



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Congregational)

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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor

Sunday, December 11, 2022 – 10 A.M.

Third Sunday of Advent



WELCOME!

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

† Please stand as you are comfortable.

As you enter the sanctuary, welcome one another.
As you hear the chimes ring, settle your mind in silence.
As worship begins, welcome God's Holy Spirit.

BELL PRELUDE "O Come All Ye Faithful" arr. Larson

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Sally Herzog

BELL INTROIT "Still, Still, Still" arr. Moglebust

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Be patient! The time is coming when we will celebrate the birth of Jesus,

People: When we will sing and rejoice, dancing with everlasting joy.

Leader: But for now, be patient, as we wait in this time called Advent,
People: When God speaks through dreams and visions, and we are invited to dance

down the holy way into the kingdom.

Leader: For this is Advent, as we prepare to join the world in celebrating the Creator of goodness and hope,

People: When those who limp will learn a new dance, when those who have no voice lead the joyful chorus. Come, Lord Jesus, Come.

† HYMN 760 "While We Are Waiting, Come"

LIGHTING THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE (JOY) Doug Turnbull & Greta Rich

Reader: On the third Sunday of Advent, we feel the joy of God that comes to us through the birth of Jesus. We remember how Mary sang a song of joy before Jesus was born, of how God was going to make all things new.

People: We sing our own songs of joy, knowing that even when we are sad now, even when we grieve, our mourning will turn to dancing.

Reader: We light this third candle for the joy we know in Christ Jesus.

People: Come, festively sing while awaiting the birth, join angels in dancing from heaven to earth. Wave banners of Good News! Lift high thankful praise! One candle is lit for the Joy of these days!

HYMN 245 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (verse 3)

A READING FROM THE PSALMS Psalm 146: 5-10
(New International Version)

Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God.
He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—
He remains faithful forever.
He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry.
The Lord sets prisoners free, the Lord gives sight to the blind,
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous.
The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.
The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the Lord.

Leader: The Word of God, for us, the people of God;
People: Thanks be to God.

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (in unison)
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.

BELL ANTHEM "What Child is This?" arr. Hakes

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "I Wonder as I Wander" Traditional

† 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.

† DEDICATING OUR LIVES AND OUR GIFTS

A READING FROM THE PROPHETS **Isaiah 35: 1-10**
(New Living Translation)
And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind
and unplug the ears of the deaf.
The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will sing for joy!
Springs will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams will water the wasteland.
The parched ground will become a pool,
and springs of water will satisfy the thirsty land.
Marsh grass and reeds and rushes will flourish where desert jackals once lived.

SERMON

† HYMN 38 "Ye Servants of God"

† BENEDICTION

I will light Candles this Christmas: Candles of joy despite all sadness. Candles of hope where despair keeps watch. Candles of courage for fears ever present. Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days. Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens. Candles of love to inspire all my living. Candles that will burn all the year long. Amen.

† RESPONSE /POSTLUDE "Joyful, Joyful" Beethoven

PLEASE NOTE: Our worship services are video recorded each week and posted on our YouTube channel for all to enjoy. Just go to strongsvilleucc.com, select **Worship**, and click on **Service Videos**.

SERVING

TODAY – DECEMBER 11

NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 18

Judi Pavisich	Greeters	Volunteer needed
Linda Ponstingle	Liturgist	Dave Williams
Bobbie Krisak, Roz Fotos	Ushers	Bill Schneider, Roz Fotos
Chris Abruzzino/Riley Marshall	Acolytes	Oliver & Matilda Sekorky
Tom Foley	Director of Music	Tom Foley
Mike Elkins	Associate Director of Music	Mike Elkins
Sharon Heinrich	Organist	Sharon Heinrich
Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich	Sound	Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich
Chancel Choir	Special Music	Children's Choir/Carol Konet

The altar flowers are given—
In loving memory of my parents, Alma and Caleb Higgins —
Diana Creecy



Our steeple will light the sky this week—
Happy Birthday to Bill Craig on December 17th—Love, Mom

FRESH FLOWERS ARE BACK! Please sign up for 2023 altar flowers on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall.

Happy Birthday today to Robert Sperber, Bob Kovatich and Megan Denman!

FAMILY OF FAITH TREE

If you have not donated an ornament for yourself/your family, you may bring it to the church office and your ornament will join the others on our tree! PLEASE NOTE: Ornaments will not be returned, but will reappear on our tree year after year.



A NOTE OF THANKS—
Today, we thank the **Bell Choir, Tom Foley, Sharon Heinrich, and Mike Elkins** for sharing their music with us today.

OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed	\$3,649.37
Last Week's Offering Received	\$4,100.00
Difference	+ \$450.63

Thank you very much for your support.
Pledge cards received to date: 60



THE CHRISTMAS FUND



Formerly known as Veterans of the Cross, this special offering of the United Church of Christ 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 throughout December. Offering envelopes are in the pew racks.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

- The Board of Trustees will meet on the 2nd Tuesday of the month, **December 13th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Diaconate will meet on the **second Monday** of the month, **December 12th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Official Board will have an email meeting in December.



OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Ruth Milidonis, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar

Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Joan Beckwith, Lloyd Bridle, Mary Carey, Gina Cathcart, Kathy Cockrell, Betty Craig, Christina Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Sam Cuyler, Sr., Sue Hawk, Paul Hirt, Bruce Keenen, Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Len Lane, Judy Maur, Reggie McCray, Laurie Meister, Roy Merkle, Michele Mihlack, Lola Millhoane, Kenn Oerkfitz, Gary Paul, Sandy Pogozeleski, Joyce Reed, Dorothy & Bill Ritchie, Ginger Rothel, Tracy Seneff, Peter Smith, Maggie Struhar, Sharon Wilson, Dave Williams, Janis Williamson, Claire Wills, Marty Winch, Rachel Zielinski, Mary Ellen Zimmerman



Extended Church Family: Dorene Baldrige, Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Ron Colosimo (Judi Pavisich's friend), John Dickson (Greg's dad), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Jennifer Gleichauf (Don & Sandy's daughter-in-law), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Tiffany Hassel (Judi Pavisich's daughter-in-law), Julie Kowell (Sarah Cathcart Wilhoit's friend), Ed Kuhn (Sandy & Don Gleichauf's friend), Andrew Majoros (Michele Mihlack's cousin), Diane Mason (Lora Rung's friend), Rudy Matjazic (Judi Pavisich's friend, Donna McDonald (the Ritchies' friend), Zachary McKeever (Pastor Heidi and Chuck's great-nephew), Linda McNabb (Ginger Rothel's sister-in-law), Heather Overman (friend of Judi Pavisich), Mae O'Shea (Sandy O'Shea's mom), Thomas O'Shea (Sandy's dad), Jeff Peacock, Terry Robson (Barb & Mark Camp's friend), Mike Rung (Lora's brother), Tina Serrano (Elliott Joyce's grandma), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Vicky Smith (Venner Clarinets), Bruce Unger (Sally Herzog's friend), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Weston (Chelsea Cathcart's friend's baby), Tom (friend of Judi Pavisich), The people of Ukraine, victims of violence, those affected by severe weather

OPT-IN: Please contact Pastor Heidi if you would like to pray for others via the email prayer chain. h.e.denman@gmail.com

**WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP
CANDY SALE**



The Women's Fellowship is selling candy after our worship services TODAY!

We have dark and light chocolate candies –

- CLUSTERS: Raisin, Coconut, Peanut, or Marshmallow** \$4.00
- BARK: Pecan or Pretzel** \$4.00
- Chocolate Dipped Pretzels** \$3.00

Please bring cash or check. The proceeds of this fundraiser will be donated to Laura's Home, a place where women and children can find help, safety, healing, and empowerment.

**PLAN TO ATTEND THESE 2 LIVE MUSIC
EVENTS AT OUR CHURCH!**



TODAY at 7 p.m.: Swinging Sounds of Christmas Jazz Concert, featuring the Strongsville City Jazz Swing Band, followed by a wine reception. Tickets are \$10 each and are on sale now!

Next Sunday, December 18th at 7 p.m.: Christmas Cantata "Peace" Our Chancel Choir, in cooperation with the Columbia United Methodist Church choir, under the direction of **Tom Foley** and accompanied by **Mike Elkins** and **Sharon Heinrich** with special guest musicians (including **Robert Foley**, **Brian King**, and **Bob Faulkner**) will present this beautiful cantata. There is no admission charge for this program. Cake and coffee will be served following the performance.

THRIFT SHOP

The Thrift Shop is OPEN on Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. but we will have special bonus hours in December. Come and shop lots of interesting merchandise. Donations are being accepted during those hours, but please try to limit your donations to what you can carry downstairs.



SPECIAL DAYS & TIMES:

- Thursday, December 15 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Thursday, December 22 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 28 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- CLOSED THURSDAY DECEMBER 29**
- Friday, December 30 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

FREE LUNCH FOR ALL

Wednesdays 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

We have room for YOU! Please join us for a nutritious meal and warm fellowship.



Reminder: For the safety of our volunteers and friends, when the Strongsville City Schools are closed on a Wednesday for the weather, the Free Lunch for All will not be serving lunch.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS MAIL BOX

To send Christmas greetings to fellow members and friends, the church "mail box" will again be available in the Gathering Area. Please remember to check the box for greetings you receive.



Also, please do not put cards in the box for friends who are not in town for Christmas. The church office cannot mail your personal Christmas cards. Cards left after Christmas will be discarded. Thank you.

GIFT CARDS

GET YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING DONE AND BENEFIT THE CHURCH!



You can order gift cards by calling **Jim Joyce** at 216-267-5043 in advance with your order. **Limited stock is available for purchase on Sunday mornings.**

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT IS NEXT SUNDAY!



The Sunday School Christmas Pageant will be on next week, December 18th, during our 10 a.m. worship service.

Please plan to stay after church for the dress rehearsal today.

ALSO, After the Pageant worship service, join us in Pilgrim Hall for Jingle & Mingle--refreshments, fellowship, and a special visit from someone from the North Pole! Donations of baked goods would be a great addition to the celebration—please see Jennifer Barry if you can donate cookies or other goodies.



MEMORIAL SERVICE TO HONOR THE LIFE OF CHARLES (CHUCK) McDOUGALL

Thursday, December 29, 2022 at 11 a.m., followed by a luncheon and fellowship in Pilgrim Hall. If you are able to provide a side dish for the luncheon, please see the sign-up sheet in Pilgrim Hall.

NEWS FROM THE KITCHEN

Did you know? The "tip jar" you see next to the coffee on Sunday mornings is there for a reason. The "tips" go directly to keeping the coffee, tea, sugar, creamer, etc., supplied. Your generosity is appreciated!



WOULD YOU LIKE A WAY TO SERVE GOD AND SERVE YOUR CHURCH AT THE SAME TIME? How about volunteering to serve on a church board or committee?

The Nominating Committee, through the Official Board, will be looking for church members to fill the many open positions on our boards.

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. Some of the positions that are available include:

Diaconate, which oversees the worship operations and church services. The committees of the Diaconate are Acolytes, Altar, Coffee Hour, Funeral, Greeters, Membership, Nursery, Pastoral Relations, Special Events, Ushers and Church Family Care Team.

Board of Trustees, which oversees the finances and physical plant of the church. The committees of the Trustees are Building and Grounds, Finance, and Long-Range Planning and Memorial/Endowment.

Mission & Outreach, which sponsors projects and our church's benevolence in the local, national, and international communities, including the 5 for 5 offerings through the United Church of Christ

Stewardship, which administers a yearly campaign to assess and inspire giving of time, talent, and treasure

Christian Education, which oversees the Sunday School and Adult Education programs

Music Committee, which supervises all aspects of the Music Ministry

Remember the old but true saying, *Many hands make light work*. Plan to be a part of one of these boards or committees. Thank you for your consideration.





You shop. Amazon gives.

DON'T FORGET!

If you're doing your Christmas shopping online, why not benefit the church while you make your purchases from Amazon? It's incredibly easy! Here's what you do:

1. Instead of typing amazon.com into your search bar, type in **smile.amazon.com**.
2. Select United Church of Christ Congregational Strongsville by clicking this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1298100>
3. Shop as you would normally—that's it!

Your addresses, billing information, and shopping cart are still saved and your Prime membership privileges still apply. A small percentage of your purchase price will go toward supporting the church.

