



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Congregational)

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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor

Sunday, December 4, 2022 – 10 A.M.

Second Sunday of Advent

Sacrament of Holy Communion

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.

PRELUDE "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" arr. Raney

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Greg Dickson

INTROIT "Of the Father's Love Begotten" Traditional

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: During this season of bumper to bumper stress, our lives as crowded as the stores,

People: God welcomes us to a feast of faithfulness, inviting us to sit in peace and gentleness.

Leader: When rancorous rants and snide remarks disrupt the beauty of the season, and people seem just too busy to offer words of compassion,

People: Jesus whispers hope into our broken hearts, singing carols of justice for all God's children.

Leader: We seem to spend more and more time with our tablets and phones, and fewer moments with those who could touch us with joy;

People: Christ's Holy Spirit embraces us with peace that comforts, loves us with a passion beyond our understanding. Come, Lord Jesus.

HYMN "Come to the Table of Grace"

Come to the table of grace\*; Come to the table of grace\*.

This is God's table; it's not yours or mine.

Come to the table of grace\*.

\*Verse 2: Hope, Verse 3: Love, Verse 4: Joy, Verse 5: Peace

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE (LOVE) The Abruzzinos

Leader: On the second Sunday of Advent, we know that God's love has always been with us. God's love has been made known to us in a new way, through the birth of the Christ-child.

People: God has become one of us, the Word that breathes the Spirit into us, and in Christ we know the fullness of God's love. We are called to share that love with the world.

Leader: We light this second candle, celebrating the love God has for the whole world.

People: "Come, wander where lion and lamb gently play, where evil is banished and faith takes the day. A babe in a manger to fool the world's eyes. One candle is lit for God's loving surprise."

HYMN 245 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (verse 2)

A READING FROM THE PSALMS Psalm 72:1-7; 18-19

(New International Version)

Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness. May he judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice. May the mountains bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness. May he defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; may he crush the oppressor. May he endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations. May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth. In his days may the righteous flourish and prosperity abound till the moon is no more.

Praise be to the Lord God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.

Leader: The Word of God, for us, the people of God;

People: Thanks be to God.

PRAYING IN SILENCE

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy, ALL: Hear our prayers. Amen.

ANTHEM "Bring Us Heavenly Peace" Raney

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" Mendelssohn

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 11: 1-10

(New International Version)

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

SERMON "Actions Speak Louder"

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

Pastor: We may not know the time, but our every moment is held in God's hands. We may not do and say what we should or could, but God offers us words of forgiveness. Join me as we pray together:

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

All: Sometimes it is hard for us to take you seriously, God of our lives. With COVID and flu stalking us, how can we think of traveling and being in crowds? With bullies raging on social media, why shouldn't we respond with anger and vindictive slights? With our hopes turned to ashes, how can we become beacons of light for those in the shadows? Forgive us, O God, and have mercy. In the days to come, may we discover the grace which has always been ours, and freely share it with

others. May we be filled with the peace of your Spirit, so we may expect you to come in places and in people that surprise us, in moments we overlook, just as you came in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. (Silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Reach out and touch the kingdom, for it is right next to you. Breathe in, and feel the Spirit of peace and hope. Breathe out, and trust and believe that God is nearer than you might ever imagine. All: Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! We can set aside our differences and embrace everyone, we can seek peace for all in our lives, our neighborhoods, our world. Amen.

A BRIEF GREAT THANKSGIVING

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

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 244 "Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"

BENEDICTION

Be people of love. Let love live in your heart and share the love of Christ with all you meet. Share love by loving those you see regularly. Start by loving your community. Share love by loving those you do not know. How do your actions affect the rest of God's creation? Share love by praying for our world. In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share love. As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share love, joy, peace, and hope with those you meet. Amen

RESPONSE "Emmanuel" McGee

POSTLUDE "The First Noel" arr. Raney

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

Table with 2 columns: TODAY - DECEMBER 4 and NEXT SUNDAY - DECEMBER 11. Roles include Greeters, Liturgist, Ushers, Acolytes, Director of Music, Associate Director of Music, Organist, Sound, and Special Music.

The altar flowers are given— In honor of our children and grandchildren—Mark & Barb Camp



Our steeple will light the sky this week— Happy, happy birthday to the Pastor's Wife, Chuck McDougall! Always loved, always missed.



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



## The Mitten Tree—last day today!

Our collection of hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks for the ends today. This week, the items will be given to the homeless shelter and the tree will become the **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!



## A NOTE OF THANKS—

Today, we thank the **Chancel Choir, Dave Williams, 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 \$1,158.50  
Difference **-\$2,490.87**

*Thank you very much for your support.*

*Pledge cards received to date: 59*



## 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.



## 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, Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Len Lane, Judy Maur, Reggie McCray, Laurie Meister, Roy Merkle, Michele Mhlack, Lola Millhoane, Kenn Oerkfitz, Gary Paul, Sandy Pogozielski, 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 Mhlack'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](mailto:h.e.denman@gmail.com)

## 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.



Thursday, December 8 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
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.

## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP CANDY SALE



The Women's Fellowship is selling candy after our worship services **TODAY** and **NEXT SUNDAY!!**

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.



**FROM OUR FRIENDS AT  
SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY CHORUS:**  
**TODAY, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.** is our Christmas concert, "In a Holiday Mood," at the Berea United Methodist Church (170 Seminary Street in Berea). After 2 years

without a Christmas concert, we are back under the direction of Tom Foley, accompanied by Carol Konet. Many of our own SUCC Chancel Choir members also sing in the Southwest Community Chorus. We hope you will support our singers and celebrate the Christmas season with music! Tickets are \$15 at the door.



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

**Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup> 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!

If you are willing to donate finger foods to be served at the reception, please see Pam Keenen, Ingrid Dickson, or Sharon Heinrich.

**Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> 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.

## 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. ORDER BY DECEMBER 6<sup>th</sup> FOR CHRISTMAS!**



## Welcome "New" Members

We welcome the return of members **Rev. Patricia (Pat) and Frank Jefferis**. They are transferring back from Middleburg Heights Community Church. Pat has already filled in for Pastor Heidi in October and Frank has been singing with the choir for the Advent and Christmas season. We are so happy to have them as a part of our church family!

## MEMORIAL SERVICE TO HONOR THE LIFE OF CHARLES (CHUCK) McDUGALL

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.



## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT IS COMING!

The Sunday School Christmas Pageant will be on Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, during our 10 a.m. worship service. We have parts for everyone!

Brief rehearsals will take place during and after our Sunday School classes on the weeks prior to the pageant. Please plan to stay after church for the dress rehearsal next Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.



**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!



**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.

**LAST CHANCE!**

**ALTAR POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS EVE**

Order deadline is TODAY. Please complete this form and place it the offering plate or give it to the Church office with your cash or check payment. The cost is \$7.00.

Wording for bulletin: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of plants: \_\_\_\_ X 7.00 / plant = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to **Strongsville United Church of Christ**, and place it with your order in the offering plate or under the office door.

*Thank you for placing a poinsettia plant on the altar!*

**For Church Treasurer's Records**  
**2022 Christmas Poinsettia**

Total number of plants: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Offering envelope number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cash/Check No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**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 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 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.

**PENNY SUNDAY THANKS**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the last Penny Sunday of the year last week and throughout 2022. Last week's collection of \$211.65 will go to Together We Rise Giving Tree for young people who are aging out of the Cuyahoga County foster care system. Our next collection will be **January 29, 2023**.



**UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS**



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



**Strongsville United Church of Christ  
 2023 Estimate of Giving**

In recognition of God's many blessings to me, I am happy to join with others in the following commitment for 2023:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

I plan to give \$ \_\_\_\_\_ each

week  month  other \_\_\_\_\_ to be used for

Our Congregation's Ministries and Operations \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to talk with someone from the Endowment Committee about including the church or church-related institution in my Will.

I would like to talk with someone about using the automatic deduction plan from my checking account.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



**You may turn in a pledge card at any time.**

