



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, May 2, 2021 – 9 A.M. & 10:30 A.M.

Sacrament of 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 complete your Attendance Card and place it in the offering plate.

† Please stand as you are comfortable.

PRELUDE "Come, Now it the Time to Worship" Doerksen

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Irene Joyce

INTROIT "Sanctuary" Thompson/Scruggs

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: For the first time in a very long time, we gather in the presence of our God: Grieving people, lonely people, even children with skinned knees will have their tears washed away by the Spirit's loving touch.

People: At long last, we gather together, in this sacred space, as faithful children of God!

Leader: We gather to worship the One who provides what we need, not always what we want, even during a time of pandemic.

People: Finally, ready or not, we gather around the Table of God!

Leader: We come to taste the goodness of God, to drink deeply from God's mercy.

People: Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Amen!

SONG "Welcome Back for 2021" Sebastian

A READING FROM THE PSALMS Psalm 22:25-28

(Common English Bible)

I offer praise in the great congregation because of you;

I will fulfill my promises in the presence of those who honor God.

Let all those who are suffering eat and be full!

Let all who seek the LORD praise him!

I pray your hearts live forever!

Every part of the earth will remember and come back to the LORD;

every family among all the nations will worship you.

Because the right to rule belongs to the LORD; he rules all nations.

PRAYING IN SILENCE

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy, **ALL: Hear our prayers. Amen.**

ANTHEM "Be Still My Soul" Sibelius

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING

Strongsville United Church of Christ is a loving, vibrant congregation with an eye to serving Jesus and making the world a better place. We appreciate your commitment to giving freely of your talents and your treasure, as you are able. Thank you. To give online, you may go to:

<https://www.myoffering.com/eonline/index.php/dashboard/login/5027>

OFFERTORY "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" Baker

A READING FROM THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES Acts 8:26-31

(Common English Bible)

An angel from the Lord spoke to Philip, "At noon, take the road that leads from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he did. Meanwhile, an Ethiopian man was on his way home from Jerusalem, where he had come to worship. He was a eunuch and an official responsible for the entire treasury of Candace. (Candace is the title given to the Ethiopian queen.) He was reading the prophet Isaiah while sitting in his carriage. The Spirit told Philip, "Approach this carriage and stay with it."

Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you really understand what you are reading?" The man replied, "Without someone to guide me, how could I?" Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him.

SERMON "Do you understand what you are reading?"

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

God of sea and sky, of sun and rain, God of all people everywhere, God of the rich and of the poor and all those in between: we have heard it said that "good news" for the poor is that they are poor no more. We have learned that Christ came "that they and we may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10b). This abundance is ours, offered freely and lovingly, to all God's children. Yet instead of thanking you, we take it for granted. We forget. We deny. We hoard. We do not always or willingly share – even though we know of the tremendous suffering in the world. We confess that we contribute to that suffering when we ignore it or avoid it. We confess that we have blamed others, or even you, for our sins.

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Forgive us, God, for the sin of withholding. Forgive us our lack of faith. Forgive us our reluctance to trust in you. Forgive us, your privileged people, for not acknowledging our own abundance – all of which comes from you and only you. Gracious, Merciful God, in your mercy, in the silence of this space, hear our prayer. (silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Hear this good news! If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. The old has passed away; a new beginning is upon us!

All: We are healed, so we might bring healing to our world; we are strengthened in faith, so we might carry Christ's Love to all people; we are set free from our sin, so we might become loving servants of Christ. Amen.

A BRIEF GREAT THANKSGIVING

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

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.

† **SONG** "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" Davis

† **BENEDICTION**

† **POSTLUDE** "Let There Be Praise" Tunney

SERVING

TODAY – MAY 2

Sharon Heinrich

Sandy O'Shea

Tom Foley

Mike Elkins

Sharon Heinrich

Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich

Rob Toth & Clay Williams

Liturgist 9 a.m.

Liturgist 10:30 a.m.

Director of Music

Associate Director of Music

Supplemental Organist

Sound

Special Music

NEXT SUNDAY – MAY 9

Beverly Wehr

Judi Pavisich

Tom Foley

Mike Elkins

Sharon Heinrich

Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich

The Bell 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**.

Our steeple will light the sky this week—

Happy Birthday to Sharon Maresco on May 1st

Happy Anniversary to Jennifer & Dave Sekorky on May 5th

Your Church Buddies

Happy Birthday to Greg Dickson on May 6th

Love, Ingrid

In loving memory of John B. Millhoane's 91st birthday

We love and miss you!

The Millhoane/Hopkins/Masuga Family

Happy Birthday to Hayley (Craig) McKane on May 7th

With Love, Grammy

OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$3,473.27

Last Week's Offering Received \$2,317.10

Difference (-\$1,156.17)

Thank you very much for your support.



STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING



The annual Strengthen the Church offering will be received throughout the month of May. It is a special mission offering Through Strengthen the Church, United Church of Christ members reach out in the name of Christ to support United Church of Christ ministries throughout the world. Envelopes are available in the Gathering Area.

OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Janet Kato, Marge McKinney, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields

Church Family: Joan Beckwith, Adria Bond, Eddy Bond, Mary Carey, Elaine Coffey, Betty Craig, Christina Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Linda Elliott, Don Gleichauf, Sue Hawk, Steve Herzog, Paul Hirt, Elliott Joyce, Carole Kapcar, Tony Koussa, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Millie Lafave, Lacey Marshall, Brigitte Matchett, Judy Maur, Laurie Meister, Michele Mhlack, Lola Millhoane, Joyce Reed, Dorothy and Bill Ritchie, Ginger Rothel, John & Maggie Struhar, Keith Sullen, Jamie & Josh Trinckes, Sharon Wilson, Sally Vetovitz, Peg Weakley, Claire Wills, Marty Winch



Extended Church Family: Dorene Baldrige, Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Judy Carte's son-in-law, Ryan, John Dickson (Greg's dad), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Kelly Kling (Strongsville Emergency Food Bank), Julie Kowell (Sarah Cathcart Wilhoit's friend), Diane Mason (Lora Rung's friend), Pat Masuga (Dan's mom), 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), Carrol Riley (Marjorie Morrison's dad), Terry Robson (the Camps' friend), Mike Rung (Lora's brother), Anneke Scholtz (Irene Jannsohn's sister), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Daphne Wilson (Irene Jannsohn's niece)

Please contact Pastor Heidi if you would like to pray for others via the email prayer chain.

IN-PERSON BOARD MEETINGS THIS MONTH

- **The Board of Trustees** will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, **May 11th** at 7 p.m. in Pilgrim Hall.
- **The Diaconate** will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, **May 18th** at 7 p.m. in Pilgrim Hall.
- **The Official Board** will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, **May 25th** at 7 p.m. in Pilgrim Hall.



Of course, the usual safety protocols will be in place at all in-person meetings.

THRIFT SHOP



The Thrift Shop is OPEN on Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. with enhanced safety protocols in place and lots of interesting merchandise. Donations are being accepted, but you must call the church first to arrange a time for drop-off.

THRIFT SHOP BONUS HOURS

The 3rd Monday of the month, May 17, 2021 — 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

(We're still open on Thursdays from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

Also, the Thrift Shop is in need of volunteers to help out for a couple of hours—sorting, organizing, and selling on Thursdays. Please call Cathy Hawk (440-781-7512) if you can help!

HELP NEEDED!



Our Panera Bread ministry is a vital means of outreach to the community. We need a volunteer or two (or three) to pick up bread and pastries from the Panera Bread store on Royalton Road on Monday mornings at 9 a.m. The job only requires picking up the baked goods from the store and dropping them off at the church, where the volunteers sort the goodies for distribution. If we can get a few people to volunteer, we can have a rotating schedule. Please contact the church by emailing strongsvilleucc@gmail.com or calling 440-238-6697 if you are willing to be a part of the important Panera Bread ministry.

WELCOME BACK 2021

Welcome back--We're glad to see all our friends.--Welcome back! And we smile when we think that we're back again. All those months we were gone, and we were away, But now we are back and we're here to stay! Gee, it's good to see ya! (Gee, it's good to see ya!) Back here where we need ya! (Back here where we need ya!) Yeah, we missed you a lot, and now you're back in your spot. Welcome back, Welcome back, welcome back, welcome back Welcome back, welcome back, Welcome back!

© Music & original lyrics: John Benson Sebastian
New lyrics: Tom Foley & Irene Joyce

Women's Fellowship will meet Tuesday, May 4, at 10:00 a.m. in Pilgrim Hall. We will plan programs for this year and then play a game. We will observe safety protocols by wearing masks and being physically distant. Please bring your own beverage. The meeting will adjourn before lunchtime.



IN-PERSON WORSHIP SERVICES 9 A.M. & 10:30 A.M.

Reservations required—call or email (Safety protocols will be in place.)



A COMBINED SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS WILL BE OFFERED AT THE 10:30 A.M. SERVICE.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Please call the church if you would like to sign up to teach on one of the Sundays (supplies and lessons will be provided).

Recordings of the weekly worship service will still be available online later on Sundays or early on Mondays.

GIFT CARDS--YOU CAN SUPPORT THIS PROJECT THAT BENEFITS OUR CHURCH!

You can order gift cards by calling Jim Joyce at 216-267-5043 in advance with your order. Limited stock is available, but special orders may be accommodated with advance notice. Thank you to those who continue to support this project by purchasing gift cards!



GRADUATES

Our church would like to recognize our graduates, so please let us know if someone is graduating within your family. We are interested to have an accurate list of graduates from high school, college, and schools of higher learning.



Full Name of graduate: _____

Graduate's address: _____

School: _____

Graduation Date (month at least): _____

Church Family member: _____

Relationship to church member: _____

Activities: _____

Honors and Awards: _____

Diploma / Degree Earned: _____

Future Plans: _____

Parents/Grandparents: _____

Please email the above information, along with a photo of the graduate, to the church office at strongsvilleucc@gmail.com by Sunday, June 6.

OPPORTUNITY TO HELP

Our new Sunday School Co-Superintendent, Linda Elkins, is looking for folks to help with the task of cleaning the upstairs carpet. A tentative date is May 16th at 1 p.m. Please contact Linda if you're able and available! (440) 655-8891 or leelkins@gmail.com.

