



Brecksville

United Church of Christ

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

*"You may write me down in
history
with your bitter, twisted lies,
You may trod me in the very dirt,
but still, like dust, I'll rise.
You may shoot me with your
words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your
hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise."*

-Maya Angelou



Fifth Sunday in Lent, April 6th, 2025 • 10:00 AM

Pastor
• John King

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.

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

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!

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Sunday April 6th, 2025

Prelude Lord Jesus, Who Through Forty Days

Welcome & Announcements

Silent Meditation



"There is a force of love moving through the universe that holds us fast and will never let us go." - Julian of Norwich



Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able*

***CALL TO PRAYER:**

One: The prophet asks: Can our soul-weary bones live again?

ALL: O God, you know!

One We ask: Can we dance again after mourning, loss and grief?

ALL: O God, you know!

One: The gift is sure and unmistakable:

ALL: God's breath poured out as new life for weary souls!

One: Let us celebrate the gift of God's new life,

ALL: And come to worship God in laughter and dancing!

Hymn of Praise

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

#292

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

Compassionate God, the wind of your Spirit is the very sign of life for all who long for you.

One breath from you and we are rescued from the arid valley of dry bones, given muscles and sinews and joy with which to praise you, and filled with the holy hope you grant to all your faithful children.

Let our whole lives be filled with the life-breath of the Spirit, that what has lain dormant may burst into bloom, and what looks to us to be death may be revealed as but rest before the emergence of new life. Amen.

***Pastor's Prayer**

***Gathering Song:**



Readings

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

First Reading: - Ezekiel 37:1-14

Gospel Reading: - John 11:1-44

Continuing Testament: Og Mandino – The Greatest Miracle in the World

Time with Young Worshipers

Sermon: by Pastor John King

Anthem

Lead Us from Death to Life

#581

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND RESTORATION [UNISON]:

Righteous God, you made us in your divine image and yet we often turn to the gazes of others to see ourselves. We yield to the temptation of comparison and measure ourselves according to standards not made for us. You declared us good, and we question your judgment. We turn from your truth and receive the lies of the enemy of our souls that devalue and condemn even though your grace is sufficient for us. Mend the brokenness within us. Fortify us with your love, hope, and vision. Shield us from stagnation and despair. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

The Church at Prayer

Gayle & Allison Colbert, Sue Renovetz, Joe Blasko, Jon Thompson, Marilyn Pay, Frances Posey, Mac Hoppel, Bee Ortiz, Terry Heiman, Cindy Burton, Elizabeth Gadus, Jan Wardlaw, Kathleen Stewart, Kathy Repko, Lois Lorenzo, The family of Cliff Stenzel, Jonathan Langham, "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]**

**Spirit of Life, we offer our lives with these gifts
that they may become a fertile plain of green life
and strengthened hope for all who live in the valley of dry bones.
May the wind of your love carry these gifts far beyond us
to the places most in need of your compassionate grace.
We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

Communion

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

Prayer of Thanksgiving after Communion

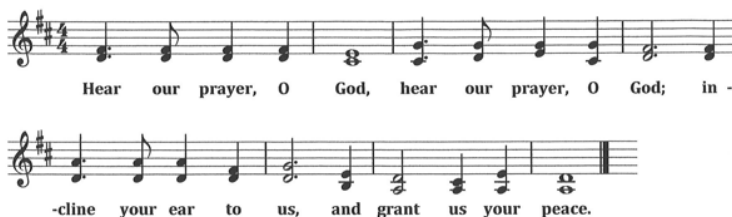
**Eternal God, you have called your people from east and west and north
and south to feast at the table of Jesus Christ. We thank you for Christ's
presence and for the spiritual food of Christ's body and blood. By the
power of your Holy Spirit, keep us faithful to your will. Go with us to the
streets, to our homes, and to our places of labor and leisure that whether
we are gathered or scattered, we may be the servant church of the
servant Christ, in whose name we rejoice to pray. Amen.**

*** Hymn of Departure My Hope is Built on Nothing Less #403**

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World (Acolyte)

*** Circle of Community Hear Our Prayer, O God**

George Whelpton, 1897



***Benediction**

Postlude

Readings

First Reading Ezekiel 37:1-14 (The Inclusive Bible)

The hand of YHWH was upon me, and it carried me away by the Spirit of YHWH and set me down in a valley—a valley full of bones. God made me walk up and down among them. And I saw that there was a vast number of bones lying there in the valley, and they were very dry. God asked me, "Mere mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "Only you know that, Sovereign YHWH."

And God said, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: 'Dry bones, hear the word of YHWH! Sovereign YHWH says to these bones: I am going to breathe life into you. I will fasten sinews on you, clothe you with flesh, cover you with skin, and give you breath. And you will live; and you will know that I am Sovereign YHWH.'"

So I prophesied as I was commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and all the bones came together, bone to matching bone. As I watched, sinews appeared on them, flesh clothed them, and skin covered them. But there was no breath in them.

Then God said to me, "Prophecy to the wind; prophecy, mere mortal, and say to it: 'Thus says Sovereign YHWH: Approach from the four winds, Breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.'"

I prophesied as I was commanded, and breath came into them; they came alive, and stood up on their feet—a vast multitude.

Then God said to me, "Mere mortal, these bones are the whole House of Israel. The people keep saying, 'Our bones are dry, our hope is gone, and we are doomed.' Prophecy, therefore, and say to them, 'Thus says Sovereign YHWH: I am going to open your graves and raise you up from the dead, my people. I will return you to the land of Israel. When I open your graves and raise you up, you, my people, will know that I am YHWH. Then I will put my Spirit into you and you will return to life.

Gospel Reading John 11:1-44 (NRSV)

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill.

So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus,

after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?"

Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world.

But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them."

After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him."

The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right."

Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep.

Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead.

For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."

Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days.

Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away,

and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home.

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.

But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him."

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,

and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."

And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him.

Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him.

The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Teacher, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.

He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus began to weep.

So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.

Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days."

Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Abba, I thank you for having heard me.

I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me."

When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Continuing Testament From- Og Mandino – The Greatest Miracle in the World

I placed my hand upon you, once more, and endowed you with powers unknown to any other creature in the universe, even unto this day.

I gave you the power to think.

I gave you the power to love.

I gave you the power to will.

I gave you the power to laugh.

I gave you the power to imagine.

I gave you the power to create.

I gave you the power to plan.

I gave you the power to speak.

I gave you the power to pray.

My pride in you knew no bounds. You were my ultimate creation, my greatest miracle. A complete living being.

I gave you... the power to choose. You had the power to choose to degenerate into the lowest forms of life, but you also had the power, out of your soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine. I have never withdrawn your great power, the power to choose.

What have you done with this tremendous force? Look at yourself. Think of the choices you have made in your life and recall, now, those bitter moments when you would fall to your knees if only you had the opportunity to choose again. What is past is past...

Use wisely, your power of choice.

Choose to love ... rather than hate.

Choose to laugh ... rather than cry.

Choose to create ... rather than destroy.

Choose to persevere ... rather than quit.

Choose to praise ... rather than gossip.

Choose to heal ... rather than wound.

Choose to give ... rather than steal.

Choose to act ... rather than procrastinate.

Choose to grow ... rather than rot.

Choose to pray ... rather than curse.

Choose to live ... rather than die.

Announcements:

From Sue, Jennifer, Erika and CJ- "To our church family, Many thanks for your expressions of sympathy in the passing of Cliff in February. We had a small ceremony with just us, but we know there is so much more to Cliff's life. With that in mind we want to extend an invitation to join us and "Celebrate Cliff", Saturday, April 12th at 1:00 PM, here at BUCC. Following the celebration, we will gather in Pilgrim Hall"

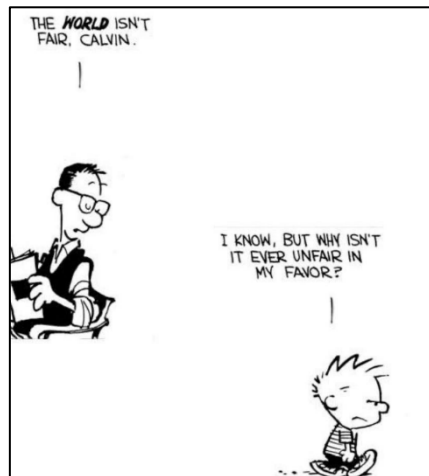
Open Invite to sing the "Hallelujah Chorus" on Easter! - We've decided to try something new this year. Several choir members have expressed interest in singing the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's *Messiah* on Easter Sunday. Many people are already familiar with this masterpiece. If you're interested in singing it with BUCC's choir on Easter (April 20), you are cordially invited - family and friends included - to join us! We'll rehearse the

"Hallelujah Chorus" 4 times before Easter: Thursdays March 27, April 3 and 10 at 7 PM, and Saturday April 19 at 11 AM. We'll also practice on Easter morning at 9:15 before service begins. If you're interested in singing with us, try to come to at least 2 of these practices so you're comfortable singing on Easter. Recordings of each vocal part will be provided. High school students are welcome to participate.

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR includes the following

TODAY	11:30 am – Membership 12:00 pm - Lenten Series Sikh Temple 4220 Broadview Road Richfield Ohio 44286
Mon. Apr 7	7:00 pm – Facilities Meeting
Tue. Apr 8	8:15 am – “Holy Grounds” at Panera 6:00 pm – AA “Love & Tolerance” (Pilgrim Hall) 6:30 pm – Social Justice
Wed. Apr 9	7:00 pm – Council
Thur. Apr 10	10:30 am – Called to care 7:00 pm - Choir Practice
Fri. Apr 11	1:00 pm – Lenten Series Unity Islamic Center 10503 Valley View Rd, Northfield
Sat Apr 12	1:00 pm – Cliff Stenzel Memorial

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.





April 6th, 2025

Early Usher:	Volunteers Needed
Late Usher:	Volunteers Needed
Greeter:	Lori Molesky
Reader:	Volunteers Needed
Flowers:	Annette Pedersen
Counters:	Marjorie Culver Kathy Pastor
A/V:	David Pastor
Snacks:	Sue Stenzel Armand Eusano
Set Up/Serve:	Sue Stenzel Carol Miller
Clean Up:	Sue Stenzel

April 13th, 2025

Early Usher:	Volunteers Needed
Late Usher:	Volunteers Needed
Greeter:	Volunteers Needed
Reader:	Jim Duffy
Flowers:	Peg Duffy
Counters:	Marjorie Culver Kathy Pastor
A/V:	Fred Pedersen
Snack:	Volunteers Needed
Set Up/Serve:	Volunteers Needed
Clean Up:	Volunteers Needed



The sanctuary art this week is "Elysian" by Cody Cobb.

Attendance last Sunday, March 30th, 2025 – Adults: 40; Kids: 6; Online: 37; Total: 83
Next week's scripture readings will be, **Philippians 2:5-11** and **Luke 22:14 - 23:56**