



**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

(Congregational)  
13740 Pearl Road  
Strongsville, Ohio 44136

**Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall**  
Designated Minister

**DECEMBER 17, 2017 – 10:00 A.M.**

**WELCOME!**

We are grateful you chose to worship with us this morning. No matter who you are and where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

For questions about our church and ministries, you may call the church at (440) 238-6697.

Please complete your Attendance Card and place it into the offering plate. We hope to see you again soon!

† *Please stand as you are comfortable.*

**BAND PRELUDE** "O Lord of Light, Who Made the Stars"

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** Rachel Zielinski

† **CALL TO WORSHIP** *after Psalm 126* Gina Gigliotti

Leader: We gather to worship with expectations: God revealed in new and astonishing ways.

**People: God comes to us in real time. God comes to us in dreams.**

Leader: Sometimes God's presence is hard to take in – difficult to believe.

**People: Oh God, we long to believe. Help our unbelief!**

Leader: God is present here. God is working in our midst.

**People: Then our mouths are filled with laughter, Our tongues shout out with joy!**

† **HYMN 256** "Love Has Come!"

**LIGHTING THE 3<sup>rd</sup> ADVENT CANDLE** The Candle of Joy  
The Clotworthy Family

Leader: Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world; those who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."  
Christ's messages of Hope and Love are celebrated in the lighting of the first two Advent Candles; this morning, we light the third candle, the Candle of Joy.

**People: We thank God for this season of hope and joy, for the freedom to celebrate and worship the One who is worthy of our faith and praise.**

Leader: Despite all the questions and uncertainty, Mary worshipped God, saying, "My soul magnifies the Lord!"  
This morning, we light the third candle, the Candle of Joy.

**People: With Mary, we affirm the goodness of God**

in every circumstance.  
**May the Joy of Christ fill our lives, even on days filled with uncertainty.**

Leader: Let us sing together the third verse of Hymn 245, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

**HYMN 245** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" Verse 3

O Come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
And order all things, far and nigh;  
To us the path of knowledge show  
And cause us in her ways to go.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

**SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**PASTORAL PRAYER and THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father, 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.**

**PRAYER RESPONSE** "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

**CHOIR ANTHEM** "Bethlehem" Lloyd Larson

**SCRIPTURE READING** Luke 1:26-38

**THE OFFERINGS**

**OFFERTORY** "He Is Born, Il Est Né"

† **DOXOLOGY 815** Tune: *Old Hundredth*  
Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise Him, all creatures here below.  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

† **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT** "The Bells of Christmas"

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

† **HYMN 258** "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

† **BENEDICTION**

† **CHOIR RESPONSE** "Who Would Send a Baby?" Mary Kay Beall

† **POSTLUDE** "One Small Child"

**This morning's altar flowers** are given . . .

*In Honor of Grant and Terri Morgan's Wedding Anniversary on December 16*  
The Morgan and Zielinski Families

*I miss you every day, Richard*  
Melinda Slavik

*In Remembrance of Mom and Dad*  
*on their wedding anniversary together in heaven*  
With love, Margaret

**THE BELLS OF CHRISTMAS**

*A Christmas Pageant Written by*  
Elena Joyce

**Director of Music:** Elena Taylor  
**Choral Accompanist:** Eli Manos  
**Liturgist for Worship:** Gina Gigliotti

**Narrator:** Olivia Clotworthy  
**Cute Bell Ringer:** Penny Zielinski  
**Friendly Bell Ringer:** Oliver Zielinski  
**Grumpy Man:** Ben Clotworthy  
**Grumpy Guy:** Ian Rolland  
**Frazzled Shopper:** Clara Barry  
**Harried Shopper:** Emma Clotworthy  
**Overwhelmed Shopper:** Alysha Rolland  
**Greedy Tween:** Teddy Bickley  
**Spoiled Tween:** Christian Habart-Scott  
**Mary:** Anna Bickley  
**Joseph:** Christopher Dragony  
**Gentle Shepherd:** Russell Bickley  
**Kind Shepherd:** Luke Giuliano  
**Sweet Angel:** McKenzi Dragony  
**Darling Angel:** Rowan Garcia  
**Adorable Angel:** Riley Hawk  
**Cuddly Lamb:** Jack Hayes  
**Baby Jesus:** Lacey Jane Marshall

**Songs**

"Ring the Bells" (Chancel Choir & Handbells)  
"Ukrainian Bell Carol" (Piano)

"I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" (Congregational Hymn 267, vs. 1,5)  
"Caroling, Caroling" (Chancel Choir)  
"Ring Little Bells" (Children's Choir)

**Sunday School Superintendents:** Irene Joyce & Jamie Trinckes  
**Sunday School Teachers:** Rachel Zielinski, Lora Rung, Dan Davis,  
Jamie Trinckes, & Irene Joyce

**Special Thanks** to Ingrid Dickson, Irene Jannsohn, Rev. Heidi,  
Doug Thorn, Jim Heinrich, Sharon Heinrich,  
and our Sunday School families



Our steeple will light the sky this week . . .

Happy Birthday Today to Bill Craig  
With love, Mom

Wishing Church Family and Friends a Blessed Christmas and a  
Happy, Prosperous New Year – God bless you one and all!  
Love, Lola

**Diaconate** meets Tuesday, December 19, at 7:00 p.m.

**Joining the Church** – If you are interested in becoming a member of Strongsville UCC, please either inform Pastor Heidi or call the church office, (440) 238-6697. Thank you!

**Advent Potluck Meal** will take place after worship today. All are welcome!

**The Christmas Fund** is a special offering of the United Church of Christ that provides direct financial assistance to retired and active United Church of Christ authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you checks. A ministry of the Pension Boards, the offering will be received TODAY. Offering envelopes are in the pew racks.

**Gift Cards** – You can easily get your Christmas gift-giving handled while helping your church by purchasing gift cards from the Organ Restoration Fund. We have a large variety of cards from restaurants, department stores, grocery stores, home improvement stores, clothing stores, sporting goods stores, and even hair salons. Please visit the gift-card table in Pilgrim Hall and see Jim Joyce. **Deadline to receive your order on Christmas Eve is TODAY.**

**Family of Faith Tree** – If you are new to the church or haven't yet added your special ornament to our tree in the Gathering Area, we invite you to donate an ornament that represents you or your family. Please do not bring an heirloom, since it will not be returned to you but will be used for years to come. Please place your ornament into the church office. A nametag will be prepared and attached to your ornament. Thank you!

**Stewardship Update** – 70 Estimate of Giving Cards have been received so far for a total of \$110,408. Estimate of Giving Cards will be gratefully accepted at any time. They are used in preparing the church budget. Thank you very much for your support of our church.

**Nursery – Helpers are needed** because of the increase in number of children. A signup sheet is in Pilgrim Hall. For questions, please contact Amanda Hawk, Sarah Hayes, or Kelly Bickley. In addition, **the nursery needs a new flat screen TV.** If you would like to donate one, please see Amanda Hawk.

**Mission Outreach** distributed the hats, scarves and mittens from our Mitten Tree in the gathering area this past week. Thanks to the always amazing generosity of our congregation, there was enough abundance to give to Brookside Center, the Refugee Relocation program of Cleveland, and the Puerto Rican immigration (post Hurricane Maria).

**Photo Directory** – Please contact Sarah Hayes or Cathy Hawk today to get your picture re-taken **if your first picture was taken before September.**

**Church Christmas Mail Box** is for giving Christmas greetings to church friends and is available in Pilgrim Hall. Please check the box for greetings you receive. Please do not put cards into the box for those who are not in town for Christmas, because the church office cannot mail your personal greetings. Cards left after Christmas will be discarded.

**Fit Club** will go on hiatus until Wednesday January 10, at 7pm. Everyone at any level is welcome to join. It's a perfect opportunity to get your New Year's resolution to be more active started! Fit Club is fun and fellowship while getting your body moving!

**The Wednesday Lunch Program really needs volunteers** especially in January when four regular volunteers will go south for the winter. To help, please contact Kenn Oerkfitz, Betty Craig, or the church, (440) 238-6697. Thank you!

**Adult Social Club** will NOT meet in December.

**2018 All-Family Winter Retreat at Pilgrim Hills** – The Church's Annual All-Family Winter Retreat will return to Temple Hills this year and will take place on President's Day weekend 2018: February 16, 17 and 18. The sign-up sheet to attend and the sign-up sheet for things to bring and to volunteer will soon be posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Please reserve your spot and room now, as rooms will be first-come, first-served. The cut-off to sign up—January 14—will be strictly enforced this year. We will not have the same luxury as we've had in the past, in which we were able to take reservations up until the event weekend. Space is limited to 68 attendees. Also, please let us know if you have any special dietary needs. Finally, those that wish to come down on Saturday only—we would be happy to have you there, but we also need your reservation by January 14, and the cost is \$10 per meal. Please contact Irene Joyce or Rachel Zielinski if you have any questions. **Here is the cost breakdown (no change from last year):**

**Adults** (12 and up): \$70

**Children** (6-11): \$15

**Children** (5 and under): FREE

**Special dates for the retreat are:**

**January 14, 2018:** Reservations close AND MONEY IS DUE.

**January 28, 2018:** All special dietary needs must be reported.

**February 11, 2018:** Retreat planning meeting in the church after worship

### CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Sunday, December 24 – Morning Worship at 10am

Sunday, December 24 – Evening Candlelight Worship at 11pm

### OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$3,865  
Weekly Offering Received 12/10/2017 \$2,477  
Difference \$1,388



SERVING	TODAY – 12/17	12/24 – 10AM
Advent Wreath	The Clotworthy Family	The Oerkfitz Family
Liturgist	Gina Gigliotti	Jim Studer
Greeters	The Bickley Family	Dawn and Alysha Rolland
Ushers	Ted and Kelly Bickley	Volunteers Needed
Coffee Hour	Jim and Linda Dettmer	Volunteers Needed

**The signup charts for Greeters, Ushers, and Coffee Hour for 2018** are posted on Pilgrim Hall's bulletin board. Please sign up to help in these areas if you are able. Your help is appreciated very much. Thank you!

**Annual Reports** are due in the church office on December 31, 2017. The Annual Meeting of the congregation is Sunday, January 28, 2018.

**Nominating Committee** – Many offices in the church will be available for the coming year. Please consider saying yes when a member of the Nominating Committee asks you to serve.

### OUR PRAYER LIST

*If you or a family member would like a visit, please call the church at (440) 238-6697. Please provide updates for this list. Thank you.*

**Long-Term Care or Homebound:** Betty Bushea, Margot James, Janet Kato at Kemper House, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields

**Church Family:** Betty Babics, the Grabski/Williams Family, Lacey (daughter of Amanda Hawk), Steve Herzog, Paul Hirt at Northwestern Health Care Center in Berea, Martha Liebert, Bill Ritchie, Betsey Santomen (wife of Rev. Joe Santomen), Rev. Oommen Thomas, Leah Tressa Forget, Kyle Woodward

**Extended Church Family:** Luke Bazan (friend of Judi Pavisich's granddaughter), Donna Briggs (mother-in-law of Judi Pavisich's daughter), the Brlas family, Audrey Curry (mother of Pam Keenen), Kim Filiautraut (friend of Sarah Keenen), Joyce Freeman (sister of Carol Woodward), Elizabeth Fulford (friend of Lora Rung), Sue Grunenwald (friend of Sharon Heinrich), Diane Mason (friend of Lora Rung), Pat Masuga (mother of Dan), Carrol Riley (father of Marjorie Morrison), the Sink family (friends of Judy Pavisich's granddaughter), Keith Stewart (cousin of Carol Woodward), Frank Toth (father of Rob), Sheena Toth (mother of Dale), Joe Valli (brother-in-law of Vicky and Dan Masuga)

### DECEMBER 2017

- 17 Sun Sunday School Christmas Pageant during worship  
Advent Potluck Meal after church  
Deadline for Gift Card Orders – to get them by Christmas Eve
- 19 Tue Diaconate Meeting, 7pm
- 20 Wed Free Lunch Program, 11:30am to 12:30pm
- 24 Sun Christmas Eve Worship at 10am and 11pm (**No** 7:30 service)
- 25 Mon Christmas Day
- 27 Wed Free Lunch Program, 11:30am-12:30pm  
Fit Club, 7pm
- 28 Thu Deadline to report special dietary needs for Winter Retreat
- 31 Sun Penny Sunday  
Annual Reports are due.

### MUSIC REHEARSALS DURING THE WEEK

**Band** (Adults and Students in Grades 6-12) – 8pm on Wednesdays

**Bell Choir** – 7pm on Thursdays

**Chancel Choir** – 8pm on Thursdays

