



Brecksville

United Church of Christ

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

"God did not enter
the world of our
nostalgic, silent-night,
snow-blanketed,
peace-on-earth,
suspended reality of
Christmas. God
slipped into the
vulnerability of skin
and entered our
violent and disturbing
world."

- Nadia Bolz-
Weber, 21st century



"Simeon and Jesus in the Temple" sketch by Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn

1st Sunday after Christmas, December 29th, 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 29th, 2024

1st Sunday after Christmas

Prelude Prelude Once in Royal David's City Gauntlett

"He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
With the poor and mean and lowly lived on earth our Savior holy."
(Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1848; alt.)

Welcome & Announcements

Silent Meditation



"Then the singing enveloped me. It was furry and resonant, coming from everyone's very heart. There was no sense of performance or judgment, only that the music was breath and food."

- Anne Lamott, 21st century



Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able*

CALL TO PRAYER:

One: *When Jesus is born to Mary and Joseph,*

All: God was there.

One: *As Jesus grew at the home in Nazareth,*

All: God was there.

One: *In the carpenter's workshop*

All: God was there.

One: *In the household chores,*

All: God was there.

One: *This very morning,*

All: God is here.

One: *In the future we cannot see,*

All: God is there.

One: *Let us love and honor our God!*

All: For God dwells among us.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION: [UNISON]

*We see a world that yet experiences conflict, violence and injustice.
A world that longs for the kingdom of God.
Reconcile us, O God. Make us wise and joyful and strong
so that we live in the understanding
of your never-ending love.
Help us to see people as you see them,
to see that each one of us is special to you
and that you have plans for each of us.
Help us to make time to remember that we are special
and to think about what hopes and dreams you have for us.*

Song of Praise: **Good Christian Friends, Rejoice** **#129**

Readings

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

First Reading: - Colossians 3:12-17 (NRSV)

Gospel Reading: - Luke 2: 22-35 (NRSVUE)

Continuing Testament: Christmas Poem by Mary Oliver



Time with
Young
Worshipers

Anthem - Thank God It's Christmas Taylor/May Chris Hatala, tenor

1. Oh, my love, we've had our share of tears
Oh, my friend, we've had our hopes and fears
Oh, my friends, it's been a long hard year
But now it's Christmas, yes, it's Christmas
Thank God it's Christmas
2. The moon and stars seem awful cold and bright
Let's hope the snow will make this Christmas right

My friends, the world will share this special night
Because it's Christmas, yes, it's Christmas
Thank God it's Christmas for one night
Chorus: Thank God it's Christmas, yeah
Thank God it's Christmas (twice)
Can it be Christmas? Let it be Christmas every day
3. Oh, my love, we live in troubled days
Oh, my friend, we have the strangest ways
All my friends on this one day of days
Thank God it's Christmas, yes it's Christmas
Thank God it's Christmas for one day
Thank God it's Christmas, yes, it's Christmas
Thank God it's Christmas ooh yeah
Thank God it's Christmas, yes, yes, yes, yes, it's Christmas
Thank God it's Christmas for one day

(Words by Roger Taylor; music by Brian May and Roger Taylor; © 1984
Queen Music Ltd, EMI Music Publishing Ltd)

Sermon: “Simeon’s Dream” by Rev. John King

Hymn of Reflection

What Child Is This

#148

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]**

**God of Vision,
Take these offerings and turn them into vision;
vision of all people fed, safe, housed, educated.
A vision of justice and peace;
A vision of the kingdom of God.**



Going with God's Love

* Hymn of Departure

Joy to the World

#132

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)



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.

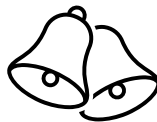
Chords: A, E, A, D, Bm, E, A, C#7, F#m, Bm, E7sus4, E7, A.

*Benediction

Postlude

God Rest You Merry

English traditional



Readings

First Reading Colossians 3:12-17 (NRSV)

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.

Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Gospel Reading Luke 2: 22–35 (NRSVUE)

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"),

and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.

It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Messiah.

Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law,

Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,

according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being
said about him.

Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is
destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign
that will be opposed
so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will
pierce your own soul, too."

Continuing Testament – Christmas Poem by Mary Oliver

Says a country legend told every year:
Go to the barn on Christmas Eve and see
what the creatures do as that long night tips over.
Down on their knees they will go, the fire
of an old memory whistling through their minds!
I went. Wrapped to my eyes against the cold
I creaked back the barn door and peered in.
From town the church bells spilled their midnight music,
And the beasts listened — yet they lay in their stalls like stone.
Oh the heretics!
Not to remember Bethlehem,
or the star as bright as the sun,
or the child born on a bed of straw!
To know only of the dissolving Now!
Still they drowsed on —
Citizens of the pure, the physical world,
They loomed in the dark: powerful
of body, peaceful of mind,
innocent of history.
Brothers! I whispered. It is Christmas!
And you are no heretics, but a miracle,
immaculate still as when you were thundered forth
on the morning of creation!
As for Bethlehem, that blazing star

still sailed the dark, but only looked for me.
Caught in its light, listening again to its story,
I curled against some sleepy beast, who nuzzled
my hair as though I were a child, and warmed me
the best it could all night.

Announcements:

UCC Christmas Fund- This morning, 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- Today, 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.

HOLY GROUNDS- Join Pastor John for an informal conversation and a cup of coffee at Panera (Brecksville). On most Tuesdays, at 8:15-9:15 you can stop by anytime, to talk about whatever is on your mind. You never know who might stop by! Of course, if you are looking for a more private conversation, you can always set up an appointment with Rev. John anytime you like.

TO DONATE ELECTRONICALLY- If you would like to make a donation to Brecksville United Church of Christ with your phone, please scan this QR code. If you need assistance, ask an usher - or a grandchild. Thank you!



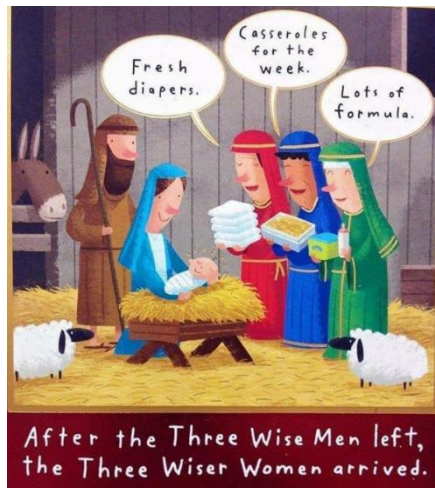
"MIND THE GAP"

As we end 2024 we are especially mindful of the gap in our BUCC budget, the gap between income and expenses. We are grateful for your generosity and the many ways you contribute to church's mission. Could you consider one final end of year gift? Let's "mind the gap" and end the year in the black. As always, thank you.

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR includes the following:

TODAY	3:00 pm – Hunger Meal
Tue. Dec 31	8:15 am – "Holy Grounds" at Panera 6:00 pm – AA "Love & Tolerance" (Pilgrim Hall)
Wed. Jan 1	11:00 am – Mindfulness & Meditation (Parlor)
Thur. Jan 2	5:30 pm – Youth Choir 6:15 pm – Music Committee 7:00 pm - Choir Practice

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





we are thankful for you

December 29th, 2024

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

January 5th, 2024

Early Usher:	Evelyn Seager
Late Usher:	Volunteer Needed
Greeter:	Volunteers Needed
Reader:	Rose Kaval
Flowers:	Volunteers Needed
Counters:	Marjorie Culver Janet Renovetz
A/V:	David Pastor
Snack:	Volunteers Needed
Set Up/Serve:	Volunteers Needed
Clean Up:	Volunteer Needed



Attendance last Sunday, December 22nd, 2024 – Adults: 78; Kids: 17; Online: 27; Total: 122
Next week's scripture readings will be, **Jeremiah 31:7-14** and **John 1: 1-18**