

# January 3rd, 2021

## Second Sunday in Christmas/Epiphany

**“Words can be like X-rays if you use them properly – they’ll go through anything. You read and you’re pierced.”**

**–Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World***

***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**

**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/>

## Announcements (continued)

**SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK CLUB** – OCWM and Christian Education will be co-sponsoring the next installment of the Social Justice Book Club! The first meeting for the new book will be on Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00-8:00 PM in the BUCC “Zoom Room”. We will be starting ***Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times***, by Bishop Michael Curry. You may purchase a copy here or anywhere books are sold! For our first meeting, please have read the introduction and first chapter. We will create a reading schedule for the remainder of the book, and assign weekly discussion leaders at our first meeting. Even if you haven’t had time to read, please feel free to join in and listen to the discussion - we’d love to have enough folks involved to need breakout rooms! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact **Kate Klonowski** at [keightykay@gmail.com](mailto:keightykay@gmail.com) or **216-534-3498** (text ok).

**PASTOR SEARCH AND NOMINATING COMMITTEE:** Over the next few weeks, 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, Sherrill Witt and Alan Klonowski. For more information, call Sherrill Witt at **216-244-6916**, or Cliff Cribbs at **216-970-6347**. Thank you in advance for your insights!

**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>

**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](https://www.brecksvilleucc.org/giving) for more info.

**2021 PLEDGE COLLECTION ENVELOPES:** The small collection envelopes for next year have arrived. Joy has placed them on the pew bench just inside the back doors. If you would like a box, please call the church office to make arrangements for pickup. If you can't pick them up, call **440-526-4364**, and Anne will mail them to 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:

"A word is dead / When it is said,  
Some say.  
I say it just / Begins to live  
That day."

–Emily Dickinson,  
*The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson*

### Prelude Music:

***What Child Is This*** English traditional melody  
***(translation: O God, We Praise You)***  
Larry Pullin, violin; Kate Lane, cello

### Call to Worship:

- ◆ Leader (Matt): The Word which was with God and was God came into the world and took on flesh.
- ◆ **People (Rose): Let those who have ears to hear, listen!**
- ◆ Leader: The world came into being through the Word, but the world did not recognize him.
- ◆ **People: Let those who have eyes to see, see!**
- ◆ Leader: Grace and truth came into the world through Jesus the Christ. In thanksgiving, let us worship God!

### Hymn of Praise:

***Good Christian Friends, Rejoice***  
14th century German melody

1. Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
now give heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;  
Ox and ass before him bow, asleep within the manger now.  
Christ is born today, Christ is born today!
2. Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
now you know of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!  
God has opened heaven's door, and you are blessed forevermore.  
Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!
3. Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;  
now you need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!  
(German and Latin, 14th century; transl. John Mason Neale, 1855; alt.)

## Prayer of Approach & Confession:

- ◆ **People (Rose):** With our words we come before you, O God, and with our words we will depart, but perhaps in the middle there's a chance for us to listen to your words. (Silent Pause) We hear you calling for justice. (Silent Pause) We hear you calling for peace. (Silent Pause) We hear you calling for unity. (Silent Pause) We hear you calling for compassion. We ask you for forgiveness for the wrong that is within us. We ask you for wisdom to see the right that lies before us. We ask you for the courage to use our words to right what is wrong and to restore what has been lost. We ask it in Jesus' name.

## Words of Assurance:

- ◆ **Leader (Matt):** There is a word we long to hear from God: "Welcome home, my child, all is forgiven, and all is set right."
- ◆ **People (Rose):** This is the word we do hear from God, who speaks to us in the life and words of Jesus the Redeemer: we are forgiven! All is set right with God, and our place with God is assured. Thanks be to God for this word of hope.

## Song of Praise:

Glory, glory, glory! Glory to God in the highest!  
 Glory, glory, glory! Glory to God in the highest!  
 And on earth be peace to all people, with whom God is pleased.  
 And on earth be peace to all people, with whom God is pleased.

## Readings

### First Reading

**Ephesians 1: 3-14**      *The mystery of God's will*

Praise be to the God and Creator of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For God chose us in Christ before the creation of the world, to be holy and blameless in God's sight. In love God predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, in accordance with God's pleasure and will—to the praise of God's glorious grace, which God has freely given us in the One He loves. In Him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. In God we were also chosen, having been predestined according to God's plan, in conformity with the purpose of God's will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of God's glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of Truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in God with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of God's glory.

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## Readings (continued)

### Second Lesson

**John 1: 1-18**

*In the beginning was the Word*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through God all things were made; without God nothing was made that has been made. In God was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true Light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through God, the world did not recognize God. He came to that which God had created, but the world did not receive its Creator. Yet to all who did receive God, to those who believed in God's name, God gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Creator, full of grace and truth. (John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'") Out of His fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is Himself God and is in closest relationship with God, has made God known.

### Contemporary Lesson

*"Two sentences"* from **Valis**, by Philip K. Dick

"There exists, for everyone, a sentence—a series of words—that has the power to destroy you. Another sentence exists, another series of words, that could heal you. If you're lucky, you will get the second, but you can be certain of getting the first."

**Anthem**

***Unto Us a Boy Is Born!***

Piae Cantiones, 1582; setting Geoffrey Shaw

Choir of Brecksville UCC, recorded on Christmas Eve 2016

**Sermon:**

***The Thing About Words***

Pastor Allan Lane

**Hymn of Reflection    *Angels from the Realms of Glory***

Smart

1. Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
As you sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:

**REFRAIN: Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, give thanks and sing.**

2. Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing,  
yonder shines the infant light: **REFRAIN**

3. Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;  
Seek the great Desire of nations, guided by Christ's natal star: **REFRAIN**

4. Saints, before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,  
Suddenly, your prayers attending, Christ beside you shall appear. **REFRAIN**  
(James Montgomery, 1816; alt.)

## **The Church at Prayer**

Friends and family of Betty Gifford, Lenore Harris, 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, Betty Kaul, Justin Brownlow, Anna Mary Fisher, Bill Toneff, Jan Wardlaw, Suzanne Patrick (niece of Kathy Smith), Stan McCain, Dottie Faust, "Edna House", Jon Thompson, Tina Ortiz, Dassie Matsuoka, Lee Sanderson, Kathleen Stewart & Joe Blasko (her father), 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 (Matt): The word is out on us: we are a kind and caring church with a hunger for justice and a thirst for helping people in Christ's name. Let us present our gifts and offerings to God, that the word might be made flesh in this new way.

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

### **Offertory Hymn:**

**We praise the Babe this time of year,  
Sing carols to Him whom we hold dear.  
Our love, His power we now proclaim,  
We send our gifts in Jesus' name. Amen!**

### **Prayer of Dedication:**

- ◆ People (Rose): There are words and deeds, O God. With our words we make promises to You as Your disciples. With our deeds, we bring love and compassion and justice to life. Accept our words and our deeds, in Jesus' name. Amen

## **Holy Communion**

**Communion Hymn: *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence***  
French carol melody, 17th century

1. Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly-minded, for with blessing in the hand,  
Christ our God to earth descending, our full homage to demand.
2. Monarch great, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth Christ stood,  
Lord of all, in human vesture in the body and the blood—  
Christ will give to all the faithful bread of life for heavenly food.  
(From the Liturgy of St. James, 4th century; transl. Gerard Moultrie, 1864; alt.)

- ◆ **The Invitation**
- ◆ **Prayer of Consecration**
- ◆ **Words of Institution**
- ◆ **Receiving the Bread and Cup**

## Prayer of thanksgiving:

People (Rose): From Your presence in the bread and the wine, O God, we have received grace upon grace. We thank You for Your empowering Spirit, connecting us to You and to each other, through the sacrament of the table. Amen

## Hymn of Departure: *Arise, Your Light Is Come* *Walter*

1. Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;  
Show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today!
2. Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;  
Proclaim the captive's liberty, good tidings to the poor.
3. Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,  
Bind up the brokenhearted ones and comfort those who mourn.
4. Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!  
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.  
(Ruth Duck, 1973)

## Going With God's Love

### Carrying the Light of Christ Into the World

Circle of Community

Chords for the first staff: A, E, A, D, Bm, E

Chords for the second staff: A, C#7, F#m, Bm, E7sus4, E7, A

### ◆ Benediction

