



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Congregational)

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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor

Sunday, February 4, 2024– 10 A.M.

Sacrament of Communion, Installation of Officers



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 “Agnus Dei” Smith

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Greg Dickson

INTROIT “Lord, Hear Our Prayer” Elkins

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Called to be light,

People: We would carry God's hope into the shadows of the world.

Leader: Called to be salt,

People: We would enhance the lives of those around us, with joy.

Leader: Called to live in God's reality,

People: We would welcome everyone as sisters and brothers in faith.

† HYMN 107 “Lord, I Lift Your Name on High” (sing twice)

A READING FROM THE PROPHETS Isaiah 40:21-26, 28-31
(New International Version)

Do you not know? Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood since the earth was founded?

He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth,

and its people are like grasshoppers.

He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,

and spreads them out like a tent to live in.

He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.

No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown,

no sooner do they take root in the ground,

than he blows on them and they wither,

and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff.

“To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these?

He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name.

Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.

Do you not know? Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;

but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,

they will walk and not be faint.

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 “I Will Lift Up My Eyes” Larson

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Pastor: Affirmation of ministry is the act whereby a local church of the United Church of Christ recognizes the diverse gifts of its members and celebrates the particular ministry each person brings to the life of the church or to various settings in the life of the world. The apostle Paul reminds us that there are many different kinds of spiritual gifts; the same Spirit gives them all. There are many ways of serving, but the same God is served by all. These people, whom we recognize and affirm today, have been called by God, each in their own unique way. They have accepted their call, and stand before us in witness to their willingness to serve God in leadership of this congregation.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, having prayerfully considered the duties and responsibilities of your ministry, are you prepared, with God's help, to serve in Christ's name and to the glory of God? (*I am.*)

Do you promise to exercise your ministry diligently and faithfully, showing forth the love of Christ in language and in action? (*I do.*)

Members of the household of faith, you have heard the promises of our brothers and sisters in Christ who have answered God's call to serve. Let us stand and affirm together our intention to live in covenant with them.

People: We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours, to be partners with you in the service of Jesus Christ. We promise to love you, to honor your leadership and to assist you so that together, we may be the faithful church of Jesus Christ.

Pastor: Let us pray together:

ALL: Eternal God, you have called these people to serve you, in Strongsville United Church of Christ and in the world. Send your Holy Spirit on them and on us all, that our service may be diligent and faithful. May their example prove worthy for all of us to follow as we are united in Christ's ministry, to the glory of your name alone. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY “Softly and Tenderly” Thompson

† 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 Mark 1:29-39
(New International Version)

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

SERMON “As God is my witness!”

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

Pastor: This is what God hopes for us - that we will speak of the mistakes we make, so we might be forgiven. Relying on the Spirit for the right words, let us pray together, saying,

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

People: It is true we break your commandments, God of our lives. Much worse, we break your heart when we point the finger at those who are different from us; when we gossip about our friends and neighbors; when we think everything is all about us. Forgive us, Loving God, we pray. We long to know your ways, so open our ears to hear those words we always ignore. We search for you each day, so open our eyes to your wonders so we may see them anew. We would believe in your promises, so fill our hearts with the presence of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. (*silent prayer*)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: God will show us the way to God's realm. Gracious, merciful, and righteous is our God of salvation!

People: God rebuilds our lives, repairs our mistakes, fills our emptiness with hope and joy. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

A BRIEF GREAT THANKSGIVING

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP “On Eagle's Wings” Joncas

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 635 “In the Garden”

† BENEDICTION

Now as the cares of the world demand your attention, may you run and not grow weary of the race. May you soar on wings like eagles, knowing the beauty of the Breath beneath your wings. And may you find time, each day, to rest in the presence of Almighty God, hearing God's whisper again: I am Creator, from everlasting to everlasting, and you are my beloved creation. Go in peace, and in the strength of God's love. Amen.

† RESPONSE/POSTLUDE “Lord, I Want to Be a Christian” Traditional

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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**.

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SERVING

TODAY – FEBRUARY 4 NEXT SUNDAY – FEBRUARY 11

Linda Plain Greeters Serena Abruzzino

Linda Ponstingle Liturgist Dave Williams

Volunteers needed Ushers Judi Pavisich

Tom Foley Director of Music Tom Foley

Mike Elkins Associate Director of Music Mike Elkins

Sharon Heinrich Organist Sharon Heinrich

Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich Video/Sound Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich

Chancel Choir, Sarah Keenen Special Music Chancel Choir

IN CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY



Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to **Dianne Maringer** and family on the death on **John Maringer** on January 31, 2024. Our love and prayers go out to their children, Rachel McBride, Jonathan Maringer, and Devan Maringer, grandchildren and great-grandson. John died one day shy of his 74th birthday. Visitation will be tomorrow from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. at Bauer Funeral Home (2089 Columbia Rd, Valley City, OH 44280) and a memorial service will be held here at the church at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6th, with a luncheon in Pilgrim Hall following.



A NOTE OF THANKS—We thank **Sarah Keenen**, our **Chancel Choir**, along with **Tom Foley**, **Sharon Heinrich**, and **Mike Elkins** for their music today.

The altar flowers are given—

In loving memory of Erik O. Jannsohn
The Dickson & Joyce families



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 today to Walter McKane!
With love, Grammy

Happy Birthday today to Gary Hackett and Walter McKane!

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Are you interested in learning more about the **United Church of Christ** and becoming a member? Pastor Heidi will be leading class after worship **TODAY** and **NEXT WEEK**, and folks desiring to join this church family will be added during worship on **February 25th**.



Become Part of Our Church Family



FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL: PENNY SUNDAY THANK YOU!



We collected \$402.35 for **World Central Kitchen** to aid families suffering in Gaza and Israel and other war-torn areas around the world. The next Penny Sunday is **February 25th**.



Ash Wednesday is February 14th. Pastor Heidi will offer two opportunities for those who wish to receive ashes. Beginning at **Noon** through **1 p.m.**, come and go as you wish to receive ashes and a blessing. At **7 p.m.**, Pastor Heidi will lead a meditative service, culminating with the imposition of ashes. All are welcome to join us for either or both times.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP—Daytime will play a Chocolate Trivia Game with Cherie Teagno on **Wednesday, February 7th**, at 1:00 p.m. in Pilgrim Hall. Evening will celebrate chocolate on **Monday, February 12th**, at 7:00 p.m. in Pilgrim Hall. All ladies are welcome to attend either of both meetings.



MISSION OUTREACH is collecting cans of soup now through **Super Bowl Sunday (February 11th)** for the **Strongsville Emergency Food Bank**.



Please bring your cans of any kind of soup and place them in the receptacle in Pilgrim Hall near the bulletin board. **Next Sunday, February 11th, Mission Outreach will host a "Souper Bowl" celebration. After the service, join us in Pilgrim Hall for a light snack of homemade soup. We want to bring people together to celebrate our current mission!**

WEAR YOUR FAVORITE TEAM JERSEY OR SHIRT!

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 Baldridge, Ron & Yvonne Adams (Judi Pavisich's friends), Chris Anderson (Linda & Mike Elkins' son-in-law), Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Angie Colosimo (Judi Pavisich's friend), Barbara Davis (Don & Sandy Gleichauf's friend), John Dickson (Greg's dad), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Joanne Gariepy (Sally Herzog's friend), Kathy Ghatti (friend of Ginger Rothel), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), 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

OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$ 3,617.01
Last Week's Offering Received \$ 4,007.00
Difference + \$389.99

Thank you very much for your support.

PLEDGE CARDS RECEIVED TO DATE: 50



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.



UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

- The Board of Trustees will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, **February 13th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Diaconate will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, **February 20th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Official Board will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, **February 27th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.

ANNUAL ALL FAMILY WINTER RETREAT IT'S NOT TOO LATE FOR SATURDAY RETREATERS!

February 17, 2024

Templed Hills Camp in Bellville, Ohio

Attention: those who wish to come down on Saturday only—we would be happy to have you there, but we also need your reservation and payment TODAY-- the cost is \$20. Please contact Irene Joyce or Rachel Zielinski if you have any questions.

ATTENDEE MEETING TODAY: Retreat planning meeting in the sanctuary after the worship service

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 Pogozelski*
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

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.



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.



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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.

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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.



BOOK STUDY--A YEAR OF BIBLICAL WOMANHOOD Continuing on **February 19th**, 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!



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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.

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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 ____/____/____