



**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

(Congregational)

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**Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor**

**Sunday, November 28, 2021 – 10:00 A.M.**

**First Sunday of Advent**



**WELCOME!**

*Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the best interests of others. – Philippians 2:4*

For the safety and comfort of everyone, please continue to wear a mask in the Gathering Area and when entering or leaving the Sanctuary. When you are seated in the pews, you may lower your mask if you wish, while maintaining social distancing. **If you are not yet fully vaccinated, we ask that you continue to wear a mask at all times. Thank you.**

† *Please stand as you are comfortable.*

**PRELUDE** "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" Mozart  
Carol Foley and Mike Elkins, keyboards

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** Irene Joyce  
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.

**INTROIT** "Emmanuel" McGee

**† CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Now, in this holy season of Advent, we wait.

**People: For the faithful God is coming to us. Come, Eternal One.**

Leader: Now, in this season of waiting, we listen.

**People: For the faithful Word speaks of good news to us. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Leader: Now, in the waiting and listening, we watch.

**People: For the faithful Spirit is moving among us. Come, Holy Spirit, come.**

**† HYMN 244** "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"  
*(If you wish to sing with us, please have your mask in place.)*

**LIGHTING THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE (HOPE)** Barbara & John Toth

Leader: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; those who follow me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." This message of HOPE is symbolized by the light of the first Advent Candle.

**People: Thank God for this season of light and hope in a world too often clouded and darkened by human acts of faithlessness.**

Leader: We are all beloved children of the Most High. Today, as we remember those who struggle to find hope and meaning in their everyday lives, we light the first candle, the Candle of Hope. Our lives are filled with things and people that come and go, but the hope we find in Jesus Christ lasts forever. We light the first candle, the Candle of Hope.

**People: May God grant to each and all of us the courage to keep the light of Hope burning in our hearts.**

Leader: Let us sing together, the first verse of...

**HYMN 245** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (verse 1)

**A READING FROM THE PSALMS**

Psalm 25: 4-10

(New Revised Standard Version)

Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

Good and upright is the Lord, therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

**Leader:** The Word of God, for us, the people of God;

**People:** Thanks be to God.

**SHARING OF 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** "Prepare the Way of the Lord" Rowan

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**OFFERING**

Thank you for your continuing commitment to giving freely of your talents and your treasure, as you are able, in service to Christ in the world. Thank you. To give online, please go to:

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

**OFFERTORY** "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" Mozart  
Carol Foley and Mike Elkins, keyboards

**† 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 PROPHETS** Jeremiah 33:14-16

(New Revised Standard Version)

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

**SERMON** "The Words of the Prophet"

**† HYMN 754** "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending"  
*(If you wish to sing with us, please have your mask in place.)*

**† BENEDICTION**

Be people of hope. Let hope live in your heart, and share the hope of Christ with all you meet. Share hope by noticing someone else's humanity. Share hope by listening to someone's story. Share hope by praying for our world. In this Advent season, together, may we see, feel, and share hope. And as

you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share hope with all whom you meet. **Amen.**

**† POSTLUDE** "Break Forth O Beauteous Heavenly Light" Schop

**SERVING**

**TODAY – NOVEMBER 28** **NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 5**

Elaine Coffey	<b>Greeters</b>	Linda Plain
Bruce Keenen	<b>Liturgist</b>	Judi Pavisich
Elaine Coffey	<b>Ushers</b>	Elaine Coffey
Tom Foley	<b>Director of Music</b>	Tom Foley
Mike Elkins	<b>Associate Director of Music</b>	Mike Elkins
Sharon Heinrich	<b>Supplemental Organist</b>	Sharon Heinrich
Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich	<b>Sound</b>	Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich
Chancel Choir/Carol Foley	<b>Special Music</b>	Chancel Choir/Carol Konet

**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](http://strongsvilleucc.com), select **Worship**, and click on **Service Videos**.



**A FRIENDLY REMINDER: COFFEE HOUR IS BACK!**  
Please stop down in Pilgrim Hall after the service for a hot beverage and warm conversation!

The altar flowers are given—  
*Celebrating our 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary on November 26<sup>th</sup>*  
Ken Mehalko & Bev Wehr



Our steeple will light the sky this week—  
*Happy Birthday today to Stephen Popovich!—With Love, Grammy*  
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**A NOTE OF THANKS**

We thank our special guest, Carol Foley, along with the Chancel Choir, Mike Elkins, Tom Foley, and Sharon Heinrich for providing our musical worship today.

**OFFERINGS RECEIVED**

Weekly Offering Needed	\$3,649.37
Last Week's Offering Received	\$7,784.00
Difference	\$4,134.63

**Thank you very much for your support.**



**PLEDGE CARDS RECEIVED TO DATE: 51**

**FREE LUNCH FOR ALL IS BACK!**

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month**

**11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

**LIMITED RESERVATIONS--Call (440) 238-5389**

**To-go meals will be available.**



Thank you to everyone who participated in the Live Nativity event last Sunday!

## OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

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



**Church Family:** Serena Abruzzino, Joan Beckwith, Eddy Bond, Mary Carey, Elaine Coffey, Kathy Cockrell, Betty Craig, Christina Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Sam Cuyler, Sr., Linda Elliott, Tom Foley, Ramona Glaze, Sue Hawk, Bob Heddleson, Steve Herzog, Paul Hirt, George Kapcar, Tony Koussa, Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Millie Lafave, Vicky Masuga, Judy Maur, Reggie McCray, Heidi & Chuck McDougall, Laurie Meister, Roy Merkle, Michele Mihlack, Lola Millhoane, Gary Paul, Judi Pavisich, Joyce Reed, Dorothy & Bill Ritchie, Ginger Rothel, Peter Smith, John & Maggie Struhar, Keith Sullen, Sharon Wilson, Sally Vetovitz, Peg Weakley, Claire Wills, Marty Winch, Mary Ellen & Bob Zimmerman

**Extended Church Family:** Dorene Baldrige, Fred Beba (Theresa's husband), Jackie Berkheimer (Judi Pavisich's friend), Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Judy Carte's son-in-law, Ryan, Hunter Colao (Barb & Mark Camp's grandson), Ron Colosimo (Judi Pavisich's friend), Mary Ann Csory (Judi Pavisich's friend), 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), 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), Carrol Riley (Marjorie Morrison's dad), Terry Robson (Barb & Mark Camp's friend), Mike Rung (Lora's brother), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Jimmy Walken (Kristen Burgess's uncle), Sandra Wentz (Debbie's daughter-in-law)

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

## The Mitten Tree

We are still collecting hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks for the needy this year. Now through **December 5<sup>th</sup>**, bring your items to the church and they will be placed on the Mitten Tree. After the 5<sup>th</sup>, the items will be given to the homeless shelter and the tree will become the **Family of Faith tree**. If you have not donated an ornament for yourself/your family, you may bring it to the church office and your ornament will join the others on our tree!



## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP CHRISTMAS TEA

Sunday – December 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 P.M.

in Pilgrim Hall

All ladies of the church are welcome. Please see or contact Elaine Coffey or Sharon Heinrich if you have not already signed up to attend.

Because of setup in Pilgrim Hall for the Tea on December 5<sup>th</sup>, we won't host coffee hour there, but fellowship will take place in the Parlor.



## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP QUILT RAFFLE

TICKETS ARE \$1.00 EACH OR 6 FOR \$5.00  
FREE PERSONALIZATION!

The Winner can get any name of their choice embroidered on the quilt.

Drawing will be held on December 12, 2021

Please see Judi Pavisich for tickets.

## THRIFT SHOP

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



### THRIFT SHOP BONUS HOURS

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, December 16, 2021 — 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Also, the Thrift Shop is still 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!

### CHURCH CHRISTMAS MAIL BOX



To send Christmas greetings to fellow members and friends, the church "mail box" will again be available in the Gathering Area. Please remember to check the box for greetings you receive.

Also, please do not put cards in the box for friends who are not in town for Christmas. The church office cannot mail your personal Christmas cards. Cards left after Christmas will be discarded. Thank you.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### SWINGIN' SOUNDS OF THE SEASON CHRISTMAS JAZZ CONCERT

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.

LIVE MUSIC featuring Strongsville's Jazz Swing Band and vocalist Cindy Smith!

Tickets will be \$10 (\$5 for kids under 10) and we will have a wine & cheese reception



following the concert. More info coming soon...

## GIFT CARDS--THINK AHEAD FOR CHRISTMAS!

Please order your Christmas gift cards early!



### AN EASY WAY TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING NEEDS!

You can order gift cards with Jim Joyce or by calling him at 216-267-5043 ahead with your list. Limited stock is available, but special orders may be accommodated by ordering prior to December 5<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to those who continue to support this project by purchasing gift cards!

## THE CHRISTMAS FUND

Formerly known as Veterans of the Cross, this special offering of the United Church of Christ provides direct financial assistance to retired and active United Church of Christ authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you checks. A ministry of the Pension Boards, the offering is received throughout December. Offering envelopes will be in the pew racks.



## CHRISTMAS PAGEANT IS COMING!



The Sunday School Christmas Pageant will be on Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, during our 10 a.m. worship service. We will have parts for everyone!

Brief rehearsals will take place during and after our Sunday School classes on the weeks prior to the pageant. Please plan to stay after church for the dress rehearsal on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Please turn in this form to your child's Sunday School teacher. My child(ren) will participate in the pageant on December 19<sup>th</sup>.

Child's Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you so much for being part of our Sunday School!

## ALTAR POINSETTIA FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Order deadline is Sunday, December 5, 2021. Please complete this form and place it to the Church office with your cash or check payment. The cost is \$6.00.

Wording for bulletin: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of plants: \_\_\_\_ X 6.00 / plant = \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to **Strongsville United Church of Christ**, and place it with your order in the offering plate or under the office door.

Thank you for placing a poinsettia plant on the altar!

For Church Treasurer's Records  
2021 Christmas Poinsettia

Total number of plants: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Offering envelope number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cash/Check No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**Order deadline is next Sunday, December 5, 2021.**

**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:

**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**: 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!

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**UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS**



- **The Board of Trustees** will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, **December 14<sup>th</sup>** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- **The Diaconate** will meet on **Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- **The Official Board** will not have their regular meeting in December.



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**Are you an online shopper?** If so, why not benefit the church while you make your purchases from Amazon? It's incredibly easy! Here's what you do:

1. Instead of typing amazon.com into your search bar, type in **smile.amazon.com**.
2. Select United Church of Christ Congregational Strongsville by clicking this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1298100>
3. Shop as you would normally—that's it!

Your addresses, billing information, and shopping cart are still saved and your Prime membership privileges still apply. A small percentage of your purchase price will go toward supporting the church.