



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, January 18, 2026– 10 A.M.
Sacrament of Holy Baptism



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 "This Little Light of Mine" arr. Raney

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Irene Joyce

INTROIT "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" Traditional Spiritual

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We wait patiently for our God.

People: We will sing, we will sing new songs of the One who calls us here.

Leader: We will not chase after other gods.

People: We will sing, we will sing new songs of the One in whom we can trust.

Leader: We will tell of all God has done for us.

People: We will sing, we will sing new songs of the One whose salvation is for all.

† HYMN 182 "For the Beauty of the Earth"

A READING FROM THE PSALMS Psalm 40:1-11
(New International Version)

I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry.

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire;

he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.

He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him.

Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,

who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.

Many, Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us.

None can compare with you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds;

they would be too many to declare.

Sacrifice and offering you did not desire— but my ears you have opened—

burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require.

Then I said, "Here I am, I have come— it is written about me in the scroll.

I desire to do your will, my God; your law is within my heart."

I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly;

I do not seal my lips, Lord, as you know.

I do not hide your righteousness in my heart;

I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help.

I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness from the great assembly.

Do not withhold your mercy from me, Lord;

may your love and faithfulness always protect me.

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 "He Leadeth Me" Gilpin

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE



THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Natalie Rose Thomas
Joseph Michael Thomas
Grandchildren of Deborah A. Thomas
Sponsors: Wayne & Bobbi Cook



WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY WORDS

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FROM THE CANDIDATES

CONGREGATIONAL PROMISE

People of God, will you welcome these candidates and uphold them in their new life in Christ?

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

PRAYER OF BAPTISM

Let us pray. Eternal God, bless this water by your Holy Spirit. By that same Spirit, save those who confess the name of Jesus Christ, that sin may have no power over them. Create new life in Joey and Natalie, baptized this morning, that they may rise in Christ. All glory and honor be to you, Eternal God, who was, who is, and shall always be, world without end. **Amen.**

BAPTISM OF NATALIE ROSE THOMAS

BAPTISM OF JOSEPH MICHAEL THOMAS

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Let us pray together: **We give you thanks, O God, for Joseph and Natalie, and for your grace acknowledged here today in water and the Spirit. Grant us grace as we receive, nurture and befriend them as members of the Body of Christ. Grant them 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 185 "Jesus Loves Me"

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "More Love to Thee" Doane

† 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

John 1:29-42

(The Message)

The two disciples heard John, and went after Jesus. Jesus looked over his shoulder and said to them, "What are you after?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" He replied, "Come along and see for yourself."

REFLECTION

"Come, See, Believe. . . ."

† HYMN 128

"I Sing the Mighty Power of God"

† BENEDICTION

Nathan Nettleton

Go now, and heed God's message. Never forget God's wonderful mercy and kindness. Welcome the freedom that is won in truth, but never use your freedom to undermine others. See that your words and actions are worthy of praise. May God uphold you in a lasting covenant. May Christ Jesus free you from all that would harm you. May the Holy Spirit nourish you in wisdom and faithfulness. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, Amen.

† POSTLUDE

"Lift Every Voice and Sing"

Johnson

SERVING

TODAY – JANUARY 18

NEXT SUNDAY – JANUARY 25

Judi Pavisich	Greeters	Pat Jefferis
Sandy O'Shea	Liturgist	Mike Willis
Judi Pavisich	Head Usher	Mary Ellen Zimmerman
Tom Foley	Director of Music	Tom Foley
Mike Elkins	Associate Director of Music	Mike Elkins
Sharon Heinrich	Organist	Sharon Heinrich
Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich	Sound	Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich
Chancel Choir	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**.

ATTENDANCE CARDS ARE IN YOUR BULLETIN!

Please take a moment to complete the card that is in your bulletin and place it in the offering plate. You may write prayer requests on the reverse side, if you wish to have us pray for someone and add a name to the prayer chain.



A NOTE OF THANKS—

We thank our **Chancel Choir, Tom Foley, Mike Elkins** and **Sharon Heinrich** for today's music!

ANNUAL MEETING



The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place Sunday, **January 25, 2026**, and will be preceded by the traditional Pancake Brunch. All are encouraged to attend this meeting, but only registered members are entitled to vote.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

- The Diaconate will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, **January 20** at 10:30 a.m. in the Parlor.
- The Official Board will have an email meeting on the fourth week of January.



FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL:

PENNY SUNDAY NEXT WEEK: Penny

Sunday will be on **January 25, 2026** for World Central Kitchen.



The altar flowers are given--

In loving memory of our beautiful mother Barbara Bridle, who embraced life with joy and nurtured deep connections within her family, her circle of friends, and her beloved church community. She remains forever in our hearts.

— Her children: Ken, Sue and Laura and their families

A 2026 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. Reserve your date(s) in memory or in honor of something or someone special.



Our steeple will light the sky this week—

Happy Birthday to Tony Craig on January 20th!

With love, Grammy

Happy Birthday today to Kathie Paul, Sharon Ritchie, Kennedy Morgan, and Ember Schneider!

BABY CONGRATULATIONS

Welcome to the world, **Beckham Hayes Wade**, son of Nicole and Brett Wade, who was born on January 11, 2026. Congratulations to grandparents **Beth & Bill Giuliano** and uncle **Luke Giuliano**, too!



IN CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY



We were saddened by the loss of long-time member **Barbara Bridle** in California on January 9, 2026 at the age of 91. She and her late husband, Lloyd were integral members of our church for many years. Our heartfelt condolences to Barbara and Lloyd's friend and family: Ken (Luann Bridle), her daughter Susan (Kevin Verner) and their daughters Mallory (Brian Haliena) and Stacy (Britt Willingham) and her daughter Laura (Marty Swartz) and their son Drew Swartz (Cassie Clemens) and daughter Jamie (James Cooper). Barbara was also very proud to be a great grandmother of 5: Gavin Swartz, Reese and Stella Haliena, Avery Willingham and Cameron Cooper. She will be buried next to Lloyd at Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery in Seville, Ohio.

THREE WITH GLEE!



Capital Campaign: We currently have \$62,551.08 in our capital campaign account. The Trustees are scheduling the painting of Pilgrim Hall, which needs to happen prior to dealing with the acoustics in that room. Things are happening, but we still have more projects on the list. Please make sure you designate your donation for "Capital Campaign." Thanks for your continuing support.

MISSION OUTREACH NEWS:

MISSION OUTREACH is collecting cans of soup now through Super Bowl Sunday (February 8th) 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.



OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Irene Jannsohn, Connie Rebar

Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Mark Camp, Judy Carte, Elaine Coffey, Betty "Grammy" Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Roger Davis, Sue Hawk, Pam & Bruce Keenen, Erv Koch, Jan Meier, Carol Konet, Bobbie & Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Jim Maresco, Jan Meier, Roy Merkle, Amanda Moulton, Ginny & Kenn Oerkfitz, George & Joyce Reed, Dorothy Ritchie, Ron Rothel, Jennifer Sekorky, Tracy Seneff, Peter Smith, Bruce Sperber, Linda Stepan, JoAnn Thomas, Debbie Wentz, Claire Wills, Marty Winch

Extended Church Family: Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Barbara Davis (Don & Sandy Gleichauf's friend), Allison Emerson (Colette's sister), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Joanne Garipey (Sally Herzog's friend), Kathy Ghetti (friend of Ginger Rothel), Jennifer Gleichauf (Don & Sandy's daughter-in-law), Sarah & David Gleichauf (Don & Sandy's grandson & wife), Michaelene Hanrahan (Jim Joyce's sister), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Tiffany Hassel (Judi Pavisich's daughter-in-law), Barb & Dale Holmberg (Tiffany Hassel's parents), George Love (friend of the church), 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), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Vicki Smith (Venner Clarinets), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Don & Pauline Wills (Judi Pavisich's friends), the people of Ukraine, Sudan, Gaza, and Israel, victims of violence, those affected by natural disasters, First Responders

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

YOU CAN ACCESS RESOURCES FROM AND INFORMATION ABOUT OUR HEARTLAND CONFERENCE OF THE UCC! Looking for a way to get connected for ministry resources in the wider church? Just scan the QR code.



ANNUAL ALL FAMILY WINTER RETREAT

February 13-15, 2026



Inspiration Hills
CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

Inspiration Hills Camp in
Burbank, Ohio

The Church's Annual All-Family Winter Retreat will take place on President's Day weekend 2026. 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 will soon be posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Please reserve your spot and room now, as rooms will be first-come, first-served. 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 A.S.A.P., and the cost is \$10 per meal. Please contact Irene Joyce or Rachel Zielinski if you have any questions.

Here is the cost:

ADULTS (12 and up): \$80

CHILDREN (6-11): \$20

CHILDREN (5 and under): FREE

Important dates to remember:

JANUARY 18, 2026: Reservations close; **MONEY DUE**

FEBRUARY 1, 2026: Planning meeting in the church after the service



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!



FREE LUNCH FOR ALL--Wednesdays

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

Many thanks to all of our dedicated volunteers and to all who come and enjoy food and fellowship on Wednesdays!

If the Strongsville City Schools are closed on a Wednesday because of inclement weather, the Free Lunch will not be served.



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 yourself. **Please do not abandon items outside the church doors.**

Reminder: When the Strongsville City Schools are closed on a Thursday due to inclement weather, the Thrift Shop will not be open.



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 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, who 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.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Are you interested in learning more about the United Church of Christ and becoming a member? Please let Pastor Heidi or the church office know if you would like to join our congregation in membership. We will be welcoming new members soon.



THANK YOU TO OUR CHURCH OFFICERS 2025

*Elected January 26, 2025 ** appointed by Official Board
Moderator: Greg Dickson **Vice-Moderator:** Jen Barry
Treasurer: Sally Herzog **Clerk:** Judy Gaumer
Sunday School Superintendent: Linda Elkins

Board of Trustees
Karen Bates** Bill Giuliano Chris Goff*
Mike Elkins Les Fox Herb Hampson Cathy Hawk*
Sandy Pogozeleski Cheryl Sobek*
Alex Tomoff* Mike Willis* Rachel Zielinski

Endowment Fund Subcommittee
Greg Dickson* Dave Williams*

Diaconate
Teri Barbish Jean Bittinger* Elaine Coffey*
Bobbi Cook* Wayne Cook* Judy Davis*
Judy Fox Pam Heimbürger* Lynne McCray*
Linda Ponstingle* Lora Rung* Cherie Teagno

Christian Education Committee
Linda Elkins Colette Emerson Dale Hawk*
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
Ingrid Dickson* Sue Gigliotti Linda Stepan*
Rob Toth Sarah Toth* Dave Williams*

Mission and Outreach Committee
Gina Cathcart* Bobbi Cook** Myron Costin*
Diana Creecy Cathy Hawk* Sarah Hayes
Lora Rung* Peter Smith Mary Willis*
Mary Ellen Zimmerman

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OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$ 4,359.00
Last Week’s Offering Received \$ 6,448.00
Difference + 2,089.00

Thank you very much for your support.
PLEDGES RECEIVED: 62



IT’S NOT TOO LATE TO PLEDGE FROM YOUR H.E.A.R.T.!

Hospitality
Engagement
Activities
Resources
Time, Talent, & Treasure



United Church of Christ 2026 Estimate of Giving

In recognition of God's many blessings to me, I am happy to join with others in the following commitment for 2026:

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 ____/____/____

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. *Matthew 6:21*
