



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Congregational)
13740 Pearl Road Strongsville, Ohio 44136
(440) 238-6697

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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall
Pastor



Sunday – December 23, 2018 – 10:00 A.M.
Fourth Sunday of Advent

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, please call the church at (440) 238-6697. Please complete your Attendance Card and place it in the offering plate. We hope to see you again soon!

† Please stand as you are comfortable.

PRELUDE "Mary, Did You Know?" Greene
Sandy O'Shea and Gary Hackett, vocalists

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Irene Joyce

INTROIT "Emmanuel" McGee

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, let us rejoice today in the God who is near in everyone around us!

People: Let us sing glad songs of the One who is rebuilding neighborhoods in our midst.

Leader: Come, let us rejoice always in Jesus who baptizes us with hope and compassion.

People: Let us sing choruses of praise to the One who brings justice to the forgotten in our midst.

Leader: Come, let us rejoice again and again in the Spirit who offers us new life in every moment.

People: Let us sing again of the One who fills us with gifts to share with everyone in our midst.

† HYMN 11 "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND CANDLE OF ADVENT

The Candle of Peace Tony Koussa and Gabby Grace

Leader: Our first three Advent candles symbolize the Hope, Love, and Joy that living in Christ can bring. Today, we light the fourth Advent Candle, the Candle of Peace.

People: We remember the words of the prophets. We await the coming of the One who shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Prince of Peace. We pray for peace in our hearts, as we work for peace and justice in our communities.

Leader: Let us sing together:

RESPONSE:

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me;

Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.

With God our creator, family all are we.

Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.

Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.

With every step I take, may this be my solemn vow:

To take each moment, and live each moment in peace eternally.

Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

A READING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Micah 5: 2–5a

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL 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.

PRAYER RESPONSE "Ask, Seek, Knock" Larson

ANTHEM "A Tiny Child Will Come" Besig/Price

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

THE OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY "A Star" McCann
Sarah and Pam Keenen, vocalists and Gary Hackett, guitar

† 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 1: 39-45

SERMON Jesus is Born (again)

† HYMN 250 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

† BENEDICTION

† RESPONSE/POSTLUDE "Hark the Glad Sound" Callahan

SERVING

TODAY – DECEMBER 23	NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 30	
Kenn Oerkfitz	Liturgist	Jim Studer
The Clotworthy Family	Greeters	Roy and Carol Merkle
Volunteers needed	Ushers	Volunteers needed
Gina Cathcart	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—

To the Glory of God and a Very Merry Christmas to You All!
Linda Plain

Our steeple will light the sky this week—

*In memory of my mom and dad, Ray and Leola Higham, my sister
Laura Smith, Baby Clare Molnar, and Marlene Smith*
Dianne Maringer

*To my church family and friends, warm wishes this Holiday Season
and in the year ahead. God Bless You All! Love, Lola Millhoane*

Happy Anniversary tomorrow to Ryan and Tony
Love, Grammy

The Official Board will not meet on Christmas Day. The church office will be closed on **Tuesday, December 25** and **Friday, December 28**.

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, Elena Joyce, 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. Please don't forget to check the box for any greeting you may have received.



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 or indicate your interest on your attendance card and place it in the offering plate. **The next New Member Class will be Sunday, January 13 following worship.**

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.



ENVELOPES ARE IN THE PEWS FOR THE UCC DECEMBER SPECIAL COLLECTION, "THE CHRISTMAS FUND," WHICH BENEFITS RETIRED CLERGY AND THEIR FAMILIES.

DECEMBER 2018 DATES TO REMEMBER

23	Sun	Worship 10am 4 th 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
28	Fri	Church Office Closed
30	Sun	Worship 10am Hymn Sing Penny Sunday
31	Mon	Annual Reports Due to church office



OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$3,649.31
Last Week's Offering Received \$2,595.50
(Difference -\$ 1,053.81)



It is not too late to submit an Estimate of Giving card and place it in the plate. Thank you very much for your support.



FAMILY OF FAITH TREE

Family of Faith Tree is decorated 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. IT'S NOT TOO LATE!**

HYMN SING SUNDAY

Enjoy the beloved hymns of our faith as we join together in song on **Sunday, December 30** during worship. Take a breath after the hectic month of planning and preparing and enjoy that Jesus Christ is born in our lives! **Please indicate your one favorite hymn on the back of your attendance card and turn it in today.** We will try to sing as many as we can next week.



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.** Please note: Thrift Shop will be closed on **December 27, 2018 and January 3, 2019.**

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 as/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, non-clergy staff, 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

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
Monday, December 24, 2018

7 p.m.: Family Service of Lessons and Carols
11 p.m.: Traditional Candlelight Service



Celebrate the birth of our Savior with your church family as we welcome the Light of the World into our lives with music, readings of the Christmas story, prayer, worship, and praise!

ANNUAL REPORTS

Chairmen of church organizations: Annual reports are due in the church office on December 31. Please be kind to the new, inexperienced Church Secretary and get your reports in on time. Thank you!!!
Once completed, Annual Reports will be available for pickup prior to the Annual Meeting.



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place **Sunday, January 27, 2019**, and will be preceded by the traditional Pancake Brunch. All are encouraged to attend this meeting and be a part of our family of faith. (You do not have to be a member to attend the meeting, but only members are entitled to cast a vote.)

Friendly reminder: If you are the last person to leave the building, please make sure doors are locked and lights are turned out. Please push or pull the doors to make sure they are closed and locked. Thanks!

FINANCIAL OFFICERS OF CHURCH GROUPS:

Please turn in your financial statements to the Auditing Committee through the church office by December 31.
It is extremely important that all books be audited before the Annual Meeting on January 28, 2018. All organizations are required to submit:
1. ALL bank books (savings and/or checking).
2. ALL bank statements for each month for each account. Checking accounts statements should show completed reconciliation on the back.
3. ALL monthly recap forms.
4. ALL bank deposit slips, withdrawal slips and bank check receipts (if received), attached to monthly recap forms.
5. ALL receipts and bills paid.
6. Copy of Annual Financial Report (original provided to church office for Annual Report).
Thank you for your cooperation.

FREE LUNCH FOR ALL

Thank you to the Berea Elks Lodge #1815 for their grant of \$1,500.00 for our Wednesday lunch program. In other news, the kitchen was cleaned and new signs were purchased. Thank you to all of the volunteers, particularly lunch captain Betty Craig for making the Free Lunch for All program so successful.

PLEASE NOTE: The Free Lunch for All will not be served on **December 26.** See you on **January 2, 2019!**

SAVE THE DATE!!!
Plan to attend this delicious home-style, all-you-can-eat meal!
Strongsville UCC



SWISS STEAK DINNER

Saturday – January 19, 2019
Seatings at 5:00 and 6:30 P.M.
Reservations Only: (216) 598-6198

Help is needed – especially on Friday for browning meat. The sign-up sheet will be posted on Pilgrim Hall's board. For safety reasons, no children under age 6 (with or without parent) can be helpers in any capacity during the serving hours of 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
Children 6 to 10 must have a parent helping them.
The Thrift Shop will be open.

Merry Christmas from the staff of
Strongsville UCC!



The church office will be closed on December 25 and 28 and the Free Lunch for All program will not be available on December 26, but will resume on January 2, 2019.