



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Congregational)

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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor

Sunday, January 8, 2023 – 10 A.M.
Sacrament of Holy Communion



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.

As you enter the sanctuary, welcome one another.
As you hear the chimes ring, settle your mind in silence.
As worship begins, welcome God's Holy Spirit.

PRELUDE "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" arr. Raney

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Joyce Reed

INTROIT "Jesus Stand Among Us" Whitworth

† 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 290 "As with Gladness Men of Old"

A READING FROM THE PROPHETS Isaiah 60:1-6
(New International Version)

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.
See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you.
Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
"Lift up your eyes and look about you:
All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar,
and your daughters are carried on the hip.
Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy;
the wealth on the seas will be brought to you,
to you the riches of the nations will come.
Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah.
And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense
and proclaiming the praise of the Lord.

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 "As We Gather at the Table" Hatch

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Go Tell it on the Mountain" arr. Elkins

† 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 Matthew 2:1-12
(New International Version)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked,
"Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?
We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

SERMON "The Gifts We Bring"

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

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

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

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; open our ears to hear those words we always ignore. We search for you each day; open our eyes to your wonders so we may see them anew. We would believe in your promises; fill our hearts with the presence of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. (pray in silence)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Hear this good news: God will show us the way to God's realm. Gracious, merciful, and righteous is our God of salvation! Thanks be to God, we are all forgiven!
People: God, rebuild our lives, repair our mistakes, fill our emptiness with hope and joy. Thanks be to God, we are all forgiven! Amen.

A BRIEF GREAT THANKSGIVING

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP "Hymn Medley"

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 288 "We Three Kings"

† BENEDICTION Nathan Nettleton, Laughingbird Ministries
"Go now as a light to the nations. Honour the Lord; preach what you know of the risen Christ, and fulfill all righteousness. And may God strengthen you and bless you with peace; may Christ Jesus bring forth justice for you and among you; and may the Holy Spirit alight on you and affirm you as God's beloved ones. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord, In the name of Christ. Amen."

† RESPONSE "Go Now in Peace" Besig

† POSTLUDE "As with Gladness Men of Old" Dix, arr. Pelz

SERVING

TODAY – JANUARY 8	NEXT SUNDAY – JANUARY 15
Judi Pavisich	Allen & Michele Mhlack
Elaine Coffey	Tom Gaumer
Volunteers needed	Volunteer needed
Oliver & Matilda Sekorky	Chris Abruzzino/Riley Marshall
Tom Foley	Tom Foley
Mike Elkins	Mike Elkins
Sharon Heinrich	Sharon Heinrich
Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich	Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich
Chancel Choir	Ken Mehalko, Chancel Choir
	Greeters
	Liturgist
	Ushers
	Acolytes
	Director of Music
	Associate Director of Music
	Organist
	Sound
	Special Music

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—
To my church family in gratitude for the laughter, love, and prayers we share—Judy Carte

Our steeple will light the sky this week—
In Memory of Paul Hirt
In Memory of Christina Craig

FRESH FLOWERS ARE BACK! Please sign up for 2023 altar flowers on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall.

A NOTE OF THANKS—
Today, we thank the Chancel Choir, Tom Foley, Sharon Heinrich, and Mike Elkins for sharing their music with us today.



In Christian Sympathy

Our sincere sympathy to the family and friends of Christina Craig, who passed away on December 31, 2022. Christina and her late husband, Rev. Larry Craig were dear friends to our congregation.

Our deepest sympathy to the friends and family of longtime church member Paul Hirt, who died on January 4, 2023 at the age of 78. Paul was a member of Strongsville UCC for 63 years.



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP MONDAY Jan. 9th at 7 p.m.
Mingle & Chat--Getting to know each other
As always, all ladies are welcome to attend either or both the afternoon meetings on the 1st Wednesday of every month or the evening meetings on Mondays!

AN INVITATION TO AN ECUMENICAL CELEBRATION

On **Friday, January 13th**, Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple will be dedicating its Sabbath service to the life and legacy of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Our congregation is invited to join them at 6:15 p.m. for Shabbat prayer services and a special guest speaker. Please let Pastor Heidi know today if you are interested in attending.



OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$3,649.37
 Last Week's Offering Received \$5,081.00
 Difference \$1,431.63



Thank you very much for your support.
Pledge cards received to date: 62

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS



- The Board of Trustees will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, **January 10th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Diaconate will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, **January 17th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Official Board will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, **January 24th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS MAIL BOX

Please remember to check the box for greetings you have received. Cards left after January 15th will be discarded. Thanks!



OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.
Long-Term Care or Homebound: Ruth Milidonis, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar

Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Joan Beckwith, Lloyd Bridle, Mary Carey, Gina Cathcart, Kathy Cockrell, Betty Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Sam Cuyler, Sr., Sue Hawk, Charles Jannsohn, Bruce Keenen, Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Len Lane, Judy Maur, Reggie McCray, Laurie Meister, Roy Merkle, Michele Mihlack, Lola Millhoane, Kenn Oerkfritz, Gary Paul, Sandy Pogozelski, Joyce Reed, Dorothy & Bill Ritchie, Ginger Rothel, Tracy Seneff, Peter Smith, Maggie Struhar, Sharon Wilson, Dave Williams, Janis Williamson, Claire Wills, Marty Winch, Rachel Zielinski, Mary Ellen Zimmerman



Extended Church Family: Dorene Baldrige, Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Ron Colosimo (Judi Pavisich's friend), John Dickson (Greg's dad), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Jennifer Gleichauf (Don & Sandy's daughter-in-law), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Tiffany Hassel (Judi Pavisich's daughter-in-law), Julie Kowell (Sarah Cathcart Wilhoit's friend), Ed Kuhn (Sandy & Don Gleichauf's friend), Andrew Majoros (Michele Mihlack's cousin), Diane Mason (Lora Rung's friend), Rudy Matjazic (Judi Pavisich'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), Jeff Peacock, Terry Robson (Barb & Mark Camp's friend), Mike Rung (Lora's brother), Tina Serrano (Elliott Joyce's grandma), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Vicky Smith (Venner Clarinets), Bruce Unger (Sally Herzog's friend), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Weston (Chelsea Cathcart's friend's baby), Tom (friend of Judi Pavisich), The people of Ukraine, victims of violence, those affected by severe weather

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

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place Sunday, **January 29, 2023**, and will be preceded by the traditional Pancake Brunch. All are encouraged to attend this meeting.



Annual Report Attention Chairs of all Church Organizations, Boards, and Committees: **ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE VIA EMAIL TO THE CHURCH OFFICE TODAY.** Please be so kind as to submit your report in a Word document to strongsvilleucc@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

FINANCIAL OFFICERS OF CHURCH GROUPS:

Please turn in your financial statements to the Auditing Committee through the church office by **TODAY**. It is extremely important that all books be audited before the Annual Meeting on January 29, 2023. All organizations are required to submit: **THANKS!**

1. ALL bank books (savings and/or checking).
2. ALL bank statements for each month for each account. Checking accounts statements should show completed reconciliation on the back.
3. ALL monthly recap forms.
4. ALL bank deposit slips, withdrawal slips and bank check receipts (if received), attached to monthly recap forms.
5. ALL receipts and bills paid.
6. Copy of Annual Financial Report (original provided to church office for Annual Report).

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: **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, Ushers, and Church Family Care Team. **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.

ANNUAL ALL FAMILY WINTER RETREAT

February 17-19, 2023 Templed Hills Camp in Bellville, Ohio
 The Church's Annual All-Family Winter Retreat will take place on President's Day weekend 2023: 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. The cut-off to sign up—TODAY—will be strictly enforced. Space is limited to 13 families. Also, please let us know if you have any special dietary needs. Finally, those who wish to come down on Saturday only—we would be happy to have you there, but we also need your reservation by TODAY, 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): \$75, CHILDREN (6-11): \$20, 5 and under: FREE

Important dates to remember:

TODAY: Reservations close; **MONEY DUE**
 FEBRUARY 12, 2022: Retreat planning meeting in the church after the worship service

BEE A BUSY BEE IN 2023

Sign-up sheets in the Gathering Area are waiting for **your name** to be added as a greeter or an 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.



HELP WANTED: Can you spare a little time on Wednesday, January 11th, immediately following the Free Lunch (around 12:45 p.m.)? The Diaconate needs a few volunteers to assist in taking down the Christmas decorations inside the church. Please see **Linda Ponstingle** if you can help.

MISSION OUTREACH BREAKING NEWS:

Our church is going to be working in partnership with St. Joseph Strongsville Welcome Circle for Ukraine We are excited to announce that a group of us (St. Joseph church and Strongsville UCC) are coming together to help a Ukrainian family escape danger and uncertainty due to the ongoing war. We are committed to providing support and guidance during the 2-year Uniting for Ukraine program by helping this young family adjust to life in Northeast Ohio and guiding them towards self-sufficiency. If you would like to help us respond to this extraordinary humanitarian need or learn more, please contact **Sarah Hayes** as mission outreach coordinator with this project. We have a list of household items that are needed as well as opportunities to donate money. The family is humbled and very grateful for this opportunity and we are grateful to everyone for their support and prayers.



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.