

# First Sunday of Advent November 29th, 2020

*“Love, and say it with your life.” –St. Augustine of Hippo*

## Announcements

**WELCOME** to all guests or visitors worshipping with us today in this Zoom format! We are doing everything we can to keep the service open to all, yet secure. In the eventuality of a disruption of the service, we will email information on how to re-enter the service with a password.

**FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN** - We encourage you to share this service with your children, as well as take part in the virtual activities with Ms. Mindy at 9:30 (1/2 hour before every service). The link for this can be found in the email you may have received, on our Facebook page and/or on our church website:

<https://brecksvilleucc.org><https://brecksvilleucc.org/services/childrens-time-online/>

**THE PASTOR IS IN!** Pastor Allan is available every Tuesday, between 11 am and noon. You can contact him either by mail, email or phone - feel free to call either the church or his cell phone directly. You can also catch him online, by clicking on the same Zoom link that we use for Sunday services. He'd love to hear from you! Here's his contact information:

- BUCC address: **23 Public Square, Brecksville OH 44141**
- Email: [buccpastor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:buccpastor@sbcglobal.net)
- BUCC Office phone: **(440) 526-4364**
- Pastor Allan's cell phone: **(513) 417-1537**
- Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/4780705901>

**SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER AT THE PRENTISS CENTER FOR AUTISM!** We will be purchasing Christmas gifts for students at the Prentiss Center for Autism again this year. BUCC member Darlene Kelly, who is Principal of the center, has identified fifteen students that we can help. You can pledge \$50 to sponsor gifts for an individual student, or contribute any other amount you choose - any funds over the cost of gifts will be used to purchase grocery store gift cards for the families. To minimize logistics during the pandemic, we will have one shopper purchase all the gifts this year. Donations can be mailed to Matt Wolbert, at 7465 Brecksville Road, Independence, 44131, or by Venmo to: @Matthew-Wolbert-1 (there's a picture of a sunflower plant with his account). Thank you for sharing the holiday spirit with these families in need!

*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!***

## **Announcements** (continued)

**THE MITTEN TREE:** The Mitten Tree is set up in the lower lobby of the church (inside the back door). It would be wonderful if its magical branches could be replenished again this year for our neighbors in need! You are welcome to bring in any new/gently-used (or newly-created!) hats, mittens, gloves and scarves, which will find new homes when we provide hunger meals. The back doors will be open during regular church hours, for those who are able to deliver their items. If you have a contribution but are unable to stop by the church, please reach out to Kate Klonowski at **(216) 534-3498** or **keightykay@gmail.com**, to arrange for a pickup.

**SOCK IT TO ME SUNDAY:** Elizabeth Gadus is collecting socks for the homeless, and will distribute them on the last Sunday of every month (hereby referred to as “Sock It To Me Sunday” until further notice). Although her primary target is St. Herman’s, she’ll also be on the lookout for other shelters in need. Your donations can be placed in the brown quilted bag, located on the bench inside the back entrance. Interested persons may contact Elizabeth by phone call or text at **440-319-6384**, or by email at **elizgadus@gmail.com**. Please take this opportunity to share during this giving season, and thank you in advance!

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT** - In keeping with our focus on Stewardship this month, it is time to choose how YOU can serve the church by joining a ministry! There are openings in all areas, with several ministries needing chairpersons. Please communicate with someone on Leadership Development by the end of November, to discuss where your gifts can be shared. Hope to hear from you soon, and thank you in advance for supporting your church!

(You may contact any of the following: Bridget Sproul, Julie Bernard, Linda Kriynovich, Cliff Cribbs, Sue Maier or Beth Rehling)

**LITTLE FREE ANTI-RACIST LIBRARY** - Don’t forget to check out the cover of this month’s *Brecksville Magazine*! If you don’t receive this publication, you can find it online at:

**<http://www.scribtype.com/2020/10/19/november-2020-brecksville-magazine/>**

The library’s inventory is still low at the moment, so if you’re able to donate a book (or more!), please consider it. You can do so either through Gina, online via Amazon, or just drop one directly into the mailbox (please alert Gina so she can ID and add the book to her catalog). The wish list can be found on amazon.com - you can either search the wish list for “Anti-racist Free Little Library of Brecksville”, or access it through this link:

**[https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/36F1K25B5001N?ref\\_=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/36F1K25B5001N?ref_=wl_share)**

Gina is happy to answer any questions you may have - please feel free to contact her at **ginamthomas@gmail.com**.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK CLUB** - The Social Justice Book Club will continue to discuss the book *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming*, by David Wallace-Wells. The next Zoom meeting is on Thursday 12/3, at 7:00 pm. (Please use the same Zoom account as our Sunday service.) This meeting will cover Part 3: The Climate Kaleidoscope: Storytelling - Politics of Consumption (pp. 157 – 217). Please feel free to contact **Kate Klonowski** at **(216) 534-3498** or **keightykay@gmail.com** with any questions!

## **Announcements** (continued)

**PASTOR SEARCH AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** During December, the PSNC will be calling everyone from the BUCC and asking for your participation in a brief survey about our Church. Your input is essential in the process of selecting a new full-time pastor. You will be contacted by one of the following members of the committee: Beth Rehling, Ben Rehling, Jon Thompson, Cliffs Cribbs, Joy Garapic, Sherris Witt and Alan Klonowski. For more information, you can call Sherrill Witt at **216-244-6916**, or Cliff Cribbs at **216-970-6347**. Thanks in advance for your help!

**ADVENT & CHRISTMAS MUSIC INVITATION\*** - An email has gone out to everyone who helped with music last year - if you have not received the message, and wish to share some music over the holidays, please don't hesitate to contact Dave Debick. Dave can help you choose a song if needed, and rehearsal time is also provided as needed. Dave can be reached either by email at **buccmusic@sbcglobal.net**, or by phone at **216-408-7949**. High school students are welcome to participate!

**\*NOTE: Social distancing is practiced and masks are worn during these rehearsal/recording sessions.**

**BUCC MASKS** are available! Interested parties can place an order by either calling the BUCC office at **440-526-4364**, or sending your request in an email to **buccoh@sbcglobal.net**. Masks are available by pick up or delivery (no extra charge) – please let Anne know what your preference is when ordering. These masks bear the UCC slogan “Still Speaking,” and our church’s name. Suggested donation is \$10, and all proceeds go toward the BUCC general fund.

**WEEKLY COLLECTION** is still happening! Please don't forget to send in your pledges to the church by mail or (preferably) PayPal! Check out **BrecksvilleUCC.org/giving** for more info.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!** If you would like to be the Zoom Host or the Slide Runner, (both very easy and done from the comfort of your own home!), please reach out to Heidi Spangler at **heidi@heidihoonthego.com**. We'd love to teach you.

**COFFEE HOUR!** After the service, we welcome all attendees to stay on Zoom to enjoy some time and fellowship with each other. Brew your favorite fairly-traded coffee or tea and a snack and catch up with friends!

*Many thanks for all the donations of time,  
money, and talent that you provide to the  
Church!*

## Gathering in God's Presence

**Meditation:** "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift of God, which is why we call it the present." –Bil Keane, Creator of *The Family Circus* cartoon

**Prelude:**        *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*        Nicolai, setting J. S. Bach  
(*Translation: Awake, calls the voice to us*)  
Ton Koopman, organist  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSkz3j9b23Y>

### **Call to Worship:    (based on a quote from Shel Silverstein)**

Leader (Jon): In the beginning was the Word, but immediately after came the Action.

- Leader (Cliff): "Listen to the mustn'ts, child. Listen to the don'ts. Listen to the shouldn'ts, the impossibles, the won'ts."
- **People (Janet): "Listen to the never haves, then listen close to me... Anything can happen child. Anything can be."**
- Leader: It can't, it didn't, it's not possible: God in a stable, hope for the dead, what is going on here?
- **People: Anything can happen, because anything once did: out of oppression came hope, out of death came life, out of a stable came God.**
- Leader: Let us find hope in the baby who is coming. Let us worship God!

**Hymn of Praise:**        *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*  
Melody from a 15th-century French "Processional"

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Child of God appear.

**REFRAIN: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

2. O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;  
To us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go. **REFRAIN**

3. O come, O come, O Adonai, who came to all on Sinai high,  
And from its peak a single law proclaimed in majesty and awe. **REFRAIN**  
(Based on ancient antiphons from Advent Vespers)

## Prayer of Approach & Confession:

- **People (Janet):** “You may choose to look the other way but you can never say again that you did not know.” Those were the words of William Wilberforce, after a speech condemning slavery. How relevant they are today! How often do we look the other way, O God, when confronted with the evils of the world? How often do we want to say, “We didn’t know?” But we do know, and we have not done enough. There are people waiting for us to offer them hope. There are people waiting for us to speak up, act out, change the world, change ourselves. We’re not there yet. Not yet. Forgive us the past. Help us in the future. Let us be forerunners of justice. Let us to be bringers of hope. We pray in the name of Jesus the Messiah, the Hope of the World. Amen

## Words of Assurance:

- **Leader (Cliff):** Like a drop of rain in the desert, like the first flower of spring after a long winter, so is the word of forgiveness from our God.
- **People (Janet):** In a sin-wrecked world, God comes to build it anew. To a sin-wracked people, God offers healing and forgiveness. Thanks be to God! Amen

## First Sunday of Advent:

### *One Candle is Lit*

“Come surely, Lord Jesus,  
As dawn follows night,  
Our hearts long to greet You, as roses, the light.  
Salvation draws near us, our vision engage.  
One candle is lit for the Hope of the age.”

**Reader 1 (Vincent Kaval):** A light shines in the darkness...

**Reader 2 (Rose Kaval):** ...and the darkness has not overcome it.

**Reader 1:** The long night is past and the new day is dawning.

**Reader 2:** The morning of His birth moves through to the morning of His resurrection.

**Reader 1:** As the clouds reflect the sun’s light on the earth before the sun has risen above the horizon...

**Reader 2:** ...let us reflect Christ’s light on the world before He appears again.

**Reader 1:** The time of His appearing is nearer now than when we first believed.

**Reader 2:** This is the hope of the world; love and grace will triumph in Jesus the Christ!

## ❖ The Candle of Hope is Lit

## Readings

### Old Testament Lesson

**Isaiah 64: 1-9**

*O that God would come down*

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before You! For when You did awesome things that we did not expect, You came down, and the mountains trembled before You. Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides You, who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him. You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember Your ways. But when we continued to sin against them, You were angry. How then can we be saved?

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. No one calls on Your name or strives to lay hold of You; for You have hidden Your face from us and have given us over to our sins. Yet You, Lord, are our Creator. We are the clay, You are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be angry beyond measure, Lord; do not remember our sins forever. Oh, look on us, we pray, for we are all Your people.

### Gospel Lesson (read by Pastor Allan)

**Mark 13: 24-37**

*Apocalyptic Hope*

“But in those days, following that distress, ‘the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And He will send His angels and gather His elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping.

What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

## Contemporary Lesson

***“To be hopeful in bad times...”***

Howard Zinn, Historian (1922-2010)

“To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places – and there are so many – where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don’t have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory.”.

**Musical Offering:** *I Want to Be Ready when Jesus Comes*

Cole/Jenkins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uh3yt0SMpnc>

**Sermon:**

*The Advent of Hope*

Pastor Allan Lane

**Hymn of Reflection:** *Keep Awake, Be Always Ready*

Nicolai

1. Keep awake, be always ready, God's time approaches sure and steady,  
 God's strength will keep your heart from blame.  
 Clouds, the Spirit's light concealing, disperse, God's purest light revealing;  
 creation will its Sovereign name.  
 Dry branches burst forth green, God's advent signs are seen: Hallelujah!  
 Christ's judgment won, God's will be done; God's new dominion thus begun.

2. Rise and shine for One is coming whose love will quench all nature's thirsting  
 to be made whole forever more.  
 On that day to end all weeping, death's swords transformed to tools of reaping,  
 the God of might will mercy pour.  
 Incarnate, God appears embracing all our tears: Hallelujah!  
 God's majesty eternally revealed to set the cosmos free.

(Arthur G. Clyde, 1993)

## **The Church at Prayer**

All family and friends of the following: Curt Bailey, Pat Bailey, Jill Black, Paul Klonowski, Dennis Lane, Rudy Lornezo, Phyllis Molnar, Bob & Jean Murphy, George Pastor, Richelle Petras, Don Seager, Kathleen Unetic and Alice Vargo. Susan Renovetz, David Pastor, Elizabeth Gadus, Phyllis Hassler, Joanne Cook, Sheila Day (friend of the Sniders), Joanne K. and Jim C. (friends of Ed & June Puwal), Max Roha, Nancy Stella, Betty Kaul, Justin Brownlow, Anna Mary Fisher, Bill Toneff, Jan Wardlaw, Suzanne Patrick (niece of Kathy Smith), Stan McCain, Lenore Harris, Dottie Faust, "Edna House", Jon Thompson, Tina Ortiz, Dassie Matsuoka, Lee Sanderson, Leroy 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.

### **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.**

## **Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings**

### **The Invitation:**

Leader (Cliff): Francis Bacon once said that "Hope is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper." He meant that it is good to awake in the morning with hope, but if that is all you have by evening, it's going to be a tough night. Let us give so that those who awake in hope have their hopes fulfilled by supper. Let us present our gifts and offerings to God.

[BrecksvilleUCC.org/giving](http://BrecksvilleUCC.org/giving)

### **Offertory Hymn:**

**We bring our gifts because we care,  
They are a part of what we share.  
Our love is strong, it heals, uplifts.  
With hearts of joy we share our gifts. Amen**



## Prayer of Dedication:

People (Janet): Find the lost, feed the hungry, satisfy someone's hopes with these offerings, O God. Direct them and us to where we can do the most good. Amen

## Hymn of Departure:

***Come, O Long-Expected Jesus*** From Psalmodia Sacra, Gotha, 1715

1. Come, O long-expected Jesus, born to set all people free;  
From our fears and sins release us; grant us your true liberty.
2. Israel's strength and consolation, hope to all the earth impart;  
Dear desire of every nation, enter every longing heart.
3. Born all people to deliver, born a child, you came to reign!  
Born to rule on earth forever, come, be known to us again.  
(Charles Wesley, 1744; alt.)

## Going With God's Love

### Carrying the Light of Christ Into the World:

Circle of Community

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:

### ***We Are Waiting***

Taylor/Kline

Recorded by Greater Plan Publishing, LLC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHA6y9Psyao>

## **Special Thanks**

### **November 29, 2020**

**Lay Reader** Cliff Cribbs  
**Responder** Janet Renovetz  
**CE** Mindy Wade  
**Slide Runner** Kate Klonowski  
**Zoom Host** Jim Duffy

### **December 6, 2020**

**Lay Reader** Bridget Sproul  
**Responder** Julie Bernard  
**CE** Mindy Wade  
**Slide Runner** Kate Klonowski  
**Zoom Host** David Pastor

*Thank You for Joining Us!*

