



**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
(Congregational)  
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**Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor**  
**Sunday, December 13, 2020 – Online**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**

**OPENING MUSIC** "Allegro Vivace from Romanian Christmas Suite" arr. Dobriencescu

## **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**INTROIT** "The First Noel" arr. Elkins

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

When God is made known in our community, we will sing "Glory!" to our God; we will rejoice in our Savior's birth. Our mouths will be filled with laughter, our joy uncontainable. We will proclaim: Look! See what the Lord has done! Our lives will declare the Hope of the Lord! We wept; we mourned. Now, Joy comes with the morning light. God has picked us up where we fell; God is keeping the promises made long ago. **Thanks be to God!**

## **HYMN "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"**

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of love.  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee, Opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away.  
Giver of immortal gladness, Fill us with the light of day!

All Thy works with joy surround Thee, Earth and heav'n reflect Thy rays.  
Stars and angels sing around Thee, Center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
Chanting bird and flowing fountain Call us to rejoice in Thee!

Thou art giving and forgiving, Ever blessing, ever blest,  
Wellspring of the joy of living, Ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother, All who live in love are Thine.  
Teach us how to love each other; Lift us to the joy divine!

Mortals join the mighty chorus Which the morning stars began;  
Love divine is reigning o'er us, Leading us with mercy's hand.  
Ever singing, march we onward, Victors in the midst of strife.  
Joyful music leads us sunward In the triumph song of life!

CCLI Song # 25321 Edward Hodges | Henry Van Dyke | Ludwig van Beethoven  
© Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain

## **LIGHTING THE THIRD CANDLE OF ADVENT: JOY**

**The Zielinski Family**

On this third Sunday of Advent, we feel the joy of God that comes to us through the birth of Jesus. We remember Mary singing a song of joy, a song of how God was making all things new. We sing our own songs of joy, knowing that even when we are sad or lonely, even when we grieve, our mourning will turn to dancing. We light this third candle for the joy we know in Christ Jesus.

## **PRAYER AS WE LIGHT THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE:**

**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.**

## **RESPONSE**

**"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"**

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.

## **FIRST READING**

**Isaiah 61 excerpts** (The Message)

The Spirit of GOD, the Master, is upon me  
because GOD has anointed me.  
He has sent me to preach good news to the poor,  
to heal the heartbroken;  
to announce freedom to all captives, to pardon all prisoners.  
GOD sent me to announce the year of his grace—  
a celebration of God's destruction of our enemies—  
and to comfort all who mourn;  
To care for the needs of all who mourn in Zion,  
give them bouquets of roses instead of ashes,  
Messages of joy instead of news of doom.

## **SHARING AND PRAYERS**

## **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.**

**MUSIC** "Angels We Have Heard on High" Traditional French Carol

## **TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US**

## **BEING COMMUNITY WHEN WE ARE APART**

**OFFERTORY** "Appalachian Lullaby" arr. Englebretson

The City of Corinth was divided by their freedom. They worshipped many gods, and kept everything they had. When Paul came a-preaching, one of his first message to them was this: find common ground. Come together. When we look for that which we hold in common, we are better, stronger and of more use to God. We again commit our lives and our resources to finding new, innovative ways to continue to walk with Jesus, even during this season of pandemic. We appreciate your commitment to giving freely of your talents and your treasure, as you are able. Thank you. To give online, you may go to:

<https://www.myeoffering.com/eonline/index.php/dashboard/login/5027>

or mail your offering to **Strongsville UCC 13740 Pearl Road Strongsville, OH 44136**. You may also save a stamp and drop your envelope in the church mailbox at any time.

## SECOND READING

## 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Be cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live. Don't suppress the Spirit, and don't stifle those who have a word from the Master. On the other hand, don't be gullible. Check out everything, and keep only what's good. Throw out anything tainted with evil. May God himself, the God who makes everything holy and whole, make you holy and whole, put you together—spirit, soul, and body—and keep you fit for the coming of our Master, Jesus Christ. The One who called you is completely dependable. If he said it, he'll do it!

## REFLECTION

"Rejoice Always!

## HYMN

## "Joy to the World"

Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth receive her King.  
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room, And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing!

Joy to the world! The Savior reigns; Let men their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, Rocks hills and plains Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy!

No more let sins and sorrows grow, Nor thorns infest the ground.  
He comes to make His blessings flow, Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found, Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love, And wonders, wonders of His love!

CCLI Song # 24016 George Frideric Handel | Isaac Watts

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## BENEDICTION FOR A PEOPLE OF JOY

Be people of joy. Let joy live in your heart, and share the joy of Christ with all you meet. Share joy by seeing the good in one other. Share joy by remembering the good times, and hoping for more good times to come. Share joy by praying for our world. In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share joy. As you go out into the wonder of God's creation, share joy, peace, and hope with those you meet. Amen.

**POSTLUDE** "Andantino from Romanian Christmas Suite" arr. Dobriescu

## SERVING

## TODAY – DECEMBER 13

## NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 20

Irene Joyce

**Liturgist**

Irene Joyce

Tom Foley

**Director of Music**

Tom Foley

Mike Elkins

**Associate Director of Music**

Mike Elkins

Doug Thorn

**Sound**

Doug Thorn

Chuck McDougall

**Video**

Chuck McDougall

Venner Clarinet Quartet

**Special Music**

Barb Fraunfelder

The Zielinski Family

**Advent Readers**

The Rolland Family

## Additional song credits

**Allegro Vivace** from Romanian Christmas Suite, Traditional Folk Melody  
arranged by Ioan Dobriescu Music: Public Domain

**The First Noel** in the style of Erik Satie arranged by Mike Elkins CCLI Song # 31047 © Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain

**Angels We Have Heard on High** CCLI Song # 27721 Traditional French  
Carol Edward Shippen Barnes | James Chadwick © Words: Public Domain  
Music: Public Domain

**Appalachian Lullaby** Traditional Folk Melody, arranged by Jim  
Engelbretson

**Andantino** from Romanian Christmas Suite, Traditional Folk Melody  
arranged by Ioan Dobriescu Music: Public Domain

## CCLI License # 11237335

**The steeple will light the sky this week—**

*Happy Birthday to Bill Craig on December 17<sup>th</sup> --Love Mom*

*My Christmas Card to all my church family*

*With Love, Betty (Grammy) Craig*



Many thanks to the Venner Clarinet Quartet: Dick Ingersoll, Sr., Marc Paige, Vicki Smith, and Amy Draggas for recording music for today's service!

Thanks also to Rachel, Gary, Oliver, and Penny Zielinski for lighting the Third Candle of Advent: Joy.

### OUR PRAYER LIST

*Please provide updates for this list to the church office.*

**Long-Term Care or Homebound:** Janet Kato, Martha Liebert, Marge McKinney, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields

**Church Family:** Joan Beckwith, Adria Bond, Eddy Bond, Mary Carey, Elaine Coffey, Betty Craig, Christina Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Linda Elliott, Don Gleichauf, Sue Hawk, Steve Herzog, Paul Hirt, Carole Kapcar, Tony Koussa, Lori Kovatich, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Millie Lafave, Lacey Marshall, Brigitte Matchett, Judy Maur, Laurie Meister, Michele Mhlack, Lola Millhoane, Judi Pavisich, Joyce Reed, Dorothy and Bill Ritchie, Ginger Rothel, John & Maggie Struhar, Keith Sullen, Jamie & Josh Trinckes, Sharon Wilson, Sally Vetovitz, Peg Weakley, Claire Wills, Marty Winch

**Extended Church Family:** Dorene Baldridge, Jackie & Phil Berkheimer (Judi Pavisich's friends), Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Judy Carte's son-in-law, Ryan, Ruby Cuyler (Sam's sister), Donna Fargo (Sally Herzog's mom), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Kelly Kling (Strongsville Emergency Food Bank), Julie Kowell (Sarah Cathcart Wilhoit's friend), Diane Mason (Lora Rung's friend), Pat Masuga (Dan's mom), Donna McDonald (the Ritchies' friend), Zachary McKeever (Pastor Heidi and Chuck's great-nephew), Linda McNabb (Ginger Rothel's sister-in-law), Mae O'Shea (Sandy O'Shea's mom), Carrol Riley (Marjorie Morrison's dad), Terry Robson (the Camps' friend), Mike Rung (Lora's brother), Aneka & Lukas Scholtz (Irene Jannsohn's sister & brother-in-law), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Sherry Sheeks (Mark Camp's sister), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Brad Williams (Judi Pavisich's friend), Daphne Wilson (Irene Jannsohn's niece)

Please contact Pastor Heidi if you would like to pray for others via the email prayer chain.



### OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed	\$ 3,473.27
Last Week's Offering Received	\$ 4,551.00
Difference	\$ 1,077.73

*Thank you very much for your support of our church.*

### 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.



**Are you an online Christmas shopper?** If so, 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. **We received a check for \$33.57 from Amazon in November. Thank you!**



## NEED AN EASY WAY TO CHRISTMAS SHOP? GIFT CARDS!



You can still order gift cards by calling **Jim Joyce** at 216-267-5043 in advance with your order. Hurry—limited stock available! You may pick up your cards at the church office with your payment at a

convenient time. **Thank you to those who continue to support this project by purchasing gift cards!**



Our love and prayers to **Rachel and Gary Zielinski, Oliver and Penny** on the death of their uncle, **Toby Morgan**. Our sympathy is also extended to **Grant, Terri, Kennedy,**

**Madison, and Reagan Morgan** and to **Jane and Dick Deutsch**, Toby's sister and brother-in-law. The funeral was held on Friday, December 11, 2020.

## ANNUAL WINTER RETREAT

February 12-14, 2021  
at Tempel Hills Camp in Bellville, Ohio

As of now, we are planning for this event to take place in whatever safe form presents itself. This Retreat will be different than any other year, but we hope it will still be a time for fellowship with your family and perhaps a change of scenery. Plans will be extremely flexible and subject to change based on the camp's safety protocols.

Rachel Zielinski and Irene Joyce had a Zoom meeting with the Heartland Conference outdoor ministries administrator, Jill Frey, on December 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the possibilities. More information, including pricing and protocols, will be disseminated through email and Facebook. Please stay tuned...



## BABY CONGRATULATIONS

Many blessings to **Erik Joyce** and **Bryana Hitchens** on the birth of their son, **Elliott James Joyce**, on December 9, 2020. Congratulations also to big sister **Alaya Hitchens**, grandparents **Jim and Irene Joyce**, great-grandmother **Irene Jannsohn**, and uncle **Evan Joyce** and aunt **Elena Joyce** too!

## THRIFT SHOP NEWS

The Thrift Shop will be open for special last-minute shopping hours on **Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup>** and **Monday December 21<sup>st</sup>** from **6 p.m. until 8 p.m.**, along with their usual hours on Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. They will be closed on Christmas Eve, December 24<sup>th</sup>.



## ANNUAL REPORTS



Although we are not meeting in person, we will still be compiling our Annual Report. Chairs of church organizations: Annual reports are due in the church office on **January 8, 2021**. Please email your report to [strongsvilleucc@gmail.com](mailto:strongsvilleucc@gmail.com) and be kind to the Church Secretary by getting your reports in promptly during this unusual time. Thank you!!!

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**Financial Officers of all church organizations:** Please submit your financial records, reports, and bank statements to the church office for audit by January 4, 2021.

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**ADVENT GIFT FOR YOU—If you have not yet done so, please pick-up your Advent packet during church office hours—**  
**9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday through Friday!**

