



Brecksville

United Church of Christ

23 Public Square • Brecksville • Ohio • 44141 • 440-526-4364
7th Sunday after Epiphany, February 23, 2025 • 10:00 AM

*“In times of
darkness, tend your
fire: it will give light
until the morning.”*

St. Brigid of Kildare



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!

7th Sunday after Epiphany

Sunday February 23rd, 2025

Prelude

We Are His Love Hallquist

Assisted by Percussion Group

Welcome & Announcements

Silent Meditation



"Everything that needs to be said has already been said. But, since no one was listening, everything must be said again." - André Gide



Gathering in God's Presence

** Please Stand as you are able*

***CALL TO PRAYER:**

One: Jesus, you call us together in this hour of prayer

ALL: Open our hearts to hear your world

One: Jesus you teach us the golden rule

ALL: We've heard it from our childhood, and yet we still struggle to treat others as we want to be treated.

One: Jesus, you challenge us to forgive, to judge not, to turn the other cheek

ALL: Yet we still find it hard to walk your path. We cling to the old ways.

One: Jesus in you alone we find the ways of light and life

ALL: Help us to discover again the power of your mercy and grace in our lives.

Hymn of Praise

Renew Your Church

#311

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

Holy One, you are deep within our world, calling us to join you in creating abundant life for all. Open our hearts to recognize you. Free us to trust your call and follow. Enable us to seek forgiveness and to forgive. Empower us to build the Kingdom of God, which makes all things new. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

***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: - Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Gospel Reading: - Luke 6:27-38

Continuing Testament: from Credo by William Sloane Coffin

Time with
Young Worshipers

Anthem

**Testify to Love Field/Pool/Van
Manen/Riekerk**

1. All the colors of the rainbow, all the voices of the wind,
every dream that reaches out, that reaches out to find where love begins,
every word of every story, every star in every sky,
every corner of creation lives to testify.

Refrain: For as long I shall live, I will testify to love.

I'll be a witness in the silences when words are not enough.

With every breath I take, I will give thanks to God above.

For as long as I shall live, I will testify to love.

2. From the mountains to the valley, from the rivers to the sea,
every hand that reaches out, every hand that reaches out to offer peace,
every simple act of mercy, every step to kingdom come,
all the hope in every heart will speak what love has done. (Refrains)

(Words and Music by Paul Field, Henk Pool, Ralph Van Manen, and Robert Riekerk;
arranged by Teena Chinn; © 1998 Windswept Pacific Ltd. and MCA Holland B.V.)

Sermon by Pastor John King

Hymn of Reflection

Your Ways Are Not Our Own

#170

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, "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]**

Accept these gifts, we humbly pray, O God. Let them give you honor and glory as we serve the needs of your people. And let the called and redeemed of God say, Amen

*** Hymn of Departure**

Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers

#397

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.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is written on a single line. Above the notes are chord symbols: A, E, A, D, Bm, and E. The lyrics 'Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja.' are written below the notes. The second staff also has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The melody is written on a single line. Above the notes are chord symbols: A, C#7, F#m, Bm, E7sus4, E7, and A. The lyrics 'Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja. Hal-le, hal-le, hal - le - lu - ja.' are written below the notes.

*Benediction

Postlude

Love Is the Answer

England Dan/J. F. Coley

“Diversity, my beloved, is often offensive, and if you are accustomed to privilege, equity might feel like oppression.”

Rev. Dr. Sen. Raphael Warnock

Readings

First Reading Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.

For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.

God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors.

So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay.

You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have.

I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.'

And he kissed all his brothers and wept with them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

Gospel Reading Luke 6:27-38 (NRSV)

"But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,

bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.

If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt.

Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again.

Do to others as you would have them do to you.

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them.

If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same.

If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return.

Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.

Be merciful, just as your God is merciful.

"Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven;

give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

Continuing Testament – from Credo by William Sloane Coffin

How are we to contrast Jesus' vision of things and the people's expectations? Are we to say he was a spiritual Messiah as opposed to a political one? Heaven forbid! That's the great... "cop-out" that will be proclaimed from pulpits all over the land today. Had Jesus been as nonpolitical as these pulpiteers, you can be sure the nails would never have grazed his palms. In the best prophetic tradition Jesus stood for the relief and protection of the poor and persecuted; for such use of the riches of creation that the world might be freed from famine, poverty, and disaster. And in the best prophetic tradition, he saw that the real troublemakers were not the ignorant and cruel, but the intelligent and corrupt. In contrast to so many of today's pulpiteers, Jesus knew that "Love your enemies" didn't mean "Don't make any!"

Announcements:

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: according to Spanish and French tradition, 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!



Come on Down!- If you have always dreamed of being in a studio audience, this could be your moment! Our services are broadcast live every week. But our camera placement usually only shows the first three pews. If those pews are empty, it appears that the whole church is empty – not a good look. So, consider sitting in those first few pews toward the center aisle. “Let your light shine!” Matthew 5:16

Sharing the 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.

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

Memorial Service- A memorial service for Cliff Stenzel will be held here at Brecksville UCC on Saturday, April 12, at 1:00 p.m.

Update- Gayle is improving in therapy but she (& most folks there) has a respiratory infection and the facility is requesting NO visitors for the next few weeks. She has appreciated the texts and cards (she has laryngitis so please don't call) and we thank everyone for your support. – Allison

Reminder- Please make sure doors are shut and latched when leaving the building. Especially in the winter, even a piece of salt can prevent it from closing properly.

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR includes the following

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|--------------|--|
| Tue. Feb 25 | 8:15 am – “Holy Grounds” at Panera
6:00 pm – AA “Love & Tolerance” (Pilgrim Hall) |
| Wed. Feb 26 | 11:00 am - Mindfulness & Meditation
7:00 pm – Stewardship/Leadership Development |
| 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.





February 23rd, 2025

Early Usher: Betsey Wilson
Late Usher: Joe Wilson
Greeter: Lori Molesky
Reader: Jill Zedan
Flowers: Danyel Esser
Counters: Marjorie Culver
Janet Renovetz
A/V: Tim Wallis
Snacks: Jenn Elting
Set Up/Serve: Jenn Elting
Clean Up: Sherrill Witt
Snow Herder: Wes Novak

March 2nd, 2025

Early Usher: Annette Pedersen
Late Usher: **Volunteers Needed**
Greeter: **Volunteers Needed**
Reader: Sherrill Witt
Flowers: **Volunteers Needed**
Counters: Marjorie Culver
Janet Renovetz
A/V: Fred Pedersen
Snack: **Volunteers Needed**
Set Up/Serve: **Volunteers Needed**
Clean Up: **Volunteers Needed**
Snow Herder: **Volunteers Needed**
Communion
Bread: **Volunteers Needed**



The sanctuary art this week is "Mist" by Gabriele Corno

Attendance last Sunday, February 16, 2024 – Adults: 36; Kids: 2; Online: 39; Total: 77
Next week's scripture readings will be, **Exodus 34:29-35** and **Luke 9:28-36**