



**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

(Congregational)

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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor

Sunday, February 25, 2024– 10 A.M.

Second Sunday in Lent

Sacrament of Baptism Reception of New Members

Penny Sunday

**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.

**PRELUDE** "Here I Am to Worship" Hughes

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** Joyce Reed

**INTROIT** "Sanctuary" Thompson/Scruggs

**† CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Lent calls us to journey, this day and every day, following Jesus wherever he leads us.

**People: Lent calls us to journey to the place where God makes covenant with us, to receive the new names we are given.**

Leader: Lent calls us to worship together, to tell future generations the good news.

**People: Lent calls us to practice justice, to bring God's hope to all people.**

Leader: Lent calls us to faithful living, to trust the One who gives us life.

**People: Lent calls us to take up our cross, to trust the One who bears it with us.**

Leader: Lent calls us to journey with God.

**People: Together, let us worship God, who walks with us, this day and every day.**

† HYMN 404 "Faith of Our Fathers"

**A READING FROM THE PSALMS** Psalm 22:23-31

(New International Version)

You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.

The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the Lord will praise him— may your hearts live forever!

All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations.

All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him.

Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord.

They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: He has done it!

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

People: Thanks be to God.

**SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**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.

**ANTHEM** "Down by the Riverside" Traditional

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE** Penny Sunday



**THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

Robert Jakob Toth

**QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FROM THE CANDIDATE**

**CONGREGATIONAL PROMISE**

People of God, will you welcome Robert and uphold him in his new life in Christ?

**People: With God's help, together we will continue to grow as followers of the Christ.**

Let us pray: **We give you thanks, O God, for your faithful son Robert, and for your grace acknowledged here today in water and the Spirit. Grant us grace as we receive, nurture and befriend Robert as a member of the Body of Christ. Grant him strength for life's journey, courage in times of suffering, the joy of faith, the freedom of love, and the hope of new life, through Jesus Christ, who makes us all one. Embrace us all as beloved children in your Household of Love, that we, too, may be faithful to your Word, united in the peace of Christ and the company of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

† HYMN 426 "Blest Be the Tie that Binds"

**INTRODUCTION AND RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS**

**QUESTIONS TO THE CANDIDATES**

**QUESTIONS TO THE CONGREGATION**

Friends, do you profess Jesus as the center and cornerstone of your faith? **We do.**

Will you be faithful to these new friends as they join this congregation and begin the next leg of their journey of faith?

**We promise our faithful companionship to these new members of our family.**

Will you challenge them to strive to become the very best versions of themselves, upholding them in Christian love and holding them accountable to the Way of the Christ?

**We will lovingly challenge these new members to strive to become the very best versions of themselves, guiding them to live into the faith they profess.**

Will you allow yourself to be challenged and changed, shaped and transformed by these new members, together seeking God's will for our lives together?

**With the help of God's Spirit, we will allow ourselves to be challenged and changed, shaped and transformed, living even**

**more fully into our called identity as the family of faith, Strongsville United Church of Christ.**

Let us pray together:

**O God, we give you thanks, first for calling us to believe, then leading us to join together and gather into this church, the Body of Christ. We give you thanks for this Family of faith, and rejoice that you have led these newest members into our midst, adding their gifts and talents to ours. Together, may we live more fully in the Spirit, building one another up in Love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Amen.**

**OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY** "Fairest Lord Jesus" German tune

† **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 OLD TESTAMENT** excerpts **Genesis 17** (New International Version)

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

**SERMON** "New Life. New Name. New Promises."

† **HYMN 410** "Standing on the Promises" vv. 1, 4, 5

† **BENEDICTION** Rev. Dr. John Squires, Uniting Church  
*As we end this time as a gathered community, may we prepare to serve in all the scattered places of our lives. Go in the knowledge that God our Creator sustains and supports you in this service. Go with the assurance that Christ Jesus equips you for service amongst the strangers and the friends of your life. Go with trusting reliance on the Spirit who enables you to bear witness, to care lovingly, and to work for justice. And in all seasons, may God's peace be with you. Amen.*

† **POSTLUDE** "Reflection on Faith of Our Fathers" arr. Callahan

**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](http://strongsvilleucc.com), select **Worship**, and click on **Service Videos**.

**SERVING**

<b>TODAY – FEBRUARY 25</b>		<b>NEXT SUNDAY – MARCH 3</b>
Nicole & Tiffany Ashforth	<b>Greeters</b>	Linda Plain
Sharon Maresco	<b>Liturgist</b>	Pam Keenen
Roz Fotos	<b>Ushers</b>	Volunteers needed
Tom Foley	<b>Director of Music</b>	Tom Foley
Mike Elkins	<b>Associate Director of Music</b>	Mike Elkins
Sharon Heinrich	<b>Organist</b>	Sharon Heinrich
Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich	<b>Video/Sound</b>	Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich
K. Bates, Children's Choir, Choir	<b>Special Music</b>	Chancel Choir



**FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL: PENNY**

**SUNDAY TODAY!** It's time to put those coins, dollars, and checks to UCC into our children's buckets! Money collected today will go toward jump-starting our Youth Group!





**A NOTE OF THANKS**—We thank **Karen Bates**, our **Chancel Choir**, and especially, our **Children's Choir**, along with **Tom Foley**, **Sharon Heinrich** and **Mike Elkins** for their music today.

The altar flowers are given—

*Celebrating Penny & Oliver's 9<sup>th</sup> Birthday yesterday*  
Rachel & Gary Zielinski

**A 2024 SIGN-UP SHEET FOR ALTAR FLOWERS IS POSTED IN PILGRIM HALL.** Please note: the cost of flowers is \$18 for 1 vase and \$36 for 2 vases.



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

*Happy Birthday to Larry Wentz on February 29<sup>th</sup>—He's finally "17!"*  
With love, Mom

*Wishing Mike Elkins a Happy "18<sup>th</sup>" Birthday on February 29<sup>th</sup>! --Music Ministry*

*In loving memory of Susan Stevenson Tressa*

**Happy Birthday today to Barbara Craig and Cade Raymond!**

**OUR PRAYER LIST**

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



**Long-Term Care or Homebound:** Joan Beckwith, Laurie Meister, Ruth Milidonis, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar, Maggie Struhar

**Church Family:** Serena Abruzzino, Judy Carte, Jennifer Cockrell, Sam Cuyler Jr., Sue Hawk, Irene Jannsohn, Kay Konicek, Bobbie & Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Jim Maresco, Reggie McCray, Roy Merkle, Lola Millhoane, Kenn Oerkfitz, Gary

Paul, Joyce Reed, Dorothy & Bill Ritchie, Peter Smith, Sharon Wilson, Dave Williams, Claire Wills, Marty Winch

**Extended Church Family:** Edward and Sharon Acton (Sally Herzog's friends), Dorene Baldrige, Ron & Yvonne Adams (Judi Pavisich's friends), Chris Anderson (Linda & Mike Elkins' son-in-law), Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Barbara Davis (Don & Sandy Gleichauf's friend), John Dickson (Greg's dad), Ed Fabian (the Bagley's Grill girls' friend), Kim Filiautraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Joanne Gariepy (Sally Herzog's friend), Kathy Ghetti (friend of Ginger Rothel), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Barb & Dale Holmberg (Tiffany Hassel's parents), Diane Mason (Lora Rung's friend), Rudy Matjazic (Judi Pavisich's friend), Donna McDonald (the Ritchies' friend), Linda McNabb (Ginger Rothel's sister-in-law), Sylvia Pakish (Don & Sandy Gleichauf's friend), Jeff Peacock (former member), Zora Roundtree (FL4A volunteer), Mike Rung (Lora's brother), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Vicki Smith (Venner Clarinets), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Tom (friend of Judi Pavisich), Don Wills (friend of Judi Pavisich), The people of Ukraine, Gaza, and Israel, victims of violence, those affected by natural disasters

**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)

**MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS!**



We are so happy to welcome our new members, **Pam and Ralph Heimburger**, who have been attending our worship services for some time. Ralph has even been a guest organist at our church. The Heimburgers live in Brunswick and come to us by way of Middleburg Heights Community Church. Pam and Ralph have been married for 32 years and have two grown children, Michael and Jennifer, plus a brand new grandbaby. Barbara and John Toth are sponsoring the Heimburgers.

**OFFERINGS RECEIVED**

Weekly Offering Needed \$ 3,617.01  
Last Week's Offering Received \$ 2,596.00  
Difference -(\$1,021.01)



**Thank you very much for your support.**  
**PLEDGE CARDS RECEIVED TO DATE: 50**

**THRIFT SHOP**



The Thrift Shop is **OPEN** on **Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.** Come and shop lots of interesting merchandise at amazing prices. Donations are being accepted during those hours, but please try to limit your donations to what you can carry downstairs. **Thanks, as always, to our dedicated volunteers!**

If the Strongsville City Schools are closed due to inclement weather on a Thursday, the Thrift Shop will be closed on that day.

**UPCOMING BOARD MEETING**



The Official Board will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, **February 27<sup>th</sup>** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.

**CHURCH OFFICERS IN 2024**

*\*Elected January 28, 2024*

**Moderator:** Greg Dickson\* **Vice-Moderator:** Jen Barry\*

**Treasurer:** Sally Herzog\* **Clerk:** Judy Gaumer\*

**Sunday School Co-Superintendents**

Linda Elkins Mary Densmore

**Board of Trustees**

Bill Giuliano\* Chris Goff Mike Elkins\* Les Fox\*  
Herb Hampson\* Cathy Hawk Sarah Hayes\* Sandy Pogozeleski\*  
Cheryl Sobek Dan Winrod Laura Winrod Rachel Zielinski\*

**Endowment Fund Subcommittee**

Greg Dickson\* Dave Williams\*

**Diaconate**

Teri Barbish\* Jean Bittinger Elaine Coffey\* Bobbi Cook Wayne Cook  
Judy Davis Judy Fox\* Carole Kapcar Susann Lerch\* Cherie Teagno\*  
Barbara White Mary Ellen Zimmerman

**Christian Education Committee**

Serena Abruzzino Mary Densmore Linda Elkins\*  
Colette Emerson\* Amanda Marshall\* Lora Rung

**Music Committee**

Karen Bates\* Ingrid Dickson\*  
Pam Keenen Ken Mehalko Mike Willis  
*ex officio:* Sharon Heinrich Tom Foley Mike Elkins

**Stewardship Committee**

Sue Gigliotti\* Judi Pavisich Bill Schneider Rob Toth\* Mary Willis

**Mission and Outreach Committee**

Judy Carte Diana Creecy\* Sarah Hayes\* Lora Rung  
Jennifer Sekorky\* Peter Smith Bev Wehr\* Mary Ellen Zimmerman

**ANNUAL GIVING STATEMENTS**



Statements of Giving for 2023 are available in the Church Family Mailbox that is located in the Gathering Area. Please be so kind as to pick up your statement as soon as you are able. Questions? Contact Gary Zielinski at [succfinancialsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:succfinancialsecretary@gmail.com).

**FREE LUNCH FOR ALL--**  
**Wednesdays**

**11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Thank you to all our faithful volunteers!

**Please note:** If the Strongsville City Schools are closed due to inclement weather on a Wednesday, the Free Lunch will not be served on that day.



**IMPORTANT INFO**—Do you know where the AED and First Aid Kit are located in the church? They are adjacent to the doorway in Pilgrim Hall, just to the right of the confirmation classroom.

**PHOTO DIRECTORY UPDATE** Directories are here!

Folks who were photographed receive a free copy. They are in the church mailbox. Extra directories may be purchased from the church office for \$10 each.



**EASTER FLOWERS ORDER FORM**

You may choose lilies, hyacinths, or tulips (no color choice). To order, please email the church or turn in this form with payment prior to the deadline of **Sunday, March 10, 2024 at NOON**. The cost is **\$8.00**.

Wording for bulletin:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

(# of plants) Lilies \_\_\_\_\_ (x \$8)

Tulips \_\_\_\_\_ (x \$8)

Hyacinths \_\_\_\_\_ (x \$8)

Total amount due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I will take my plant(s).  I will leave my plant(s) for someone who needs some cheer.

Please make your check payable to **United Church of Christ**, and call or email the church with your order.

**For Church Records**                      **2024 Easter Flowers**

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

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

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

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

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

**Order and payment deadline is Sunday, March 10 at NOON.**



**BOOK STUDY--A YEAR OF BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD**

Continuing on **March 18<sup>th</sup>**, Pastor Heidi and Linda Elkins are leading a monthly book study based on Rachel Held Evans's wonderful book, *A Year of Biblical Womanhood*. The group will meet on the **third Monday of each month at 7 p.m.**, for one hour. It's not too late to join us!



**DO MORE IN 2024!** New sign-up sheets in the Gathering Area are waiting for your name to be added as a greeter or usher. No experience is necessary—we will show you everything you need to know! Everyone is welcome to be a part of our church life.



**2024 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN --M.A.P.L E.**

- M- Making and moving**
- A- Accepting and Acknowledging**
- P- People**
- L- Learning and Loving**
- E- Encompassing**



**Strongsville United Church of Christ 2024 Estimate of Giving**

In recognition of God's many blessings to me, I am happy to join with others in the following commitment for 2024:

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/savings account.

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

