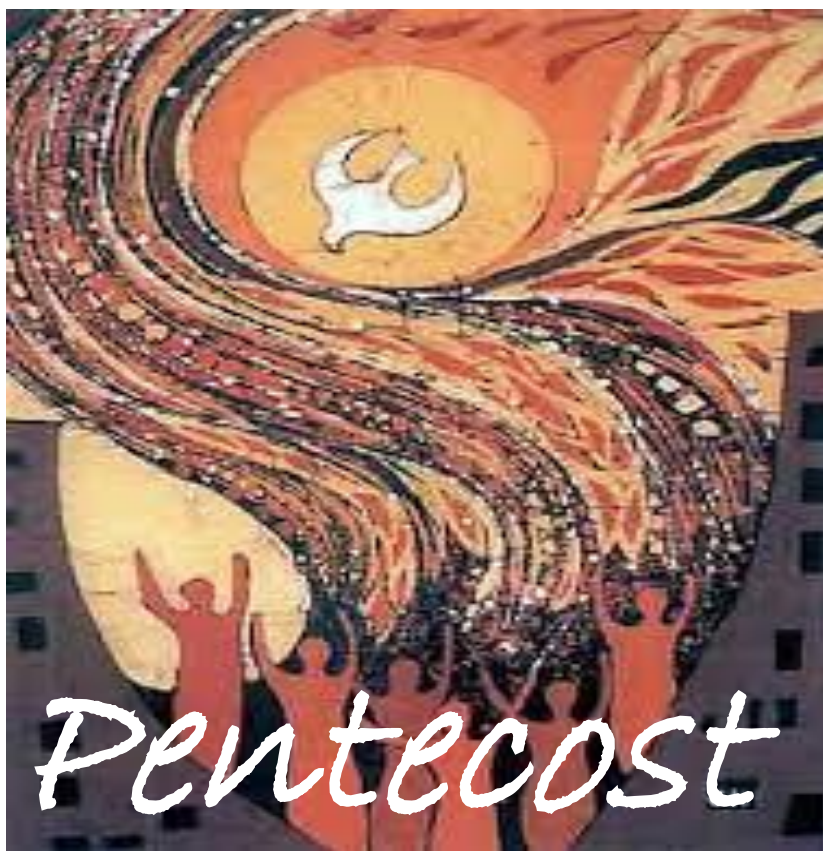


THE *Pillar*
BRECKSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

JUNE 2022



Pentecost

TO BE LOVING, SERVING, AND ACCEPTING
OF ALL PEOPLE
WITH GOD'S LIFE-CHANGING POWER
AND GRACE

Pastor's Ponderings.....

The journal **Science Advances** just published a new discovery of fossils older than anything seen before. These fossils are dated from just 300 million years after Earth formed.

To put this into perspective, stretch your arms out for a handy geological timeline. Fingertip to fingertip, represents time from the formation of Earth to now – about 4.5 billion years. The length of your left middle finger represents the time that the Earth was a hot volcanic piñata, relentlessly whacked by comets and asteroids. It was an unpleasant neighborhood. No life as we know it could survive.

Then, 4.2 billion years ago, life began. It was only microscopic, but it was life. These little guys never wrote a good novel, but I am grateful for their generous contribution of oxygen to the atmosphere. But here's what I find truly astonishing: as soon as life could exist, life did exist. This era of microbial life extends all the way from your left hand to your right wrist.

Then, from your right wrist onward, everything changes very quickly. Complex life burst forth in what is called the Cambrian explosion. All modern animal phyla appeared in a geological blink of an eye. These new critters had legs and eyes; they learned to chase food and scamper away. One of them, the once ubiquitous trilobite, went extinct 200 million years before the dinosaurs even showed up. I have some trilobite fossils in my office; stop by and hold one in your hand.

I know not everyone will draw the same inspiration, but, for me, this perspective strengthens my faith in a God who loves life. Life was everywhere as soon as life could be anywhere. Life has evolved and diversified into goofy shapes, colors and sizes, with ingenious, creative abilities and defenses. Combined with the recent news from space (the discovery of thousands of new planets), I think it would be weird if extraterrestrial life does NOT exist; we just don't seem to have observed it yet.

Meanwhile, back on Earth, when one species gets out of balance, natural selection brings them back in line (usually by wiping them out) to restore balance. For example, if a shark produced as much offspring as a salmon, they would overwhelm the seas, wipe out their own food supply and die off. Balance restored, with apologies to the industrious sharks.

(continued)

Pastor's Ponderings..... (continued)

In our arm-to-arm timeline, all complex life is in your right hand. And in a single stroke with a nail file, you could eradicate the entire span of human existence off your timeline.

Human presence has been brief, but wildly influential. Human influence is felt everywhere from the top of the atmosphere to the bottom of the seas, usually to the dismay of other species. But the microbes can still claim victory. There are more of them than us, and they were here first.

Fossils tell the story of five mass extinction events. The Permian extinction (251 million years ago) wiped out 96% of all marine life. A Siberian volcano did it. The famous Cretaceous event (65 million years ago) wiped out the dinosaurs and 75% of all other species, thanks to an asteroid that took a vacation in Cancun.

But here's a sobering idea: a sixth mass extinction event is happening now, quietly, all around us. This one's not caused by an asteroid or volcano. It is caused by human influence. We are what is out of balance. Humans have been here but a short while. Like ill-mannered guests, we have made quite of mess of things on this planet.

I believe in a creator who loves life and diversity. Perhaps we'll be part of that progression, perhaps not. But if we love the Creator, faith compels us to respect science and care for Creation. We are but stewards of this garden, not owners. We are here, but for a time, to care for the Earth and one another.

*"Treat the Earth well:
it was not given to you by your parents,
it was loaned to you by your children."*

- Kikuyu Proverb

And yes, that will be on the test.

-- Peace and blessing, Pastor John

Meet the Staff

Job Title – Pastor

Duties: Preach the Way of Jesus, build relationships inside and outside the church, extend pastoral care and spiritual support, serve, reach out and grow the faith community in Brecksville and the wider community, prepare experiences of prayer that are meaningful and relevant, develop connections to the wider UCC denomination, cultivate spiritual leadership within the community, and of course, any other responsibilities as needed – and there are lots of those. :0)

Your favorite part of your job: Helping people and sharing Jesus' Way. I genuinely love and care for the people of Brecksville UCC – you really are a pleasure to work with. I enjoy the variety of work, and the fact that I'm never really finished, I just run out of time!

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up? A journalist. I started with photography, then discovered that I enjoyed writing for publication, getting some regional writing awards in high school. That gave my self-esteem a much-needed boost at the time. I was a journalism major in my first year of college, then switched to teaching, then went to seminary.

First paying jobs: 1) Paperboy; 2) Ferris wheel operator; 3) Pizza maker; 4) Group home for people with developmental disabilities; 5) Stone cutter; 6) English teacher; 7) U.S. Air Force.

Favorite music genres: Classical and other orchestral music, especially Mahler and Beethoven; most anything by U2, The Chicks, or Bruce Springsteen.

Favorite movies: Apollo 13, Big Fish, The Matrix, Ordinary People, 2001: A Space Odyssey, A River Runs Through It, Contact, Life of Pi, and The Mission.

Favorite book: Les Misérables by Victor Hugo.

Something we don't know about you: I live with chronic pain caused by ankylosing spondylitis. The pain varies unpredictably; some days are worse than others.

Your favorite way to spend your free time / Hobbies: Hiking, Scrabble, Astrophysics, Scuba.

What three items would you take with you to a deserted island: Les Misérables, Hiking Shoes, Coffee.



FROM THE MINISTRIES OF BUCC

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

ATTENTION!!!!ATTENTION!!!! – Looking for some excitement on Sunday mornings? Love (or even like) kids? Don't feel like sitting through the sermon? Well, consider becoming a Sunday school teacher! We have openings for the middle school and high school classes. It's easy and a lot of fun. We have all of the teaching materials and supplies - and if no kids show up, you can stay in church! Please see Miss Mindy or call the church office and let me put you on the list!!

– Mindy Harris-Wade

CLEVELAND FOOD BANK – CE made mugs and candle holders for their Lenten project this year. They raised \$300.95, which has been donated to the Cleveland Food Bank. Thanks to our kids for their hard work, and to all who generously supported their efforts!

FACILITIES

OUTSIDE – Lawn maintenance will be \$75 per week which is a \$25 increase over last year. The increase was due to go into effect last year, but NJM Landscaping was kind enough to hold off until this year.

The parking lot will undergo repairs, recoating and striping in August. The cost will be \$8,900, and the project will be performed by Protect-A-Cote, Inc. This should give us 3-5 more years of service. A complete resurfacing of the entire lot would run in the neighborhood of \$75,000. A capital fund drive would need to be considered at some future point.

Continued next page

FACILITIES (continued)

The columns in the rear portico are showing deterioration, especially around the bottom area. We are seeking an estimate to wrap them in aluminum.

INSIDE – The sink and faucet in the flower room are being replaced. They are in bad condition and over 50 years old. Price is yet to be determined.

FINANCE

A collection was taken for Edna House, which provides a safe, sober environment for those recovering from alcohol and drug addictions. A total of \$611 was received for this worthy cause.

Another \$165 was collected for Ukrainian relief.

Memorials were given in memory of Fred Pesek and Marjorie Rahnenfuehrer.

OCWM

EDNA HOUSE – Thanks to the generosity of the BUCC congregation, we were able to give Edna House a check for \$611 this year. Many thanks to all who support this worthy effort!

STAFF/CONGREGATION RELATIONS

NURSERY – After a long closure of the nursery due to the COVID pandemic, Council has approved the reopening and staffing of the nursery. The nursery has been thoroughly cleaned and is ready to greet our little ones. Before the Staff Congregation Relations Ministry fills the Church Nursery Attendant position with a permanent employee, we would like to assess the need. We are looking for several adult volunteers who would be willing to staff the nursery one to two Sundays over a two-month period. We would ask that the volunteer arrive 10-15 minutes before the service. If there are no children in the nursery after the Children's Sermon concludes, the volunteer is free to leave the nursery. You may sign up using Breeze or you may contact Evie Novak of the SCR Ministry or the church office if you are willing to help out.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

SUMMER MUSIC VOLUNTEER PROGRAM 2022 – Dave Debick will continue recruiting volunteer musicians for summer music, during May and early June. If you're comfortable singing or playing your instrument in public, please consider sharing your musical gifts at a Sunday service, sometime over the summer. You won't find a more affirming group of listeners than BUCC members! Dave can help you find music, and he's happy to rehearse with you as much/little as you're comfortable with. High school students are welcome to participate. Feel free to contact Dave with any questions. His number is in the church directory, or you can find him recruiting during coffee hour over the next few weeks - All are welcome!



Happy, Happy *JUNE* Birthdays* to the following BUCC Members! Please share in their joy and wish them a Happy Birthday!

- | | |
|---------|-------------------|
| June 02 | Bridget Sproul |
| June 04 | Lily Hunt |
| June 08 | Vincent Kaval |
| June 10 | Heidi Spangler |
| June 15 | Dot Bailey |
| | Giuliana Gagliano |
| June 19 | Marla Corrado |
| June 20 | Sam Koch |
| June 23 | Marilyn Wrights |
| June 24 | Chad Sproul |
| June 25 | Carole Snider |
| June 26 | Maureen Stanley |
| | Kimberly Wallis |
| June 27 | Bruce McCain |
| June 29 | Carli Began |
| | Evelyn Seager |
| | David Wilson |

****If you have a *JUNE* birthday and are not included above, please contact the church office so we can add you to the BUCC Birthday List!***



CALENDAR

JUNE 2022

Wed., JUNE 1

6:30pm Postcards in
Pilgrim Hall

Thu., JUNE 2

5pm Recorder/Dulcimer
5:30pm Joyful Noise
7pm Choir

Fri., JUNE 3

OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., JUNE 4

Sunday, JUNE 5

10am Worship Service

Mon., JUNE 6

Tue., JUNE 7

8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)

Wed., JUNE 8

Thu., JUNE 9

Fri., JUNE 10

OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., JUNE 11

Sunday, JUNE 12

10am Worship Service

Mon., JUNE 13

Tue., JUNE 14

8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)

Wed., JUNE 15

PILLAR DEADLINE

Thu., JUNE 16

Fri., JUNE 17

OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., JUNE 18

Sunday, JUNE 19

10am Worship Service

Mon., JUNE 20

Tue., JUNE 21

8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)

Wed., JUNE 22

Thu., JUNE 23

Fri., JUNE 24

OFFICE CLOSED

Sat., JUNE 25

Sunday, JUNE 26

10am Worship Service

Mon., JUNE 27

Tue., JUNE 28

8:15am "Holy Grounds"
(Brecksville Panera)

Wed., JUNE 29

Thu., JUNE 30



PARTICIPANTS IN WORSHIP

JUNE 5, 2022

Head Usher: Sue Maier
Ushers: Evelyn Seager
TBD
Lay Reader: Jill Zedan
Greeter: Sherrill Witt
Nursery: TBD
Counters: Marge Culver
Sue Stenzel
Acolyte: Aurthur Cook
Peace Candle: Dorothy Cook
A/V: TBD
Flowers: Janet Renovetz
Snack: Gina Cook
Jon Thompson
Setup/Serve: TBD
TBD
Cleanup: TBD
TBD

JUNE 12, 2022

Head Usher: TBD
Ushers: Evelyn Seager
TBD
Lay Reader: Jon Thompson
Greeter: Caroline Chandler
Bob Chandler
Nursery: TBD
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: TBD
Peace Candle: TBD
A/V: Fred Pedersen
Flowers: Tia Began
Snack: Diane Gressley
TBD
Setup/Serve: TBD
TBD
Cleanup: TBD
TBD

JUNE 19, 2022

Head Usher: Jill Zedan
Ushers: Diane Gressley
Evelyn Seager
Lay Reader: Paul Kuzmins
Greeter: Jon Thompson
Nursery: TBD
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: TBD
Peace Candle: TBD
A/V: Jim Duffy
Flowers: Janet Renovetz
Snack: Jon Thompson
TBD
Setup/Serve: TBD
TBD
Cleanup: Bob Chandler
Caroline Chandler

JUNE 26, 2022

Head Usher: Diane Gressley
Ushers: TBD
TBD
Lay Reader: Rose Kaval
Greeter: Dave Bernard
Nursery: TBD
Counters: Marge Culver
Janet Renovetz
Acolyte: TBD
Peace Candle: TBD
A/V: TBD
Flowers: TBD
Snack: Diane Gressley
TBD
Setup/Serve: Cliff Stenzel
Sue Stenzel
Cleanup: Sue Stenzel
TBD

The Pillar

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United Church of Christ

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FIRST CLASS

