

Prayer Walk STOP ① IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

We are called to care for creation and pass it on to the next generation better, healthier, and heartier than we found it. What is our relationship with the natural world? Look for a new sign around the church yard each week!

STOP ONE: CHIPPEWA CREEK



Behold Chippewa Creek a tributary watershed to the Cuyahoga River. Its steep slopes and rapid urbanization sends volumes of floodwater into Cuyahoga Valley National Park where it joins the river, which flows into Lake Erie. Its drainage area includes the communities of Brecksville, Broadview Heights, North Royalton and small parts of Seven Hills and Parma. Keeping Chippewa Creek clean protects our drinking water, our wildlife and our neighbors!



WORD FOR REFLECTION: HUMILITY

From a position of humility,
we can act with insight and courage.
What does it mean to be humble?
How can humility help us solve problems?

READ Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

LISTEN Mary Oliver's Poem "Daisies."

SCAN ME!



WALKING THE TALK

- Protect the water system - pick up poop when walking your dog.
- Dispose of prescription medications properly - never in the toilet or garbage.
- Choose detergents without phosphates.

Get more quick and easy tips for protecting our waterways. Download the "Healthy Home" book from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District.

PRAY

God of love and justice, Maker of heaven and earth, help us to begin. Give us the strength we need to make changes for the better. Help us to care for our communities, our climate and your creation.



BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Prayer Walk

STOP ② IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

How can we care for creation and pass it on to the next generation better, healthier, and heartier than we found it? Visit each of our seven stops on our prayer path and reflect on your relationship with the natural world **in our own backyard**.

STOP TWO: PEOPLE POWERED BIKES



Installed in 2018, this Bike Patio provides a safe space to park your bike when you travel to Brecksville. The tools in the Dero Fix It Stand make common repairs easy! Tell your bike riding friends about it. Since 2015, our church has been fixing donated bikes and getting them to people in need. This year, we will distribute our 1000th bike! Want to be part of it?

Email BIKES@brecksvilleUMC.com

WORD FOR REFLECTION: WONDER

When you consider the wonders of creation that mean the most to you, what specific places and experiences come to mind? What do you most want to preserve for generations to come?

READ Genesis 1:26-31

LISTEN Mary Oliver's Poem "Mindful."

SCAN ME!



WALKING THE TALK

Stepping off that gas and onto bike pedals is one of the best things you can do to help the environment. Choosing a bike over a car just once a day reduces the average person's carbon emissions from transportation by 67%.

- Consider riding your bike - or walking - to a destination you usually reach by car this week. Work, school, church, the store... Tell a friend about it!

PRAY

God of grace and generosity, restore us to our graceful, generous calling. Grant us the love, courage, and wisdom to care for your creation: stepping back when we should step back, stepping up when we should step up, helping life to flourish in all its wondrous beauty, from the waters to the wilderness. Amen.



BRECKSVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

STOP **3** *Prayer Walk* IN OUR OWN BACKYARD

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STOP THREE: NATIVE PLANTS



Native plants, like the black eyed susan and purple coneflower in this flower bed, are great additions to your landscape. They help manage storm water run off, improve air quality and provide food and shelter for birds, native bees and butterflies! The roots of native plants run deep. Over the ages, they have adapted to our climate and require less water or fertilizer (if any). Plus, they're beautiful!

WORD FOR REFLECTION: CARE

We are called to care for creation, to make it hospitable for all our neighbors, and all of God's creatures, great and small. What does this look like in your experience?

SCAN ME!



READ Mark 8: 34-37

LISTEN Mary Oliver's Poem "To Begin with, the Sweet Grass."

WALKING THE TALK

Ever thought of planting a rain garden? These gardens are not raised. They are sunken into the ground to absorb stormwater, filter pollutants, and provide habitat for pollinators. In a rain garden, the long roots of the native plants help to temporarily retain water and replenish groundwater. As you walk the church grounds, think about places we might incorporate rain gardening.

PRAY

God, give us the trust and humility, the courage and hope we need to live for the sake of you. Make us gardeners again, serving and preserving, tilling and keeping. Return us to who you make us to be - not for our sake alone, but also for your sake and our neighbor's sake, all creatures, great and small. Amen.



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STOP FOUR: WORSHIP ON THE LAWN

Worshipping outside, away from the formality of a church building, we are reminded of this significant truth. In worship, we should always remember that God is our Creator. You are invited to join us on Sunday mornings at 8:30 am on the church lawn as we worship in God's Cathedral - under the trees, accompanied by bird song.



WORD FOR REFLECTION: AWARE

Oftentimes, we continue with "business as usual" without thinking about the consequences of our actions. When we make choices with intention, we can ask how it affects our calling as caretakers of God's creation.

READ John 2: 13-22

LISTEN Mary Oliver's Poem "Of The Empire."

SCAN ME!



WALKING THE TALK

Come to an outdoor worship service, reflect on the message, and draw nearer to God. When we make time for a day of rest, a sabbath day, we slow down and remember how God made the heavens and the earth - - then rested. And it was good! Not sure Outdoor Worship is for you? Our worship services are recorded and archived online, so you can "try them out."

PRAY

God of passion and new life, give us the boldness we need to clear away old systems that destroy, and build new ones that care for creation, revive our sacred calling, and draw us closer to you. When righteous anger is fitting, or when compassionate patience is fitting, kindle it in our hearts, for the sake of your household. Amen.



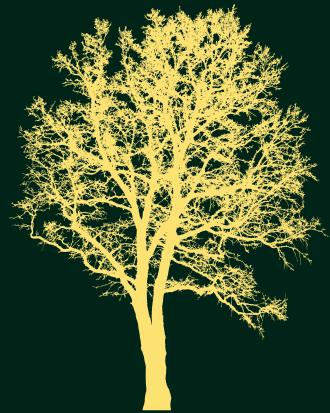
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STOP FIVE: TREES

Trees are a proven, affordable, natural climate benefit. Planting a tree is something that can be done today to help pull carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. Every tree planted is a step in the right direction. This Callery Pear is not native to our region. It has a weak wood and branch structure that is susceptible to ice storm damage. A better choice are native trees, which need less care and provide additional benefits to our ecosystem!



WORD FOR REFLECTION: LOVE

Reflect on the places, experiences and people you love and want to preserve. Where in nature have you experienced a closeness with our creator God?

READ John 3:14-21

SCAN ME!

LISTEN Mary Oliver's Poem "When I Am Among The Trees."



WALKING THE TALK

PLANT A TREE: Northeast Ohio is losing nearly 100 acres of tree canopy each year, due to pests, diseases, a changing climate and human activity. Holden Forests and Gardens People for Trees Campaign has a goal to equip us to plant and care for at least 15,000 new trees throughout Northeast Ohio by 2025. Let's help! Don't have room for a tree? Sponsor a tree planting! Look for resources to get started by scanning the QR code above.

PRAY

God of love and liberation, give us a vibrant spirit of hope and resolve. Help us to tell the story of your creation in ways that open up new avenues, new expressions of your love for the world. Help us to listen as creation groans, to heed the signs of the times. Shepherd us all forward in hope and love. Amen.



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"A vibrant, fair and regenerative future is possible, not when thousands of people do climate justice activism perfectly, but when millions of people do the best they can."

— Xiye Bastida

STOP 6: THE R'S OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

Being conscious of our daily choices is one way we can better care for God's creation. We've all heard the phrase, "reduce, reuse, recycle." What if we also "rethink" our consumption and "refuse" single use products? Could we "repair" what is broken? "Regift" what we don't need? Let our food "rot" by composting? And "respect" God's creation with our attention?



WORD FOR REFLECTION: OPPORTUNITY

We are living in what many of the Bible's authors called "kairos" time, "opportune time," an era when "the time has come." What actions can we take today to impact our decedents for the better? What opportunities do we have to nurture our planet to health?

READ John 12:20-33

SCAN ME!

LISTEN Mary Oliver's Poem "The Summer Day."



WALKING THE TALK

1. Rethink - Examine your consumption & waste habits.
2. Refuse - Say "no" to products you don't need or won't use.
3. Reduce - your purchases. Borrow things when you can.
4. Reuse - Upcycle items you would typically throw away. Get creative!
5. Repair everyday items instead of buying new ones. Try to fix things.
6. Regift (donate) items you no longer need instead of throwing them away.
7. Recycle - Learn to properly sort recycling and garbage.

PRAY

God of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, thank you for bringing us to "this hour." Bless us with poise and courage. Be with us when we feel troubled. Help us to trust in the seeds we plant, even and especially those whose fruit we may never see, whose harvest will bless generations to come. Amen.



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