



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Congregational)
13740 Pearl Road Strongsville, Ohio 44136
(440) 238-6697
StrongsvilleUCC@gmail.com
StrongsvilleUCC.com



Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor
Sunday, December 5, 2021 – 10:00 A.M.
Second Sunday of Advent
Sacrament of Holy Communion

WELCOME!

Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the best interests of others. – Philippians 2:4

For the safety and comfort of everyone, please continue to wear a mask in the Gathering Area and when entering or leaving the Sanctuary. When you are seated in the pews, you may lower your mask if you wish, while maintaining social distancing. **If you are not yet fully vaccinated, we ask that you continue to wear a mask at all times. Thank you.**

† *Please stand as you are comfortable.*

PRELUDE "Be Not Afraid" Courtney
Dedicated to Chuck McDougall

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Joyce Reed
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.

INTROIT "Emmanuel" McGee

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Because of You, Righteous 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 wait,

People: On this day of anticipation and hope, in the days of doubt and worry.

Leader: With You, Spirit of Advent, we pray,

People: For those for whom this season is not one of joy; those whose lives are empty of family and friends.

† **HYMN 757** "Soon and Very Soon"
(If you wish to sing with us, please have your mask in place.)

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE (LOVE)

Laura & Dan Winrod

Leader: Jesus taught his disciples, saying, "I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

This message reminds us that God's Love for each one of us never fails.

People: In a world where sometimes it can be so difficult to truly love one another as God has loved us, we thank God for this season of hope and love.

Leader: We are all beloved children of the Most High. Today and every day, in our words and in the way we live our lives, Love wins. Knowing and believing in the power of Love, we light the Second Advent Candle – the Candle of Love, the Love Jesus has for all people.

People: Jesus' promise of God's unconditional Love illuminates our souls. As we light the Candle of Love, may this light in our souls shine more brightly in the world.

Leader: As we light this Candle of Love, let us sing together, the second verse of...

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

A READING FROM THE PROPHETS Baruch 5:1-4
(New Revised Standard Version)

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God. Put on the robe of the righteousness from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting. For God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven. For your name will forever be called by God, "Peace of righteousness and glory of godliness."

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 "Advent Celebration" Paige

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING

Thank you for your continuing commitment to giving freely of your talents and your treasure, as you are able, in service to Christ in the world. Thank you. To give online, please go to:
<https://www.myoffering.com/eonline/index.php/dashboard/login/5027>

OFFERTORY "Still, Still, Still" arr. Hayes
Carol Konet, piano

† **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 GOSPELS **Luke 1:68-79**
(New Living Translation)

"And you, my little son, will be called the prophet of the Most High, because you will prepare the way for the Lord. You will tell his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins. Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace."

SERMON "Just Wait!"

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

Advent is the time to prepare; Advent is the time to watch and wait; Advent is the time to open our hearts to God, as we pray together:

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

We watch for packages to arrive and Christmas cards to be delivered, but we do not keep our eyes open for your coming. We notice where to find the best bargains, and what decorations our neighbors have put on their houses, but we do not notice the little, the least, the lost, the last as they walk down our streets. Forgive us, Saving God, for our misplace priorities. May we watch for your coming; may we reach out to those in need; may we wait for hope to come, even as Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, arrives to live in our hearts. (silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: The good news is being made known to all people: Christ Jesus is born to spread God's Love throughout Creation.

All: Glory and praise to the only wise God, who fills us with healing and hope. Amen.

A BRIEF GREAT THANKSGIVING

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP "Advent Meditation" Elkins

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 251** "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"
(If you wish to sing with us, please have your mask in place.)

† **BENEDICTION**

Be people of love. Let love live in your heart, and share the love of Christ with all you meet. Share love by noticing someone else's humanity. Share love by listening to someone's story. Share love by praying for our world. In this Advent season, together, may we see, feel, and share love. And as you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share love with all whom you meet. **Amen.**

† **POSTLUDE** "O Come, All Ye Faithful" arr. Hayes
Carol Konet, piano

SERVING

TODAY – DECEMBER 5		NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 12
Linda Plain	Greeters	Judi Pavisich
Judi Pavisich	Liturgist	Bruce Keenen
Linda Plain	Ushers	Judi Pavisich
Tom Foley	Director of Music	Tom Foley
Mike Elkins	Associate Director of Music	Mike Elkins
Sharon Heinrich	Supplemental Organist	Sharon Heinrich
Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich	Sound	Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich
Chancel Choir/Carol Konet	Special Music	Bell Choir

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**.

The altar flowers are given—

*In loving memory of my parents, Alma and Caleb
Diana Creecy
In Honor of Sarah Keenen's Birthday on December 6th!
Pam & Bruce Keenen*

Our steeple will light the sky this week—

*In loving memory of our parents, Don & Betty Bushea
and Anita & Bill McKenna--Barb Fraunfelder & Dennis Smith
In memory of my grandmother, Jane C. Graves
Roberta Carpenter

Happy Birthday today to Doug Turnbull and Chuck McDougall!

Happy Anniversary today to Becky & Jack Stephenson!

A NOTE OF THANKS

We thank our special guest, Carol Konet, along with the Chancel Choir, Mike Elkins, Tom Foley, and Sharon Heinrich for providing our musical worship today.

OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$3,649.37
 Last Week's Offering Received \$2,230.50
 Difference (-\$1,418.87)



Thank you very much for your support.

PLEDGE CARDS RECEIVED TO DATE: 54

FREE LUNCH FOR DECEMBER 8th!

2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Call (440) 238-5389



The 2021 Heartland Conference Make a Difference grant committee chose our grant proposal for funding. The Free Lunch program will be receiving a check in the amount of \$825.00.

OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Janet Kato, Marge McKinney, Ruth Milidonis, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields



Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Joan Beckwith, Eddy Bond, Mary Carey, Elaine Coffey, Kathy Cockrell, Betty Craig, Christina Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Sam Cuyler, Sr., Linda Elliott, Tom Foley, Ramona Glaze, Sue Hawk, Bob Heddleson, Steve Herzog, Paul Hirt, George Kapcar, Tony Koussa, Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Millie Lafave, Vicky Masuga, Judy Maur, Reggie McCray, Heidi & Chuck McDougall, Laurie Meister, Roy Merkle, Michele Mihlack, Lola Millhoane, Gary Paul, Judi Pavisich, Joyce Reed, Dorothy & Bill Ritchie, Ginger Rothel, Peter Smith, John & Maggie Struhar, Keith Sullen, Sharon Wilson, Sally Vetovitz, Peg Weakley, Claire Wills, Marty Winch, Mary Ellen & Bob Zimmerman

Extended Church Family: Dorene Baldrige, Fred Beba (Theresa's husband), Jackie Berkheimer (Judi Pavisich's friend), Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Judy Carte's son-in-law, Ryan, Hunter Colao (Barb & Mark Camp's grandson), Ron Colosimo (Judi Pavisich's friend), Mary Ann Csory (Judi Pavisich's friend), John Dickson (Greg's dad), Kim Filiautraut (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), 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), Thomas O'Shea (Sandy's dad), Carrol Riley (Marjorie Morrison's dad), Terry Robson (Barb & Mark Camp's friend), Mike Rung (Lora's brother), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Jimmy Walken (Kristen Burgess's uncle), Sandra Wentz (Debbie's daughter-in-law)

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

The Mitten Tree—Last Day today

After today, the hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks 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!



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP CHRISTMAS TEA

TODAY at 1:00 P.M. in Pilgrim Hall
 Because of setup in Pilgrim Hall for the Tea, we won't host coffee hour there today, but fellowship will take place in the Parlor.



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP QUILT RAFFLE

TICKETS ARE \$1.00 EACH OR 6 FOR \$5.00
 FREE PERSONALIZATION!

The Winner can get any name of their choice embroidered on the quilt.

Drawing will be held on December 12, 2021

Please see Judi Pavisich for tickets.

THRIFT SHOP

The Thrift Shop is OPEN on Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. with lots of fall merchandise on display. Donations are being accepted, but you must call the church first to arrange a time for drop-off.



THRIFT SHOP BONUS HOURS

The 3rd Thursday of the month,
 December 16, 2021 — 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

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.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! SWINGIN' SOUNDS OF THE SEASON CHRISTMAS JAZZ CONCERT

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17th at 7 p.m.

LIVE MUSIC featuring **Strongsville's Jazz Swing Band** and vocalist **Cindy Smith!**

(Masks required) Tickets will be \$10 (\$5 for kids under 10) and we will have a reception

following the concert. TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

GIFT CARDS--THINK AHEAD FOR CHRISTMAS!

Please order your Christmas gift cards early!



AN EASY WAY TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING NEEDS!

You can order gift cards with Jim Joyce or by calling him at 216-267-5043 ahead with your list. **Limited stock is available.** Thank you to those who continue to support this project by purchasing gift cards!

BABY CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome to the world, **Paige Evelyn Horvath**, born Monday, November 29 at 6:40 p.m. Paige checked in at 8 lbs 9 oz, and 20-1/2" long. Congratulations to parents **Blythe and Steve**, and siblings **Avery, Stephen and Audrey** and grandparents **Pastor Heidi and Chuck McDougall!**



CHRISTMAS FOR VETERANS PROJECT

Our church family provided 60 nylon drawstring bags filled with two candy bars and two pairs of socks. The Sunday School classes helped our committee fill the bags and added the notes they had made along with the Christmas flyer from our church made by Irene Joyce. These



bags were delivered to Church Street Ministry on November 29th. These gifts will be given out during December, to the Veterans they serve in all Cuyahoga County. All extra socks and candy, along with \$150 cash donations were included as well. Many thanks to all of you for making this happen.

THE UPPER ROOM DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE FOR JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2022 IS AVAILABLE IN THE GATHERING AREA.

(Pocket-sized or large print)
 Pick up your free copy today!



BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Sunday, December 19th at 7 p.m.

This season of pandemic has been tough on all of us. So much loss: of family, of friends-- of freedom to

gather and enjoy life. Have you been able to slow down long enough to actually listen to your spirit- and grieve? Join Pastor Heidi for a **Service of Healing & Reflection**. We will take a pause to pray, meditate and grieve as we feel led-- *together*. Invite a friend. Your heart will thank you.

FROM OUR FRIENDS AT THE STRONGSVILLE COMMUNITY BAND:

Christmas Concert—Sunday, December 12th at 3 p.m.

At the Strongsville Middle School Auditorium Come and hear the Band, under the direction of our own Ken Mehalko, with special guest vocalist Brittany Fernandez!



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 will be in the pew racks.



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT REHEARSALS



The Sunday School Christmas Pageant will be on Sunday, December 19th, during our 10 a.m. worship service. 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 12th.

ALTAR POINSETTIA FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Order deadline is TODAY. Please complete this form and place it to the Church office with your cash or check payment. The cost is \$6.00.

Wording for bulletin: _____

Given by: _____

Number of plants: ___ X 6.00 / 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
2021 Christmas Poinsettia**

Total number of plants: _____

Amount enclosed: \$_____

Offering envelope number: _____

Cash/Check No. _____

Name: _____



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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:

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.

Treasurer: Manages the outgoing finances of the church in conjunction with the Financial Secretary

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!

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS



- **The Board of Trustees** will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, **December 14th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- **The Diaconate** will meet on **Monday, December 13th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- **The Official Board** will not have their regular meeting in December.



Are you an online 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.

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