



# Brecksville

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# United Church of Christ

23 Public Square • Brecksville • Ohio • 44141 • 440-526-4364  
*6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany, February 16, 2025 • 10:00 AM*

*"For some reason, the most vocal Christians among us never mention the Beatitudes. But, often with tears in their eyes, they demand that the Ten Commandments be posted in public buildings. And of course, that's Moses, not Jesus. I haven't heard one of them demand that the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes, be posted anywhere. "Blessed are the merciful" in a courtroom?*

*"Blessed are the peacemakers" in the Pentagon? Give me a break!"*

*-Kurt Vonnegut Jr.*



**Pastor**  
• John King

**Director of Music**  
• David Debick  
Ministers – All of Our Members

**Financial Secretary**  
• Joy Garapic

**Administrative Assistant**  
Miranda Lacefield

## **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](mailto:buccoffice23@gmail.com) – web address: [www.BrecksvilleUCC.org](http://www.BrecksvilleUCC.org)**

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

## 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany Sunday February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### Prelude

#### **Whatever You Do Christian Harmony, 1805**

"Whatever you do to the least ones of these,  
I tell you in truth that you do unto me!  
Lord Jesus, you taught us! May we learn anew  
that when we serve others, we also serve you."

(Words by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, b. 1961; words © 2008 C. W. Gillette)

### Welcome & Announcements

### Silent Meditation



*"When you live in Culture War Mode, there is always a battle to fight, a side to take, and people to fear. When you live in God's Kingdom, there's always a stranger to welcome, a neighbor to befriend, and an enemy to love."*

*-Dan White Jr.*



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

*\* Please Stand as you are able*

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

One: Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

**ALL: We are each a child of God.**

**No matter who we are, or where we are on life's journey,  
we are blessed.**

One: Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

**ALL: We come to worship the God who feeds us, who fills us, and who  
blesses us.**

One: Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

**ALL: Let us rejoice in the love of God,  
and turn to our God together in prayer, song, and praise.**

**Hymn of Praise**

**Blest Are They**

**Haas**

**(see insert)**

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

O God of many blessings, be with us in our joy and in our sorrow.  
Help us to reach out with your love to those in need,  
that we may not be satisfied until all are fed.  
Bless each of us here, and all who cannot be present with us today.  
Shower your blessings on our worship, as we pray all this through Jesus the  
Christ, our teacher and our guide.

**\*Pastor's Prayer**

**\*Song of Praise:**

***Glory to God***

***Pablo Sosa 1988***



Glo - ry, glo - ry, glo - ry! Glo - ry to God in the high - est, And on earth be  
peace to all peo - ple, for God loves us all.

## ***Readings***

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

**First Reading: - Amos 5:21-24**

**Gospel Reading: - Luke 6:17-26**

**Continuing Testament: By Diana Butler Bass**

Time with  
Young Worshipers



## **Anthem**

## **Can We Be Silent** **Erin Tomlinson, flute**

**Mahler**

1. How can we be silent when we know our God is near,  
bringing light to those in darkness, to the worthless, endless worth?  
How can we be silent when we are the voice of Christ,  
speaking justice to the nations, breathing love to all the earth?  
Refrain: None can stop the Spirit burning now inside us.  
We will shape the future. We will not be silent!
2. How can we be silent when our God has conquered death,  
stretching out his arms to suffer so that we might have new life?  
How can we be silent when we know that Jesus rose,  
and will come again in glory, ending suffering and strife? (Refrain)
3. How can we be silent as we turn our eyes away  
and ignore the poor and broken who lie bleeding in the street?  
How can we be silent when we're called to heal and serve  
in the image of Lord Jesus, who has stooped to wash our feet? (Refrain)  
We will not be silent....We will not be silent!  
(Music and Words: Michael Mahler, b. 1981; © 2003, GIA Publications, Inc.)

**Sermon:** "Blessed are they" by Pastor John King

## **Hymn of Reflection**

## **Let Justice Flow like Streams**

**#588**

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

Gayle & Allison Colbert, 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, Kathleen Stewart, Ann Klonowski, Kathy Repko, Lois Lorenzo, The family of Cliff Stenzel, "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,  
In Jesus' name.**

## **Communion**

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

**Communion Music      Banquet      Morris  
"Here at this table, we're welcomed by name;  
all are invited, each seat is the same.  
Serving, receiving, and eating the feast  
humbles the haughty and honors the least."  
(Words: Adam M. L. Tice, b. 1979; © GIA Publications, Inc.)**

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION

*We give thanks, almighty God,*

*that you have refreshed us at your table*

*by granting us the presence of Jesus 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; through Jesus Christ our Savior.*

*Amen.*

\* Hymn of Departure

Community of Christ

#314

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 musical notation is presented on two staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the hymn, with lyrics "Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja." written below it. Chords A, E, A, D, Bm, and E are indicated above the staff. The second staff contains the melody for the second line, with lyrics "Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja." written below it. Chords A, C#7, F#m, Bm, E7sus4 E7, and A are indicated above the staff.

\*Benediction

Postlude

Go Now Forth into the World

Forscutt

## Readings

### **First Reading Amos 5:21–24 (The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language)**

"I can't stand your religious meetings.  
I'm fed up with your conferences and conventions.  
I want nothing to do with your religion projects,  
your pretentious slogans and goals.  
I'm sick of your fund-raising schemes,  
your public relations and image making.  
I've had all I can take of your noisy ego-music.  
When was the last time you sang to me?  
Do you know what I want?  
I want justice—oceans of it.  
I want fairness—rivers of it.  
That's what I want. That's all I want.

### **Gospel Reading Luke 6:17-26 (NRSV)**

Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon.  
They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.  
And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.  
Then he looked up at his disciples and said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.  
"Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. "Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.  
"Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man.  
Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.  
"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.  
"Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. "Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

"Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

### **Continuing Testament – By Diana Butler Bass**

The sense of the Beatitudes is not "If you are poor, God will bless you" or "If you do nice things for the poor, God will bless you." Nor is it "Be happy for poverty." Instead, "Blessed are the poor" could be read, "God privileges the poor." If you are poor, you are favored by God. God's gifts are with you.

This would have shocked Jesus's hearers on that day long ago. Blessing was beyond the reach of everyday people. "The blessed" in Greek actually became interchangeable with "the gods" and "the elite" and meant something like "those worthy of honor." Thus, the "the blessed" were the big shots of the ancient world, the upper crust, those who lived above all the worries of normal existence. The poor, "the losers," had to live with shame. Even back then, the blessed were the rich, not the poor.

In the Roman Empire, the world in which the Beatitudes were first preached, the richer and more powerful you were, the more valor and virtue you possessed, the closer you were to the emperor at the top of the social hierarchy, the more blessed you were, and the more blessings you could (if you chose to) bestow on those beneath you.

When Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor," he overturned the hierarchical structure of blessing. The Beatitudes move blessing from a feeling — happiness — to a social ethic of radical equality. God gives gifts to everyone, but most especially to the vulnerable and those at the bottom of society. The rich, the sated, the mirthful, the proud have a very hard time understanding this. Gifts are not only for the few, but wildly distributed for all.

And the people at the bottom? History's losers? God's favor resides with them. God has uniquely blessed them. What is the proper response to this? Gratitude. Blessing is an invitation to give thanks — and a vision of a very different sort of world.

## **Announcements:**

**BUCC Pasta Fundraising Dinner-** Tonight at 4:00pm-6:00pm in Pilgrim Hall. Advanced Ticket sales can be purchased for \$10/pp (children under 6 free) from Armand Eusano (apeusano@gmail.com, 216-469-11359), or Diane Gressley (digressley@gmail.com, 440-417-2675) Sign-up sheet will be posted in Narthex, rear lobby, and Pilgrim Hall. Friends and family welcome. Volunteers would be gratefully appreciated for set-up, serving, clean-up, and to provide Desserts.

**MARDI GRAS-** Plan on joining us for incredible New Orleans-style music and a festive potluck on Sunday, March 2. Sign up to bring your best potluck dishes, Creole or otherwise, with Kathy Smith or Mary Kidd following worship. Fellowship will provide the King Cake dessert: as you know, whoever finds the baby hidden in the cake is believed to have increased luck and prosperity in the new year. Best of luck to all!

**Soup Supper-** Our annual Ash Wednesday soup supper will be held March 5 beginning at 6:30 with the service beginning at 7. We are looking for two more soups, including a vegetarian option for approximately 50 guests. An 18 bean soup has already been committed. Attendees with the last names, beginning with the letter A-L can bring bread. M-Z will bring bread for Maundy Thursday. We will have juice, soda and the usual coffee and tea to accompany the meal. Please contact David Pastor at ridave@hotmail.com or 440.552.4403 to commit to making soup or with any questions.

**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!



**Flowers-** The flowers today are dedicated to the memory of Cliff Stenzel by Pat Rehm and Carol Miller

## THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR includes the following

Today	4:00 pm - Pasta Fundraising Dinner in Pilgrim Hall
Tue. Feb 18	8:15 am – “Holy Grounds” at Panera 6:00 pm – AA “Love & Tolerance” (Pilgrim Hall) 7:30 pm – Communication & Outreach
Wed. Feb 19	11:00 am - Mindfulness & Meditation 6:00 pm – Braver Angels
Thur. Feb 20	5:30 pm – Youth Choir-Per Distributed Schedule 7:00 pm - Choir Practice

**PRIVACY MATTERS-** Our services are broadcast live online, and recordings of services are available for replay and sharing. That allows us to expand our outreach, but it also brings additional concerns. Please keep in mind: Children who come up for the “Time with Young Worshippers” will be seen and heard online. By permitting your child to come forward, be aware that this implicitly gives the church permission to share their participation online.

We are glad to include your prayer intentions in our communal prayer. But avoid disclosing personal medical information without permission. With

that in mind, please either:

Ask permission to publicly share their health information in our prayers, OR  
Avoid details or keep anonymity by the way you phrase your prayer.

If you sit in the first few pews, you will be visible online. If you prefer to avoid being seen online, avoid those pews. But if you don't mind, please consider migrating to the front pews. When our videos show empty pews, the sanctuary looks vacant even when it is full. So, please populate those first pews to ensure that our online presence accurately depicts the vibrant and growing congregation that we truly are.





### February 16th, 2025

Early Usher:	Evelyn Seager
Late Usher:	Mark Lehman
Greeter:	Lori Molesky
Reader:	Rose Kaval
Flowers:	Carol Miller
Counters:	Marjorie Culver Janet Renovetz
A/V:	David Pastor
Snacks:	Sherrill Witt
Set Up/Serve:	Carole Snider
Clean Up:	Carole Snider Sherrill Witt
Snow Herder:	<b>Volunteers Needed</b>
Communion Bread:	Kathy Pastor

### February 23rd, 2025

Early Usher:	<b>Volunteers Needed</b>
Late Usher:	<b>Volunteers Needed</b>
Greeter:	Lori Molesky
Reader:	Jill Zedan
Flowers:	<b>Volunteers Needed</b>
Counters:	Marjorie Culver Janet Renovetz
A/V:	<b>Volunteers Needed</b>
Snack:	Jenn Elting
Set Up/Serve:	Jenn Elting
Clean Up:	Sherrill Witt
Snow Herder:	Wes Novak



The sanctuary art this week is Claude Monet-  
The Magpie (Between 1868 and 1869)

Attendance last Sunday, February 9, 2024 – Adults: 46; Kids: 13; Online: 47; Total: 106  
Next week's scripture readings will be, **Genesis 45:3-11, 15** and **Luke 6:27-38**