



Brecksville

United Church of Christ

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

*I believe in the sun
even when it's not
shining.
I believe in love even
when I feel it not
I believe in God even
when he is silent.*

*Prayer found on the
wall of a
concentration camp
in World War II*



Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost, September 21st, 2025 • 10:00 AM

Financial Secretary

• Joy Garapic

Office Manager

• Miranda Lacefield

Music Director

• Rob Keshock

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!

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday September 21st, 2025

Prelude **Jesus, Lover of My Soul**

Welcome & Announcements

Silent Meditation

“Divine Love,
the heart of hearts,
abounds in every grain of being,
from atom’s gleam to starry sky,
from darkest pain to brightest joy.
Unceasing love kindles life—
a royal promise sealed with the kiss of peace.”
~ Hildegard of Bingen, (1098- 1179)

Gathering in God's Presence

* Please Stand as you are able

***CALL TO PRAYER** (Inspired Psalm 113)

One: Praise the Holy One! From the rising of the sun until its setting, the name of God deserves our praise!

All: Who is like our God...seated on high?

One: Praise the Most High, who observes all things and remembers the poor and those in need.

All: God our Righteousness raises the lowly and levels the exalted.

One: Praise the Righteous One, who is just and mighty, who repairs and redeems.

All: The Redeemer pours out love and justice, compassion and conviction, hope and salvation. Praise the Holy One!

Hymn of Praise

Surely No One Can Be Safer

#487

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

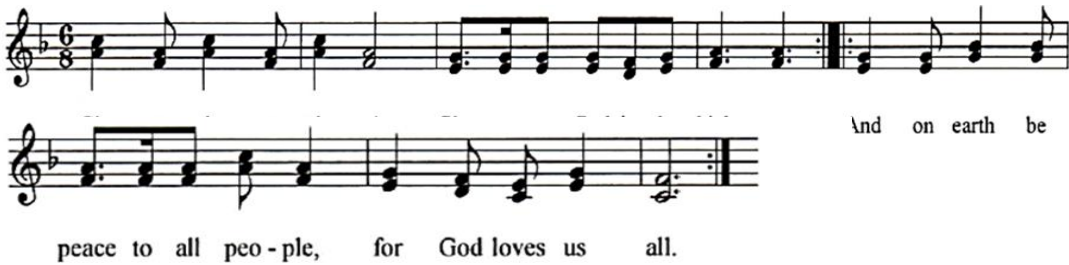
Great God, who gathers us together in spirit and in truth, sanctify our time together. Grant us wisdom and discernment. Open our hearts to receive and to give. Be glorified in our worship and the transformation that moves us forward as your people. In your glorious and precious name, we pray. Amen.

***Assurance of Grace**

***Gathering Song:**

Glory to God

Pablo Sosa 1988



Readings

(See back of bulletin for complete readings)

First Reading: - Psalm 113

Gospel Reading: - Luke 16: 1-13

Continuing Testament From The Selfless Way of Christ by Henri Nouwen



Sermon: by Rev. Tom Gerstenlauer

Anthem

God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak

The Church at Prayer

Gayle & Allison Colbert, Jon Thompson, Marilyn Pay, Frances Posey, Mac Hoppel, Bee Ortiz, Cindy Burton, Elizabeth Gadus, Jan Wardlaw, Kathleen Stewart, Kathy Repko, Lois Lorenzo, Jonathan Langham, Tony Cuninghame, Chad Sproul, Dot Bailey, Jane Cribbs, Joanne Cook, Kathy Ford, Midge Cassidy, Pat Rehm, Kate Benedict, Marge Culver, "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]

Abundant God, may the gifts we give along with your miraculous power be sufficient to the needs of the community and a blessing to the world that you love. Amen.

* Hymn of Departure You Servants of God, Your Sovereign Proclaim #305

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

* Circle of Community

Two staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. Chords are indicated above the notes.

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

Lyrics: 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.

*Benediction

Postlude

Born of God, Eternal Savior

#542

Readings

First Reading Psalm 113

Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD; praise the name of the LORD.

Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time on and forevermore. From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the LORD is to be praised.

The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens.

Who is like the LORD our God, who is seated on high,

who looks far down on the heavens and the earth?

He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people.

He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. Praise the LORD!

Gospel Reading Luke 16:1-13

Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property.

So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.'

Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg.

I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.'

So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.'

Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.'

And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light.

And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much.

If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?

And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own?



No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

Continuing Testament From The Selfless Way of Christ by Henri Nouwen

"Is it possible to follow Christ while fulfilling the demands of the world, to listen to Christ while paying equal attention to others, to carry Christ's cross while carrying many other burdens as well? Jesus certainly appears to draw a very sharp distinction. 'No one can be the slave of two masters' (Matthew 6:24), he insisted, and he did not hesitate to confront us with the uncompromising demands of his call: 'It is a narrow gate and hard road that leads to life... Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me.' (Matthew 7:14, 10:37)

These challenging words are not meant only for a few of Jesus' followers who have so-called 'special vocation'. Rather, they are for all who consider themselves Christians.

Announcements:

 **Nursery Attendant Needed**  The Nursery Attendant will provide safe, secure, and nurturing care for children ages 0 through 4 years old during church services and events. This individual may also assist Miss Mindy in the classroom as needed.

The position pays \$50/Sunday. The hours are 9:45 am until the children are secured by their parents after the service.

If you or someone you know is interested in this important ministry role, please contact the church office at BUCCoffice23@gmail.com or 440-526-4364 or speak with a member of the Christian Education Committee.

Let's continue to provide a warm and welcoming space for our youngest members to grow in God's love!

Neighbors in Need- On Sunday October 5, we will collect a special offering: Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. The Neighbors in Need offering supports ministries of justice and compassion, with one-third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries and the remaining two-thirds supporting UCC justice ministries. In 2025 the Neighbors in Need Offering supported 26 grant recipients across the UCC who were engaged in projects of direct service and advocacy. Thank you for your support and generosity!

Colony Cupboard- We are continuing to support the Colony Cupboard! This is a resource for students at Brecksville Broadview Hts High School who need essentials and school supplies. We donated a trunk full of supplies recently and they are grateful for our continued support. Based on student needs for the new school year, below is the updated list of supplies they are requesting:

Markers, highlighters, binders, graph paper, & headphones

Donations are collected in the back of the church.

BBH pride is sponsoring a great education event at the Brecksville Community Center. Thursday, September 25 at 6pm

A Conversation on Transgender Truth: The Science and The Journey

Join us in a non-judgemental space to better understand the issues, challenges and successes along the transition journey. Our transgender friends have never needed understanding more than now, please attend with an open mind and heart.

Conversation led by:

- Local Psychologist specializing in gender non-conforming adults
- MetroHealth Physician practicing Family Medicine and Gender Care
- Akron Children's Hospital Adolescent Medicine Specialist
- Motivational Speaker and Entrepreneur discussing issues within the transgender community, from a lived experience

Register today! (Registration is mandatory for this event). Visit:

<https://bbhpride.org/pride-events/events/transgender-truth/>

Advent Devotional - The Spiritual Life Ministry is looking ahead to one of our most beloved BUCC traditions, the annual congregation-written Advent Devotional. In order to compile the booklet, please sign up after worship. Simply choose one of the pre-selected scriptures that speaks to you, and tell us why in a couple of paragraphs. Many people also choose to close with a one or two sentence prayer. We especially love to hear how it connects you and/or your family to a certain time or place. You'll be amazed by the stories your fellow members have to share! If you cannot attend worship in person, simply call Miranda in the office during the week and she can help you out. We are asking for your devotion to be submitted to the office at BUCCOffice23@gmail.com by OCTOBER 31.



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!

Share Your Inspiration – As a congregational church, input from you, the congregation, is essential. 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 the office. (buccoffice23@gmail.com)

Sharing Good News -At the beginning of the Sunday service you are welcome to share announcements. Please keep these brief by avoiding details. Share the essentials, then share how people can learn more details (e.g., see the bulletin announcement or talk to somebody). Also, feel free to share good news such as birthdays, anniversaries, retirement, awards, etc.

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 Worshipers" 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.

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR includes the following

Tue. Sep 23 6:00 pm – AA "Love & Tolerance" (Pilgrim Hall)

Wed. Sep 24 11:00 am – Mindfulness and Meditation

Thu. Sep 25 7:00 pm – Choir Practice



Volunteers:

September 21st, 2025

Early Usher:	Joe Willson
Late Usher:	Volunteers Needed
Greeter:	Lori Molesky
Reader:	Sherrill Witt
Flowers:	Jan Renovetz
Counters:	Jan Renovetz Volunteers Needed
A/V:	Betsey Wilson
Snack:	Volunteers Needed
Set up:	Sherrill Witt
Clean Up:	Sherrill Witt

September 28th, 2025

Early Usher:	Volunteers Needed
Late Usher:	Volunteers Needed
Greeter:	Volunteers Needed
Reader:	Volunteers Needed
Flowers:	Mary Kidd
Counters:	Jan Renovetz Sue Stenzel
A/V:	David Pastor
Snack:	Volunteers Needed
Set Up:	Volunteers Needed
Clean Up:	Volunteers Needed

Attendance last Sunday, September 14th, 2025 – Adults: 44; Kids: 10; Online: 13;
Additional Views: 9; Total: 76

Liturgy from Worship Ways

Notes

[illegible]