

Brecksville

United Church of Christ

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

***Loving, Serving and Accepting All People
with God's Life-Changing Power***

***"I am unjust,
but I can strive
for justice. My
life's unkind,
but I can vote
for kindness. I,
the unloving,
say life should
be lovely. I,
that am blind,
cry out against
my blindness."
—poet Vachel
Lindsay***



Fourth Sunday of Lent

Sunday March 22, 2020 • 10:00 AM

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Pastor
• Allan Lane

Director of Music *Financial Secretary* *Ministers*
• David Debick • Joy Garapic All of our Members
Office Manager – Jeannette Kroeger

Affirmation of Welcome

We are an Open and Affirming Congregation, welcoming all of God's children.

If you are single, married, divorced, separated, or partnered,
You Are Welcome Here!

If you are Asian, Hispanic, Black, or White,
You Are Welcome Here!

If you are male, female, or transgender,
You Are Welcome Here!

If you are 3 days old, 30 years old, or 103 years old,
You Are Welcome Here!

*If you've never been in a church, if you are Buddhist, Roman Catholic, agnostic,
Or a life-long member of the UCC,*
You Are Welcome Here!

If you are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or pangender
You Are Welcome Here!

If you are fully abled, or a person with differing abilities,
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 and join us for refreshments in Pilgrim Hall downstairs following the service. If you are interested in learning more about our church, please speak to our pastor.

Large Print Bulletins are available. Simply ask an usher. Hearing difficulty? Please talk to any usher about a Personal Sound receiver available for your use. Pillows for back support are also available, if needed

Office Hours:

Mon., Tues., Wed., Thurs.: 9:00 - 12:00

Church Phone: 440-526-4364

e-mail: buccoh@sbcglobal.net – web address: www.BrecksvilleUCC.org

March 22, 2020 – Fourth Sunday of Lent

Meditation Music

“Cynicism masquerades as wisdom, but it is the furthest thing from it. Because cynics don’t learn anything. Because cynicism is a self-imposed blindness: a rejection of the world because we are afraid it will hurt us or disappoint us. Cynics always say ‘no.’ But saying ‘yes’ begins things. Saying ‘yes’ is how things grow.” –Stephen Colbert

Gathering in God’s Presence

** Please Stand as you are able.*

Prelude

I’ll Praise My Maker

Attr. Greiter

Bearing the Light of Peace

Bearing the Light of Christ

* Call to Worship

Leader: Fear is always hiding in the darkness: the darkness of not knowing what is to come; the darkness of rumors and reports of impending doom; the darkness of isolation and solitude amidst a global struggle for survival.

People: Fear loves the darkness, but God is light! Light to call us into a future where God already is; light passes on the good news of Jesus against every bad report; light maintains community and friendships in the midst of separation.

L: God said, “Let there be light!” And there was light, a light shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. Let us worship God!

* Hymn of Praise

O Come to Me, You Weary

Welsh hymn tune

"O come to me, you weary, and I will give you rest."

The blessed voice of Jesus, which comes to hearts oppressed!

It tells of benediction, of pardon, grace, and peace,
of joy that has no ending, of love which does not cease.

"O come to me, you wanderers, and I will give you light."

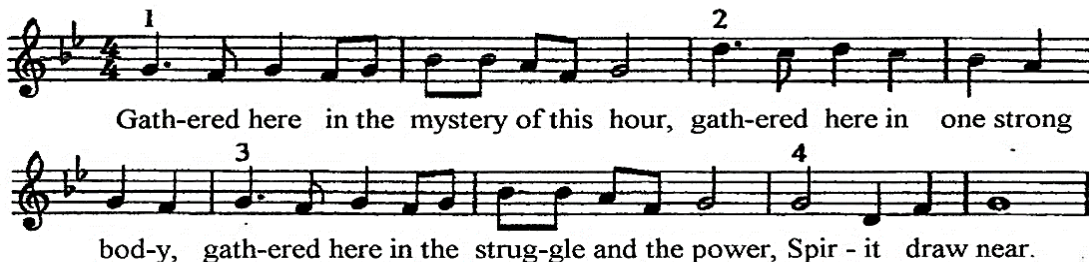
The loving voice of Jesus, which comes to cheer the night!
Our hearts were filled with sadness, and we had lost our way;
but morning brings us gladness and songs for each new day.

William C. Dix, 1867; alt.

*** Prayer of Confession and Renewal [Unison]**

O God, once we were blind; we could not see. We didn't realize it at the time. We couldn't see our own part in the fallenness of the world. We couldn't see how our actions drove people apart, put others in danger, caused others pain, exploited others' resources, destroyed our common environment, centered only ourselves and our desires. We just didn't see it. Then we saw Jesus. Then we saw what a good life lived selflessly looked like. And now we see ourselves more clearly in this time of Lent. Forgive us the past, renew us in the present, grant us courage for the future. All of it we ask in Jesus' name.

*** The Song of Praise Gathered Here - #742 [sung 2 times]**



Gath-ered here in the mystery 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.

Epistle

Ephesians 5:8-14

The New Testament

John 9:1-41

Contemporary Reading

a prayer from *The Hungering Dark* Frederick Buechner:

Time with Young Worshipers

Musical Offering

Grace Got You

MercyMe

Sermon

I Once Was Blind, But Now I See

Pastor Allan Lane

Hymn of Reflection

Amazing Grace

Columbia Harmony, *Cincinnati*, 1829

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
John Newton, 1779; alt.

The Church at Prayer

Silent Meditation

Prayers of the Church

Our Lord's Prayer *[the additional use of "Mother" is optional, according to One's Theological understanding]*

...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.

Organ Response

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

The Invitation

Leader: Let us bring what we can; let us offer what we are; let us work with God to
remake the world into a better place. Let us present our gifts and offerings to God.

*** Offertory Hymn**

**We now are in the time of Lent,
To learn again what Jesus meant.
His life and message are so great,
We send these gifts to celebrate. Amen.**

*** Prayer of Dedication [Unison]**

**In a time of illness, we dedicate these offerings to health; in a time of isolation, we
dedicate these offerings to friendship; in a time of need, we dedicate these
offerings to you, O God, to provide abundance for all. Amen**

Going with God's Love

* Hymn of Departure

O Grant Us Light

Baker

O grant us light, that we may know wisdom that you alone can give,
That truth may guide us as we go, and virtue bless the lives we live.

O grant us light that we may find where error lurks in human lore,
And turn to you our seeking minds, and love your holy Word the more.

O grant us light, that we may learn how dead is life from you apart,
How sure is joy for all who turn to you an undivided heart.
Lawrence Tuttiett, 1864; alt.

* Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

Acolyte

* Circle of Community Hear Our Prayer, O God - sung twice

*As we move to form a circle around the pews, we will sing **Hear our Prayer, O God.** 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*



The image shows two staves of musical notation for the hymn 'Hear our Prayer, O God'. The music is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes: 'Hear our prayer, O God, Hear our prayer, O God; in - cline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.'

Benediction

Postlude

In God Alone

Berthier (Taizé Community)

PLEASE KEEP THE FOLOWING MEMBERS AND FRIENDS IN YOUR PRAYERS:

All that are suffering with Covid 19, Max Roha, Nancy Stella, Betty Kaul, Don Seager, Justin Brownlow, Anna Mary Fisher, Bill Toneff, Jan Wardlaw, Suzanne Patrick (Niece of Kathy Smith), Jill Black, Stan McCain, Phyllis Molnar, Lenore Harris, Dottie Faust, "Edna House", Jon Thompson, Tina Ortiz, Dassie Matsuoka, Lee Sanderson, Kathleen Stewart, Cindy Burton, people who are unemployed and under employed.

(Please let the office know of any additions, corrections or changes to our prayer lists.)

BUCC ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WELCOME all our guests who are worshipping with us today. Please sign our guest book and join us downstairs in Pilgrim Hall for our Coffee Hour.

WE WELCOME VISITING PARENTS - We offer several childcare options and fun activities for kids during worship hour: Infants and toddlers will be cared for in the nursery. Kindergarten through seventh grade will go to class after the Word to Young Worshipers. Crayons and paper are also available from ushers for children.

PFLAG - Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. This is a local and national organization that has been in the Cleveland Area for 35 years. One of the services provided is a Monthly Support Group Meeting. The group is led by a licensed Psychologist and Social Workers. The purpose is to provide support and education to family and friends of people coming out Gay, Lesbian, Trans, Bisexual or Questioning. The group is free and meets at Trinity Cathedral on the second Tuesday of the month 6:45p-8:30p. For more information, call Mark Lehman, LISW at 330.631.4415

STAFF CONGREGATION RELATIONS is creating a team of member volunteers who might be willing to perform small office tasks on an occasional basis in order to help Jeannette during busy times or when she is out sick or on vacation. These tasks might include answering phones during office hours, copying, folding, stapling, typing, mail distribution, preparing the weekly bulletin, or assisting with the monthly pillar. If you are willing to be called on occasion to perform one or more of these tasks, please contact SCR Chairperson Evie Novak at 440-479-9743 or evienovak1@gmail.com. Thank you to David Ritchey, Marge Culver, Jan Renovetz and Jim Duffy who are currently assisting with office responsibilities as needed. We would like to have a few more volunteers, if possible.

Readings

Epistle - Ephesians 5:8-14

For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

The New Testament John 9:1-41

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. We^[a] must work the works of him who sent me^[b] while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and

wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus^[c] to be the Messiah^[d] would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again?

Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”

The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man? He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

Contemporary Reading – Frederick Buechner: a prayer from *The Hungering Dark*

“Lord Jesus Christ, Help us not to fall in love with the night that covers us but through the darkness to watch for you as well as to work for you; to dream and hunger in the dark for the light of you. Help us to know that the madness of God is saner than humans and that nothing that God has wrought in this world was ever possible. Give us back the great hope again that the future is yours, that not even the world can hide you from us forever, that at the end the One who came will come back in power to work joy in us stronger even than death. Amen”

LAY READERS

MARCH 22, 2020

Lay Reader: Ben Tomlinson

MARCH 29, 2020

Lay Reader: Jon Thompson

Together
we make a
Family