review.

Flowers- 2024 Christmas Flower Dedications

Julie Bernard and Lin Kriynovach	<i>In memory of Tony, Julie and Lori Gorenc</i>
The Cook Family	<i>In memory of Our bestest dog Cricket</i>
Peg and Jim Duffy	<i>In memory of dear Aunt Jill</i>
Armand Eusanio and Jeff Thompson	<i>In memory of Armand's parents Robert and Ann Eusanio In memory of Jeff's parents Jim and Gin Thompson In memory of Armand's niece Lee Ann Candela</i>
Dorie Gabor	<i>In memory of my husband Steven Gabor</i>
Joy Garapic	<i>In memory of William Garapic, husband, father, grandfather</i>
Gordon, Tracey and Eleanor Gibb	<i>In memory of Vivienne Grace Gibb In memory of Rev.H. Robert Jewell</i>
Kathy Goshe	<i>In memory of Kathy's mother Betty Csek</i>
Claudia Griesmer	<i>In memory of Michelle Nader</i>
Kate Matthews and Jackie Cassara	<i>In Memory of Sister Therese Anne Cox</i>
Robert L Petrus	<i>In memory of John W. Petrus In memory of J.R. Mc Evoy</i>
Eric Rahnenfuehrer	<i>In memory of Jan Rahnenfuehrer In memory of Marjorie Rahnenfuehrer</i>
Sue and Cliff Stenzel	<i>In memory of those we have lost, but will never forget</i>
Jill Zedan	<i>In honor of this congregation that will and has prevailed through hard times.</i>

Welcome Tracey, Gordon and Ellie!

Today we welcome the Gibb family as new members. Tracey works with Centene, and Gordon works with Key Bank. Eleanor is in 4th grade at BBH. She loves all things musical theater and enjoys dance and voice. The Gibb family enjoys theater, movies, board and card games, volunteering with school activities and playing with Josie, the rescue pup.

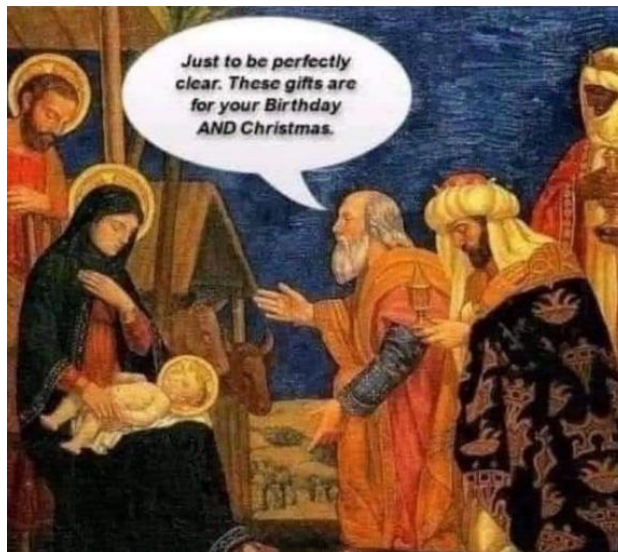


THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR includes the following:

Tue. Dec 24 8:15 am – "Holy Grounds" at Panera
 6:00 pm – AA "Love & Tolerance" (Pilgrim Hall)
 10:00 pm - Christmas Eve Service

SHARE YOUR INSPIRATION – As a congregational church, input from you, the congregation, is essential. The Spiritual Life Ministry is inviting you to keep an eye out during your week for potential continuing testament readings, bulletin cover art, quotes, and hymns. When you find something that speaks to you, please email it to Pastor John buccpastor23@gmail.com)

You'll notice scriptures for upcoming weeks listed in the Sunday bulletin – ideas that connect to those particular scriptures are especially welcome. In October, our Music Director started a once-monthly brainstorming session scheduled on the first Thursday of the month, at 6:15 pm in the sanctuary. Everyone is invited! At BUCC, WE ARE ONE, and we look forward to your unique input into our shared journey.





we are thankful for you

December 22nd, 2024

Early Usher: Evelyn Seager
Late Usher: **Volunteers Needed**
Greeter: Lori Molesky
Reader: Armand Eusano
Flowers: Christmas Poinsettias
Counters: Marjorie Culver
Janet Renovetz
A/V: Jim Duffy
Snacks: Gary Brezina
Lois Lorenzo
Set Up/Serve: Betsey Wilson
Clean Up: **Volunteers Needed**

Our sanctuary art this week is
"Christmas Story #3" by Eugenia
Gorbacheva

December 29th, 2024

Early Usher: Evelyn Seager
Late Usher: **Volunteer Needed**
Greeter: **Volunteers Needed**
Reader: Jill Zedan
Flowers: Christmas Poinsettias
Counters: Marjorie Culver
Janet Renovetz
A/V: Fred Pedersen
Snack: **Volunteers Needed**
Set Up/Serve: Annette Pedersen
Clean Up: **Volunteer Needed**



Attendance last Sunday, December 15th, 2024 – Adults: 86; Kids: 15; Online: 72; Total: 173
Next week's scripture readings will be, **Colossians 3:12-17** and **Luke 2:40-52**