



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Congregational)

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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor

Sunday, January 12, 2025– 10 A.M.

Baptism of Christ



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 "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho" arr. Graef

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Irene Joyce

INTROIT "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child" arr. Graef

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Like the soft whisper of a little child singing to herself before anyone else in the house is awake,

People: Ever so gently, God's voice cradles us with songs of wonder and awe.

Leader: With the persistence of teenagers and young adults, heady with the newfound freedom of questioning everything,

People: God's voice rumbles like a river through our lives, sweeping away all the boundaries between us.

Leader: Like the grandpa who passes on the secret to his bread, like the nana who teaches her grandkids how to drive,

People: God's voice is always reminding us that we are precious, esteemed, and beloved.

† HYMN 408 "How Firm a Foundation"

A READING FROM THE PROPHETS **Isaiah 43:1-3**
(New International Version)

But now, this is what the Lord says— He who created you, Jacob,

He who formed you, Israel:

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;

and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.

When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;

the flames will not set you ablaze.

For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;

I give Egypt for your ransom, Cush and Seba in your stead.

Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you,

I will give people in exchange for you, nations in exchange for your life.

Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east

and gather you from the west.

I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.'

Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth—

everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory,

whom I formed and made."

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 "Oh, Freedom!" arr. Graef

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" arr. Graef

† **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 3:21-22**

(New International Version)

When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

SERMON "Fresh Starts"

† **HYMN 56** "To God Be the Glory"

† **BENEDICTION** Malcolm Doney, Uniting Church

May the love which overcomes all differences, which heals all wounds, which puts to flight all fears, which reconciles all who are separated be in us and among us, now and always, and may the blessing of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be upon you this day and for ever more. Amen.

† **POSTLUDE** "When the Saints Go Marching In" arr. Niehaus

SERVING

TODAY – JANUARY 12 **NEXT SUNDAY – JANUARY 19**

Barbara & John Toth **Greeters** Greta Rich & Doug Turnbull

Dale Hawk **Liturgist** Pam Keenen

Volunteers needed **Ushers** Volunteers needed

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

Satori Winds **Special Music** Chancel 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**.



A NOTE OF THANKS—

We thank the **Satori Winds—Dick E. Ingersoll, Dick K. Ingersoll, Don Kubec, and Ken Mehalko**, along with **Sharon Heinrich** for today's music.

The altar flowers are given—

Remembering Lou Coté--Diana Creecy



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 Rachel Zielinski on January 16th!

Love, your 2nd favorite set of twins

ANNUAL ALL FAMILY WINTER RETREAT

February 14-16, 2024 Inspiration Hills Camp in Burbank, Ohio



The Church's Annual All-Family Winter Retreat will take place on President's Day weekend 2025. This year, we

are at a new location and things will be a little different. The sign-up sheet to attend and the sign-up sheet for things to bring and to volunteer are posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Please reserve your spot and room now, as rooms will be first-come, first-served. The cut-off to sign up is today. Space is limited to 12 families. Also, please let us know if you have any special dietary needs. Finally, those that wish to come down on Saturday only—we would be happy to have you there, but we also need your reservation by January 12th, and the cost is \$12 per meal. Please contact Irene Joyce or Rachel Zielinski with questions.

Here is the cost:

ADULTS (12 and up): \$75 CHILDREN (6-11): \$20

CHILDREN (5 and under): FREE

Important dates to remember:

JANUARY 12, 2025: Reservations close; **MONEY DUE**

FEBRUARY 2, 2025: Retreat planning meeting in the church after the worship service

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP



Are you interested in joining our congregation? Pastor Heidi will be offering a membership class in the near future. Please contact her or the church office if you would like to become a member of the Strongsville UCC.

FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL:

PENNY SUNDAY: The next Penny Sunday will be on **January 26, 2025** and will go to our Free Lunch for All Program.



UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

• The Board of Trustees will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, **January 14th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.

• The Diaconate will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, **January 21st** at 10:30 a.m. in the Parlor.



OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Irene Jannsohn, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar, Maggie Struhar

Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Judy Carte, Sam Cuyler Jr., Joe Hattery, Martha Hattery, Sue Hawk, Kay Konicek, Bobbie & Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Jim Maresco, Roy Merkle, Lola Millhoane, Ginny & Kenn Oerkfritz, Judi Pavisich, Bob Pogozelski, George & Joyce Reed, Dorothy Ritchie, Ron Rothel, Tracy Seneff, Peter Smith, Gayle Sperber, Linda Stepan, Richard Sullen, Doug Thorn, Sharon Wilson, Claire Wills, Marty Winch

Extended Church Family: Yvonne Adams (Judi Pavisich's friend), Linda Allwood (Dale Hawk's sister) Dorene Baldrige, Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Barbara Davis (Don & Sandy Gleichauf's friend), John Dickson (Greg's dad), Allison Emerson (Colette's sister), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Joanne Gariepy (Sally Herzog's friend), Kathy Ghatti (friend of Ginger Rothel), Jennifer Gleichauf (Don & Sandy's daughter-in-law), Sarah & David Gleichauf (Don & Sandy's grandson & wife), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Barb & Dale Holmberg (Tiffany Hassel's parents), Diane Mason (Lora Rung's 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), The people of Ukraine, Sudan, 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 \$ 4,359.00
Last Week's Offering Received \$ 5,542.00
Difference +\$1,883.00

Thank you very much for your support.

PLEDGES RECEIVED: 61



BOOK STUDY—A NEW CHAPTER!

On **Monday, January 20th**, Pastor Heidi and Linda Elkins will begin a study of a book called *Sisterhood*. The Book Study group will continue to meet on the **third Monday of each month at 7 p.m.**

MISSION OUTREACH NEWS:

MISSION OUTREACH is collecting cans of soup now through Super Bowl Sunday (February 9th) 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.



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place Sunday, **January 26, 2025**, and will be preceded by the traditional Pancake Brunch. All are encouraged to attend this meeting.



ANNUAL REPORTS

Once completed, Annual Reports will be available for pickup prior to the Annual Meeting.



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. Please consider saying **YES** when a member of the Nominating Committee asks you to serve. Some of the positions 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.

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.



CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES HELP

If you are looking for ways to support our UCC brothers and sisters affected by the fires in Southern California, please consider making a donation to the United Church of Christ Global HOPE Fund. You can find more information here: support.ucc.org/global-HOPE.



BE A GREETER! A new sign-up sheet in the Gathering Area is waiting for your name to be added as a greeter. No experience is necessary—we will show you everything you need to know. Being a greeter is a wonderful way to get to know people and welcome them to worship!

CHURCH OFFICERS IN 2024

*Elected January 28, 2024 **Appointed by the Official Board

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 Cherie Teagno*
Barbara White Mary Ellen Zimmerman

Christian Education Committee

Serena Abruzzino Mary Densmore Linda Elkins*
Colette Emerson* Sarah Hayes** 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

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

PAPER RECYCLING!

Our paper recycling bin is serviced by Royal Oak Recycling. Please continue to deposit your **FLATTENED** cardboard and your papers in the bin. However, **please do not place papers/cardboard outside the bin if it's full.** Thanks!



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 accepted during our Thursday sale hours, but please try to limit your donations to what you can carry downstairs. **Please do not abandon items outside the church doors.**



FREE LUNCH FOR ALL--Wednesdays
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

A reminder: Donations are welcomed to support the increasing costs of this valuable program. **Thank you to all of our faithful volunteers!**



WALK THE END ALZHEIMER'S
ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

Strongsville Community Band
A Tradition of Musical Excellence

Melodies for Memories

A Concert Supporting Families Affected by Alzheimer's and Other Dementias

Sunday, January 19th
Strongsville Middle School

2 PM | Health Fair & Doors Open
3 PM | Concert Begins
4 PM | Health Fair
5 PM | End of Event

Join us for a festive musical afternoon as we partner with local organizations to bring you more than just great music! Before and after the concert, we're teaming up with community partners to connect you with valuable resources and support for Alzheimer's and dementia. Together, let's raise awareness, enjoy incredible music, and strengthen our community.