



# Brecksville

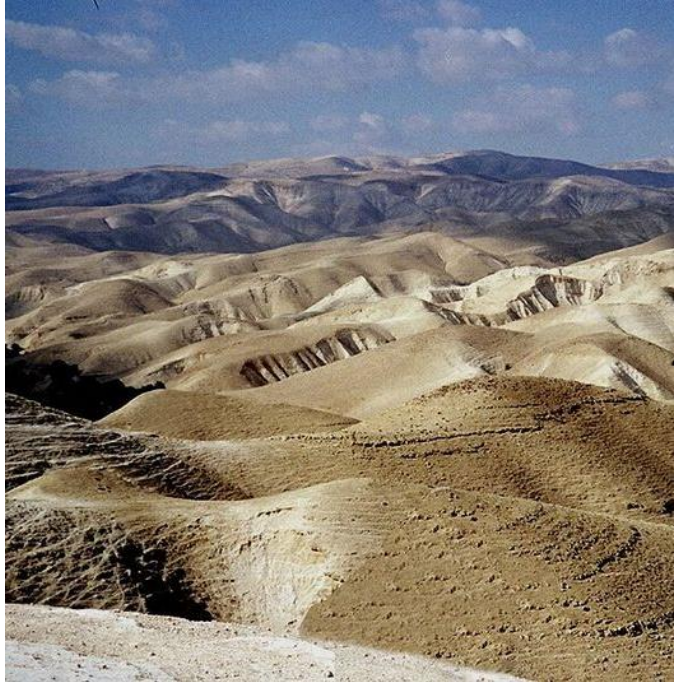
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# United Church of Christ

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

*"Pain insists upon  
being attended to.  
God whispers to us  
in our pleasures,  
speaks in our  
consciences, but  
shouts in our pains. It  
is God's  
megaphone to  
rouse a deaf world."*

— C.S. Lewis



**Photo: The Judean Desert -where Jesus fasted and prayed**

**First Sunday in Lent, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 • 10:00 AM**

**Director of Music**

• David Debick

**Financial Secretary**

• Joy Garapic

Ministers – All of Our Members

**Pastor**

• John King

**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.

**\*\*LARGE PRINT BULLETINS AVAILIABLE UPON REQUEST\*\***

**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!**

# First Sunday in Lent

## Sunday March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### Prelude

### Be Still and Know

Bell

"Be still and know that I am God and there is none beside me.  
I am the one who calls you my friends. I am the one whose love never fails.  
I am the one who says 'follow me.'"

(Music by John L. Bell, b. 1949; © 1988 & 1998 WGRG, Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc.)

### Welcome & Announcements

### Silent Meditation



*"One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life: That word is love."  
— Sophocles*



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

*\* Please Stand as you are able*

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

One: We may be entering this season like deadwood, dry from pain and injustices.

**ALL: And yet, God is still hydrating our spirits.**

One: We may be wandering, feeling as if we have no direction.

**ALL: And yet, God is guiding us in the wilderness.**

One: We may be fearful, wondering what comes next.

**ALL: And yet, God is surrounding us with peace.**

One: We may begin our Lenten journey spiritually arid, aimless, and anxious.

**ALL: But the Spirit of Strength will never leave our side.**

Hymn of Praise

Forty Days and Forty Nights

#205

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

Divine Sojourner,

As we wander far into the wilderness, may your light sustain us. May the questions that fill our minds with doubt drift away into the sands of the journey. May we dig within our souls to remove the prejudices deep within us. However we wander in this season, may your Holy Glow refocus our attention on our relationship with you and the ways we connect with our siblings. Amen.

**Lenten Prayer of Reflection, Repentance and Growth**

**ALL:** God of the Road, we journey together into the wilderness again. In this time filled with new spiritual practices and studies, our minds will be “tested.” Doubts will creep in as we seek your presence. At times, we will slide away from our responsibilities to care for our neighbors.

**ONE:** Will hurtful words from others taunt us, and inhibit our growth with you? Will negative images in our minds draw us away from our practices? Will we snooze to the needs of this world and ignore the pain in our communities?

**ALL:** Deliver us from the temptations of this world and the tests that we impose upon ourselves. Amen.

**\*Pastor's Prayer**

**\*Gathering Song:                      Gathered Here (sung twice)**

742

*Text and music: Phil Porter, 1990*

The musical notation is written on two staves in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and suitable for a round. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff contains the first two measures, and the second staff contains the next two measures. The lyrics are: 'Gath-ered here in the mys-tery of this hour, gath-ered here in one strong bod - y, gath-ered here in the strug-gle and the power, Spir - it draw near.'

Gath-ered here in the mys-tery of this hour, gath-ered here in one strong  
bod - y, gath-ered here in the strug-gle and the power, Spir - it draw near.

*This chant may be sung as a round.*

## **Readings**

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

**First Reading: - 1 Kings 19:11-13**

**Gospel Reading: - Luke 4:1-13 (NRSV)**

**Continuing Testament: Life Of Pi, Yann Martel (p. 54). HarperCollins.  
Kindle Edition**

Time with  
Young Worshipers

**Anthem                      Turn My Heart, O God    Haugen**

Refrain: Turn my heart, O God. Turn my heart, O turn my heart.

Take my pain and brokenness; shape my life for you.

Come and turn my heart, O God.

1. From all that leads to death, to seek the way of life:

Come and turn my heart, O God.

From all that leads to sin, to holiness and grace:

Come and turn my heart, O God.

From all despair and grief, to hope of life renewed:

Come and turn my heart, O God. (Refrain)

2. From bitterness and hate, to tenderness and care: Come and turn...

From selfishness and greed, to generous caring love: Come and turn...

From all deceit and lies, to faithfulness and truth: Come and turn... (Refrain)

3. O let your Spirit come and cleanse my inmost heart: Come and turn...

Give back to me the joy of walking in your way: Come and turn...

O fill me with your grace that I might sing your praise: Come and turn...  
(Refrain)

4. O bring me home to you, Most Holy, Blessed One: Come and turn...

And let my spirit rest within your loving heart: Come and turn...

For you alone can raise my weary soul to life: Come and turn... (Refrain)

(Words and Music: Marty Haugen, b. 1950; © 2002, GIA Publications, Inc.)

**Sermon: "The Still Small Voice"** by Pastor John King

**Hymn of Reflection**

**"Take Up Your Cross," the Savior Said**

**#204**

## ***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, Jan Wardlaw, Kathleen Stewart, Kathy Repko, Lois Lorenzo, The family of Cliff Stenzel, Caroline Chandler, "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]**

Holy Stream of Gifts, we share our gratitude for all of our fruits – from our possessions to knowledge and from our time to abilities. May our "best" be something that we do not hoard but that we freely give away. As we embrace this season of fasting and reflection, may we recognize the best of our talents, treasures, and time and share with God and neighbor. Amen.

#### **\* Hymn of Departure**

**Dear God, Embracing Humankind    #502**

## Carrying the Light of Christ into the World (Acolyte)

### \* Circle of Community

## Hear Our Prayer, O God

George Whelpton, 1897



### \*Benediction

### Postlude

### Ricercare G. Gabrieli (1557-1612)

## Readings

### First Reading 1 Kings 19:11-13

Fleeing for his life, Elijah came to a cave and spent the night there. Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by."

Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the

entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

### **Gospel Reading Luke 4:1-13 (NRSV)**

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness,

where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished.

The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread."

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world.

And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please.

If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours."

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here,

for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,'

and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

### **Continuing Testament Life Of Pi, Yann Martel (p. 54). HarperCollins. Kindle Edition**

That a god should put up with adversity, I could understand. The gods of Hinduism face their fair share of thieves, bullies, kidnappers and usurpers... Reversals of fortune, yes. Treachery, yes. But humiliation? Death? I couldn't imagine Lord Krishna consenting to be stripped naked, whipped, mocked, dragged through the streets and, to top it off, crucified—and at the hands of mere humans, to boot. I'd never



heard of a Hindu god dying... Devils and monsters did, as did mortals, by the thousands and millions—that's what they were there for. Matter, too, fell away. But divinity should not be blighted by death. It's wrong... Why would God wish that upon Himself ? Why not leave death to the mortals? Why make dirty what is beautiful, spoil what is perfect?

Love. That was Rev. Martin's answer.

There is the story of Vishnu incarnated as Vamana the dwarf. He asks of demon king Bali only as much land as he can cover in three strides. Bali laughs at this runt of a suitor and his puny request. He consents. Immediately Vishnu takes on his full cosmic size. With one stride he covers the earth, with the second the heavens, and with the third he boots Bali into the netherworld...

That is God as God should be. With shine and power and might. Such as can rescue and save and put down evil. This Son, on the other hand, who goes hungry, who suffers from thirst, who gets tired, who is sad, who is anxious, who is heckled and harassed, who has to put up with followers who don't get it and opponents who don't respect Him—what kind of a god is that? It's a god on too human a scale, that's what.

There are miracles, yes, mostly of a medical nature, a few to satisfy hungry stomachs; at best a storm is tempered, water is briefly walked upon. If that is magic, it is minor magic, on the order of card tricks. Any Hindu god can do a hundred times better.

This Jesus is a god who spent most of His time telling stories, talking. This Son is a god who walked, a pedestrian god—and in a hot place, at that—with a stride like any human stride, the sandal reaching just above the rocks along the way; and when He splurged on transportation, it was a regular donkey. This Son is a god who died in three hours, with moans, gasps and laments. What kind of a god is that? What is there to inspire in this Son?

Love, said Rev. Martin.

Love

## Announcements:

**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!



**The Social Justice Ministry** is collecting the following items to distribute to people living in homeless camps in Northeast Ohio, and to cancer patients going through chemotherapy. We are working with the Little Annie's Hope Train organization. Over the next several weeks you will see a bin on the pew bench at the parking lot entrance door.

<https://www.facebook.com/LittleAnniesHopeTrain> has pictures and other information. If you have questions, contact Claudia Griesmer.

### **Blessing Bags Distributed in Homeless Camps**

Personal Sized Toiletries (what you get from hotel rooms)  
Travel size dental floss and toothpaste  
Deodorant  
Mini hand sanitizers  
Small combs  
Chapstick  
Kleenex packets  
Individually wrapped toilet paper  
Wrapped plastic silverware (what you get with carry-out food)  
NEW adult heavy socks  
Inexpensive manual can openers  
Canned items with pull tabs (but NO cream soups)

### **Chemotherapy Packages for Cancer Patients**

Puzzle books  
Kleenex  
Journals  
Spearmints  
Pens  
Saltine crackers  
Ginger tea

**THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR** includes the following

Tue. Mar 11	8:15 am – “Holy Grounds” at Panera 6:00 pm – AA “Love & Tolerance” (Pilgrim Hall) 6:30 pm – Social Justice
Wed. Mar 12	11:00 am - Mindfulness & Meditation 4:00 pm – Stewardship/Leadership Development 7:00 pm – Council
Thur. Mar 13	10:30 am – Called to Care Meeting 5:30 pm – Youth Choir-Per Distributed Schedule 7:00 pm - Choir Practice

## 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.



**The Ash Wednesday soup/supper** was attended by approximately 30 people. Thank you to those who brought bread, set up, served, and cleaned up. A special thanks goes to those who made the delicious soups, Katie King, Sherrill Witt, Diane Gressley, and Sue Stenzel.



### March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Early Usher: Jill Zedan  
Late Usher: Diane Gressley  
Greeter: Lori Molesky  
Reader: **Volunteers Needed**  
Flowers: Sue Stenzel  
Counters: Marjorie Culver  
Janet Renovetz  
A/V: **Volunteers Needed**  
Snacks: **Volunteers Needed**  
Set Up/Serve: **Volunteers Needed**  
Clean Up: **Volunteers Needed**  
Snow Herder: **Volunteers Needed**

### March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Early Usher: Diane Gressley  
Late Usher: Sue Stenzel  
Greeter: **Volunteers Needed**  
Reader: Rose Kaval  
Flowers: Katie MacKeigan King  
Counters: Marjorie Culver  
Janet Renovetz  
A/V: David Pastor  
Snack: Jenn Elting  
Set Up/Serve: Jenn Elting  
Clean Up: **Volunteers Needed**  
Snow Herder: **Volunteers Needed**  
Communion  
Bread: **Volunteers Needed**



The sanctuary art this week is Miya Ando Fuji  
Iro 2019

Attendance last Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 – Adults: 62; Kids: 7; Online: 51; Total: 120  
Next week's scripture readings will be, **1 Samuel 3:1-10** and **Luke 13:29-35**