



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Congregational)
13740 Pearl Road
Strongsville, Ohio 44136
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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall
Pastor



Sunday – December 2, 2018 – 10:00 A.M.
First Sunday of Advent
Sacrament of Communion

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.

PRELUDE "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" Traditional
Ken Mehalko, clarinet and Mike Elkins, keyboard

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Irene Joyce

INTROIT "Enter Now His Gates" Emig

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: In search of you, Holy God, we begin our journey to Bethlehem,
People: Trusting that you will lead us down the paths of faithfulness.

Leader: For you, Child Jesus, we quietly wait,
People: Our hearts filled with anticipation and hope, even in these days of doubt and worry.

Leader: With you, Holy Advent Spirit, we serve,
People: Waiting on those for whom this season is not one of joy, and those whose lives are empty of family and friends.

ALL: Come, Lord Jesus. We are waiting for you. Amen.

† HYMN 243 "Emmanuel" (Sing twice)

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST CANDLE OF ADVENT

The Candle of Hope Herbert Hampson and Janice Stough

Leader: Jesus said, "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 of HOPE is symbolized by the light of the first Advent Candle.

People: In a world made dark by human faithlessness and disbelief, we thank God for this season of light and hope.

Leader: We are all beloved children of the Most High. Today, as we remember those who struggle to find hope and meaning in their everyday lives, we light the first candle, the Candle of Hope. Our lives are filled with things and people that come and go, but the hope we find in Jesus Christ lasts forever. We light the first candle, the Candle of Hope.

People: May God grant to each and all of us the courage to keep the light of Hope burning in our hearts.

HYMN 245 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (First Verse)

A READING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT Jeremiah 33: 14-16

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

PRAYER RESPONSE "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" Traditional

ANTHEM "Prepare the Way of the Lord" Rowan

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

THE OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

† **DOXOLOGY** **HYMN 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**

A READING FROM THE GOSPELS Luke 21: 25-36

SERMON What are we waiting for?

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

WORDS OF CONFESSION, RECONCILIATION AND PARDON

Pastor: Sometimes, we unintentionally cause hurt with our words; our actions can bring pain. Even our well-intentioned plans can go awry, and relationship is broken. As we begin this season of waiting, we offer our misspoken words, our missteps and our brokenness to God asking forgiveness and desiring healing. Please join me, as we pray together;

People: Lord, fill us with the desire to be more compassionate; give us your wisdom to offer hope to a friend needing a kind word; plant in us the courage to give from our plenty to those who have little. Open our eyes, Good and Upright God, to see where we have failed to live the lives you would have us live. Hear our prayers in silence, as we seek your compassionate mercy and forgiveness; grace that makes us whole; and especially, lead us to desire to follow more closely where your Spirit is leading us, as individuals and as your faithful congregation. (silent prayer)

Pastor: Listen and believe, beloved Children of the Most High: In the bleak midwinter of our lives, redemption draws near in the form of a baby. Even in the darkness of our doubts, the kingdom of God is as close as the cradle. In the name of Jesus Christ, know and believe: you are forgiven!

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP "O Living Bread" Smith

All are welcome to come forward to partake of the Lord's Supper, or the communion servers will come to you if you wish.

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.

† **HYMN 572** "Blessed Assurance"

† **BENEDICTION**

† **RESPONSE** "Rejoice! Rejoice!" Traditional

† **POSTLUDE** "Go Out in Joy" R. C. Foley
Bobby Foley, Piano

SERVING

TODAY – DECEMBER 2 **NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 9**

Betty Craig	Liturgist	Pam Keenen
Linda Plain	Greeters	Lola Millhoane
Linda Plain & Marty Winch	Ushers	Volunteers needed
Volunteer needed	Coffee Hour	Volunteer needed
Tom Foley	Director of Music	Tom Foley
Mike Elkins	Associate Director of Music	Mike Elkins
Sharon Heinrich	Organist	Sharon Heinrich

The altar flowers are given—

*In honor of Sharon Heinrich, Tom Foley, and Mike Elkins
In celebration of Sarah Keenen's birthday on December 6th*

Our steeple will light the sky this week—

*In Memory of my Grandmother, Jane C. Graves,
for her birthday on December 4th!—Roberta Carpenter
In Memory of Doris Irene Soucie*

Happy Birthday today to Harry Wenzel!

PLEASE NOTE: *Our worship services are video recorded each week and posted on our YouTube channel for all to enjoy.*

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 at Danbury Senior Living in Brunswick, Janet Kato at Kemper House, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields

Church Family: Betty Babics, Rev. Larry and Christina Craig, Steve Herzog, Margot James, Bobbie Krisak, Karl Kuhlenschmidt, Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Phyllis Kurz (mother of Karen Morgan), Martha Liebert, Lacey Marshall (daughter of Amanda and John), Laurie Meister, Karen Morgan, Harvey Pincombe, Joyce Reed, Bill Ritchie, Linda Stepan, Barbara Toth, Sally Vetovitz, Kyle Woodward
Extended Church Family: Luke Bazan (friend of Judi Pavisich's granddaughter), Amy Carroll (sister of Marty Winch), Michele Cortese (friend of the Heinrichs), Kim Filiatraut (friend of Sarah Keenen), Joyce Freeman (sister of Carol Woodward), Elizabeth Fulford (friend of Lora Rung), Karen Greenway and daughters (friends of Judi Pavisich), Sam Harteis (friend of Reeds), Margaret Haught (mother of Jen Barry), Sandra Manos (mother of Eli), Diane Mason (friend of Lora Rung), Pat Masuga (mother of Dan), Zachary McKeever (great-nephew of Pastor Heidi and Chuck), Jeff Perrin (cousin of Barb Fraunfelder), Carrol Riley (father of Marjorie Morrison), Frank Toth (father of Rob), Joe Valli (brother-in-law of Vicky and Dan Masuga)



The Church Family Greeting Card Mailbox is located in Pilgrim Hall by the bulletin board for those who would like to send a Christmas wish and save a stamp.



CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Are you interested in joining our family of fellowship by becoming a member of the Strongsville UCC? Pastor Heidi will be having a membership class in January. Please contact her or the church office if you would like to be a part of the new class of members

HOW CAN YOU HELP OUT?

Sign-up sheets in Pilgrim Hall are waiting for **your name** to be added as a communion server, greeter, usher, coffee hour helper, or nursery helper! **Help is especially needed to pick up the donations from Panera on Monday or Friday mornings.** No experience is needed and everyone is welcome to be a part of our church life.



DECEMBER 2018 DATES TO REMEMBER

- 2 Sun Worship 10am with Communion**
1st Sunday of Advent
Children's Choir
- 5 Wed Free Lunch for All, 11:30am to 12:30pm
Fit Club
Band Rehearsal 8:15 pm
- 6 Thurs Thrift Shop 10am-4pm
Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm
Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm
- 9 Sun Worship 10am—Poinsettia orders due**
2nd Sunday of Advent
Pageant Dress Rehearsal
Blue Christmas Service 7pm
- 10 Tues Trustees Meeting 7pm
- 11 Wed Free Lunch for All, 11:30am to 12:30pm
Fit Club, 7pm
Band Rehearsal 8:15pm
- 12 Thurs Thrift Shop 10am-4pm
Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm
Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm
- 14 Fri Swingin' Sounds of Christmas Concert 7:30pm**
- 16 Sun Worship 10am Children's Pageant**
3rd Sunday of Advent
Reception to follow worship
- 17 Tue Diaconate Meeting, 7pm
- 18 Wed Free Lunch for All, 11:30am-12:30pm
Fit Club
Band Rehearsal 8:15 pm
- 19 Thurs Thrift Shop 10am-4pm
Bell Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm
Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:30pm
- 23 Sun Worship 10am**
4th Sunday of Advent
- 24 Mon Christmas Eve Family Service 7pm**
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 11pm
- 25 Tues Christmas Day
- 26 Wed No Free Lunch for All
No Fit Club, No Band Rehearsal
- 27 Thurs Thrift Shop Closed
Men's Luncheon 11:30am
No Bell or Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 30 Sun **Worship 10am Hymn Sing**
Penny Sunday
- 31 Mon Annual Reports Due**



OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$3,649.31
Last Week's Offering Received **\$1,993.00**
(Difference -\$1,656.31)



As of this printing, we have received 63 Estimate of Giving cards for a total of \$108,192.00. Thank you very much for your support.

FROM THE 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. Some of the positions that are available include serving on the:
Moderator, who presides over the Official Board and represents the church in the community
Vice-Moderator, who works in tandem with the Moderator, serves on the Nominating Committee, and enlists volunteers for dinners and other Official Board events.
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 and Ushers.
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.
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



MITTEN TREE ~ FAMILY OF FAITH TREE

The **Mitten Tree** will be in the Gathering Area until December 8 for collecting hats, gloves, mittens, socks, and scarves for the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless. On December 8, the hats, gloves, mittens and scarves will be removed, and the tree will become the **Family of Faith Tree**, which we will decorate with Christmas ornaments donated by members and friends. **If you have not yet donated an ornament – or – if you'd like to donate an additional ornament, please bring it to the church office and include your name.** Official Board will prepare a tag with your name, attach the tag to your ornament, and hang the ornament on the Family of Faith Tree. Please know that **your ornament will NOT be returned to you**, but it will become part of the Christmas decorations each year. **Please do not bring expensive heirloom ornaments.**

Thank you for celebrating with your church family with the Mitten Tree, as well as the Family of Faith Tree!



Penny Sunday for the National Youth Advocacy Program (NYAP) and their Giving Tree for foster children collected \$189.37 (including \$67.52 in pennies!) last week. Thanks to everyone who donates their spare change each month!

FOR THOSE WHO GET A PRINTED VERSION, PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO PICK UP YOUR DECEMBER NEWSLETTER ON THE TABLE IN THE GATHERING AREA!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR THESE DECEMBER SPECIAL EVENTS HERE AT SUCC!



Blue Christmas Service of Remembrance

Come for a quiet, contemplative time of reflecting, remembering, and healing on **Sunday, December 9 at 7 p.m.**



Swinging Sounds of Christmas by the Strongsville Community Jazz Band on Friday, December 14 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets, which benefit our Music Ministry, are only \$10, \$5 for kids ages 6-12, and free for kids under 6. Tickets will be available for purchase in advance next week in Pilgrim Hall and at the door.

Christmas Pageant and Reception

Sunday, December 16 during worship, the Sunday School will present their annual Christmas Pageant, followed by a reception in Pilgrim Hall. Plus...a visitor from the North may make an appearance. **DRESS REHEARSAL IS NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9 AFTER THE SERVICE.**



Hymn Sing Sunday

Enjoy the best Christmas hymns as we join together in song on **Sunday, December 30** during worship.

SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY CHORUS CHRISTMAS CONCERT 2018



The **Southwest Community Chorus** and Chamber Singers will present their 2018 Christmas concert, "Carol Me Sweetly," **TODAY, December 2, at 3:00 p.m.** at the United Methodist Church, 170 Seminary Street in Berea.

This year's performance features our Music Director, **Tom Foley** as director, accompanist **Carol Konet**, and church singers: **Ingrid Dickson, Gary Hackett, Irene Joyce, Bruce Keenen, Pam Keenen,**

Sarah Keenen, Sharon Maresco, Dave Williams, and UCC guest singer, **Craig Hardy.**

Tickets are available in advance at a cost of \$12.50 for adults, \$15 at the door and free for children 12 and under. Save a few bucks by purchasing your tickets from any of the above choir members! You'll enjoy the music, and we'll get you in the Christmas mood. We like looking into the audience and seeing our fellow church members. So, please attend. Thank you!



THE THRIFT SHOP is open for business on Thursdays, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., with a bonus Free Lunch for All sale day on Wednesdays once a month from 11 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. **WE NEED HELP!** If you can spare a few hours on Thursdays to volunteer in our Thrift Shop, please consider helping at the

Thrift Shop. **Also, an additional person is needed to work with us for 2 hours on the second Wednesday of the month. Please contact the church office if you can help either on Wednesdays or Thursdays.**