



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Congregational)
13740 Pearl Road
Strongsville, Ohio 44136

Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall
Designated Minister

DECEMBER 10, 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 “Advent Medley”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rachel Zielinski

BELL INTROIT “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming” arr. McChesney

† CALL TO WORSHIP From Isaiah 40:1-5

Leader: Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her that she has served her term,
that the penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord’s hand
double for all her sins.

People: A voice cries out:
“In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Leader Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.

People: Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”

† HYMN 763 “The King Is Coming”

LIGHTING THE 2ND ADVENT CANDLE The Candle of Love

Leader: Jesus makes the promise, “I am the light of the world;
those who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will
have the light of life.” This message reminds us of God’s
deep, unfailing Love for each of God’s children.

People: Thank God for this season of hope and love in a world
where sometimes loving one another seems nearly
impossible.

Leader: We are God’s family. Today and every day, in our words
and in the way we live our lives, Love wins. Knowing and
believing in the power of Love, we light the Second
Advent Candle – the Candle of Love, the Love Jesus
brought for all people

People: Jesus’ promise of the unconditional Love of God
illuminates our souls. We light the Candle of Love.

Leader: Let us sing together, the second verse of “O Come, O
Come, Emmanuel.”

HYMN 245 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” Verse 2

O Come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death’s dark shadows put to flight.

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 Native American Flute

CHOIR ANTHEM “Celtic Christmas Blessing” Craig Curry

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

THE OFFERINGS

BELL OFFERTORY “Good Christian Men, Rejoice” arr. McChesney

† 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

SCRIPTURE READING Mark 1:1-8

SERMON “Harbinger of Joy”

† HYMN 240 “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

† BENEDICTION

† CHOIR RESPONSE “Who Would Send a Baby?” Mary Kay Beall

† BAND POSTLUDE “One Small Child”

This morning’s altar flowers are given . . .

In Memory of All Our Loved Ones
Lola and Family

UPDATE FROM YOUR PULPIT SEARCH COMMITTEE

To date, we have received 21 ministerial profiles. The Committee has been
carefully and prayerfully evaluating the ones we have so far, and are in the
process of discerning which of these would be a good fit and a possibility to
become our settled pastor. Each profile is between 20 and 30 pages long,
and we each read and all discussed the merits of every one. After that, we
narrowed the list down to 10, which we are ranking and deciding which of
these to further explore. The process continues! Your ongoing support and
prayers for us are gratefully felt. Please feel free to bring any questions or
concerns to any one of us. Thank you.

Your Pulpit Search Committee

Ted Bickley, Judy Carte, Kristen Clotworthy,
Jim Dettmer, Ingrid Dickson, Sally Herzog, Bill Schneider

Our steeple will light the sky this week . . .

In Celebration of Chuck McDougall
on an unnamed milestone birthday on December 5

Happy Birthday today to Ken Mehalko, Suzi Foley and Chris Minnick!

Women’s Fellowship will distribute their cheeseball orders today.

Children have Music Rehearsal on Tuesday, December 12, at 6:30 p.m.
and Pageant Rehearsal on Wednesday, December 13, at 7:00 p.m.

Trustees meet Tuesday, December 12, at 7:00 p.m.

Adult Social Club – A reminder to those who made reservations, the club
will go to Stan Hywet Hall this Thursday, December 14, for "Deck the Hall
2017." We will meet at church to carpool at 4:00 p.m.



BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE
of Remembrance and Healing
this Friday, December 15, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Come, rest in the arms of Jesus as we pause to rest,
remember and celebrate our loved ones together.
All are welcome—especially you.

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!

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.

The Sunday School will present their Christmas Pageant in worship next Sunday, December 17. A brief rehearsal is scheduled for this Wednesday, December 13, at 7:00 p.m.

Advent Potluck Meal will take place after worship next Sunday, December 17. Please bring a main dish; plus either a side dish, salad, or dessert to share; and your own table service. All are welcome!

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 have would like to donate one, please see Amanda Hawk.

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 next Sunday, DECEMBER 17.**

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 Christmas greetings. Cards left after Christmas will be discarded.

Penny Sunday – Thank you to everyone who gave on November 26! \$113.26 was collected for the National Youth Advocacy Program, which benefits foster children in Cuyahoga County. (Plus \$20 was received for the Strongsville Food Bank.) The Sunday School added to that total, and we sponsored four young children for their Giving Tree, buying clothes, toys, books, and other necessities. Also, \$120 in gift cards was donated to Beth Giuliano's inner-city school project. The December Penny Sunday collection will be placed in the Sunday School's account to replenish these expenditures. Thanks again to our congregation for their generous hearts!

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

Mission Outreach has made two donations to benefit our Veterans. We gave \$400 to Help for Heroes in Columbia Station. This small foundation is a hands-on project that provides used furniture to homeless veterans transitioning to a place of their own. The second one was \$100 to the Veterans Outreach at the Food Pantry in Berea. They provide food, toiletries and clothing to needy veterans as well as those transitioning from homelessness. These funds were generated from our recent “Around the World Baskets” raffle. Thank you for being, as always, a caring congregation.

OFFERINGS RECEIVED		
Weekly Offering Needed		\$3,865
Weekly Offering Received 12/3/2017		<u>\$5,051</u>
Difference		\$1,186



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.

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 is received annually on the Sunday before Christmas, which is next Sunday, December 17, this year. Offering envelopes will be in the pew racks.

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.

2018 All-Family Winter Retreat at Pilgrim Hills – The Church’s Annual All-Family Winter Retreat will return to Templed 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 DUE
January 28, 2018: All special dietary needs must be reported
February 11, 2018: Retreat planning meeting in the church after the worship service

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Sunday, December 17 – Children’s Christmas Pageant in Worship at 10am
followed by Advent Potluck Meal in Pilgrim Hall

Sunday, December 24 – Morning Worship at 10am

Sunday, December 24 – Evening Candlelight Worship at 11pm

SERVING	TODAY – 12/10	NEXT SUNDAY – 12/17
Advent Wreath	The Rolland Family	The Clotworthy Family
Liturgist	Bruce Keenen	Gina Gigliotti
Greeters	The Clotworthy Family	The Bickley Family
Ushers	Jim & Linda Dettmer	Ted and Kelly Bickley
Coffee Hour	Myron Costin	Jim and Linda Dettmer

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, Martha Liebert, Bill Ritchie, Betsey Santomen (wife of Rev. Joe Santomen), Jan Stough, Rev. Oommen Thomas, Leah Tressa Forget, Kyle Woodward

Extended Church Family: Luke Bazan (friend of Judi Pavisich’s grand-daughter), Donna Briggs (mother-in-law of Judi Pavisich’s daughter), the Brlas family, Audrey Curry (mother of Pam Keenen), Kim Filiatraut (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), Piper Masuga (granddaughter of Dan and Vicky and great-granddaughter of Lola Millhoane), 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

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| 10 | Sun | Delivery of Cheeseballs by Women’s Fellowship |
| 12 | Tue | Children’s Choir Rehearsal for pageant music, 6:30pm
Trustees Meeting, 7pm |
| 13 | Wed | Free Lunch Program, 11:30am-12:30pm
Children’s Pageant Rehearsal, 7pm |
| 14 | Thu | Money due for Winter Retreat
Adult Social Club to Stan Hywet Hall, meet at church at 4pm |
| 15 | Fri | January 2018 Newsletter Deadline
Blue Christmas Service of Remembrance and Healing,7:30pm |
| 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

Children for the Pageant Music – Tuesday, 6:30pm

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

Bell Choir – 7pm on Thursdays

Chancel Choir – 8pm on Thursdays

