



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 (Congregational)
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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor
Sunday, November 29, 2020 – Online
First Sunday of Advent

OPENING MUSIC "When You Call Him Jesus" Susan Stevenson Tressa

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTROIT "Of the Father's Love Begotten" 13th century melody

CALL TO WORSHIP

Now, in this holy season of Advent, we wait, for the faithful God is coming to dwell among us. Now, in this season of waiting, we listen, for the faithful Word speaks the good news to us. Now, in the waiting and listening, we watch, for the faithful Spirit is moving in our hearts. Lord, give us eyes to see. Lord, give us ears to hear. Lord, give us patience.
Amen.

HYMN "Away in a Manger"

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
 The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
 The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
 The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the Baby awakes,
 But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
 I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky
 And stay by my cradle 'til morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
 Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
 Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
 And fit us for heaven, to live with Thee there.

CCLI Song # 5950047 Frank Anderson | James Ramsey Murray | John Thomas McFarland | Martin Luther © Words: Public Domain
 Music: 1979 New Spring (Admin. by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.)

LIGHTING THE FIRST CANDLE OF ADVENT: HOPE

Jim Joyce

On this first Sunday of Advent, we look for signs of hope in our world. People helping each other. Walls of separation being broken down. Bridges crossing great divides. We find signs of hope in a family, traveling a long way from home, expecting a baby and being surrounded by the compassion of strangers. We light this first candle for the hope we find in the world, as we wait for Christ to come into our world and lives in a new way.

PRAYER AS WE LIGHT THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE: Come surely, Lord Jesus, as dawn follows night, our hearts long to greet you, as roses, the light. Salvation, draw near us, our vision engage. One candle is lit for the hope of the age.

RESPONSE "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

O come O come Emmanuel And ransom captive Israel,
 That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.
 Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

FIRST READING **Mark 13:24-31** (New Revised Standard Version)

"But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."

SHARING AND PRAYERS

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

MUSIC "What Child is This?" arr. John Ness Beck

TIME FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

BEING COMMUNITY WHEN WE ARE APART

OFFERTORY "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" French Melody

Advent. A time for new beginnings. A time to celebrate the presence of God in our world. A time to remember that Jesus was brought into the world as part of a human family, grew up as a very human child, and taught us to love one another for who we are in community. Together, we again commit our lives and our resources to finding new, innovative ways to continue to walk with Jesus, even during this season of pandemic. 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>

or mail your offering to **Strongsville UCC 13740 Pearl Road Strongsville, OH 44136**. You may also save a stamp and drop your envelope in the church mailbox at any time.

SECOND READING Mark 13:32-37 (New Revised Standard Version)
 “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you, I say to all: Keep awake.”

REFLECTION

“What Are We Waiting FOR?”

HYMN

“**Fairest Lord Jesus**”

Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature,
 O Thou of God and man the Son.
 Thee will I cherish; Thee will I honor,
 Thou my soul's glory, joy, and crown.

Fair is the sunshine; fairer still the moonlight
 And all the twinkling starry host.
 Jesus shines brighter; Jesus shines purer
 Than all the angels heav'n can boast.

Beautiful Saviour! Lord of all the nations!
 Son of God and Son of Man!
 Glory and honor, praise, adoration
 Now and forevermore be Thine!

CCLI Song # 27800 August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben | Joseph August Seiss © Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain

BENEDICTION FOR A PEOPLE OF HOPE

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, we need to see, feel, and share hope. As you go out into the wonder of God's creation, share hope with everyone you meet. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme" J.S. Bach

SERVING

TODAY – NOVEMBER 29 **NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 6**

Irene Joyce	Liturgist	Dave Williams
Tom Foley	Director of Music	Tom Foley
Mike Elkins	Associate Director of Music	Mike Elkins
Doug Thorn	Sound	Doug Thorn
Chuck McDougall	Video	Chuck McDougall
Sharon Heinrich, Carol Foley, Sarah Keenen	Special Music	Dave Williams
Jim Joyce	Advent Readers	The Sekorky Family

Happy Birthday today to Dale Toth & Oscar Fraunfelder!

Additional song credits

When You Call Him Jesus Susan Stevenson Tressa. Words and Music Copyright August 2008 by Susan Stevenson Tressa. Sarah Keenen, vocalist. Sharon Heinrich, accompanist

Of the Father's Love Begotten CCLI Song # 2933359 Aurelius Clemens Prudentius | Karla Worley | Steven V. Taylor Plainsong 4th century, Music: 13th century Public Domain

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence CCLI Song # 2131182 Gerard Moultrie | Rafe van Williams © Words: Public Domain Music: French Melody, 17th century Public Domain

What Child is This? Greensleeves Traditional English melody. Carol Foley, piano. Arranged by John Ness Beck.

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme (Sleepers Wake) Johann Sebastian Bach from Chorale Cantata 18th century. Sharon Heinrich, organ. Music: Public Domain

CCLI License # 11237335

The steeple will light the sky this week—

*In loving memory of Susan Stevenson Tressa and deep admiration for her musical talents
In honor of my grandson Michael McNabb's 15th birthday on November 26th—Ginger Rothel*

OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Janet Kato, Martha Liebert, 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., Mike & Linda Elkins, Linda Elliott, Don Gleichauf, Sue Hawk, Steve Herzog, Paul Hirt, Carole Kapcar, George Kapcar, Tony Koussa, Lori Kovatich, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Millie Lafave, Lacey Marshall, Brigitte Matchett, Judy Maur, Laurie Meister, Michele Mihlack, Lola Millhoane, Judi Pavisich, Lisa Pogozelski, Joyce Reed, Dorothy and Bill Ritchie, Alysha Rolland, Ginger Rothel, John & Maggie Struhar, Keith Sullen, Jamie & Josh Trinckes, Sharon Wilson, Sally Vetovitz, Peg Weakley, Claire Wills, Marty Winch

Extended Church Family: Ron, Yvonne, & Ronnie Adams (Judi Pavisich's friends), Dorene Baldrige, Jackie & Phil Berkheimer (Judi Pavisich's friends), Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Judy Carte's son-in-law, Ryan, Ruby Cuyler (Sam's sister), Donna Fargo (Sally Herzog's mom), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Kelly Kling (Strongsville Emergency Food Bank), Rev. Kent Knife (retired pastor from MHUCC), 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), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Sherry Sheeks (Mark Camp's sister), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Brad Williams (Judi Pavisich'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.



Many thanks to Sharon Heinrich for recording organ music for today's worship service, to Sarah Keenen for her vocals on a piece composed by our former organist Susan Stevenson Tressa, and to Carol Foley (mom of Tom) for filling in as piano accompanist today!

OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed	\$ 3,473.27
Last Week's Offering Received	\$ 1,576.00
Difference	(-\$ 1,897.27)



Thank you very much for your support of our mission and ministry.



MITTEN TREE—YES! IT'S HAPPENING! We will still collect hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks for the needy this year. From now through December 6, 2020, bring your items to the church during office hours and they will be placed on the Mitten Tree. We will update you the progress of the tree as the collection grows. This is last year's tree and the need this year is even greater.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Thanksgiving Basket Project. 37 families—approximately 151 individuals were given food assistance thanks to our congregation's generosity and giving spirit.



PANERA BREAD REPORT

The bread and pastries we pick up every Monday and Friday are distributed to people in need in Cleveland and surrounding areas. We could not offer this ministry without someone willing to pick up the baked goods from Southpark Mall on Mondays at 11 a.m. or from the store on Route 82 on Mondays and Fridays at 9 a.m. If you can give a half hour of your time to help, please call Cathy Hawk at 440-781-7512 or the church office. (Thank you to the faithful bread transporters and sorters who continue to help!)





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

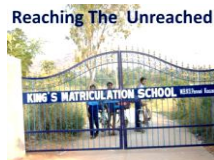
1. Instead of typing amazon.com into your search bar, type in **smile.amazon.com**.
2. Select United Church of Christ Congregational Strongsville by clicking this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1298100>
3. Shop as you would normally—that's it!

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. **We received a check for \$33.57 from Amazon in November. Thank you!**

SPONSORSHIP OF CAROLINE IN INDIA

It's time to sign up for 2021: The cost is \$30 per month. Please call the church at 440-238-6697 or email at strongsvilleucc@gmail.com to sign up.

- December, 2020—Sharon & Jim Heinrich
- January—The Sunday School
- February—
- March—
- April—
- May—
- June—
- July—
- August—
- September—
- October—
- November--
- December—



The Child Sponsorship Program is a part of Global Ministries, United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ (Christian) Churches.



We are saddened by the loss of church member and artist **Martha Liebert**, who passed away on November 23, 2020. Our love and prayers go out to her family and friends. Martha will be cremated, and a memorial service planned here in Ohio at a (much) later date. Please keep Lisa and her sisters Caren and Deanna Liebert in your prayers. If you would like to send a card or lovely memory to Lisa, her address is Lisa Krell; P. O. Box 467; Hammonton NJ 08037
Lisa said how much her mother absolutely loved her church. If you are so inclined, gifts in Martha's memory may be given to the Strongsville UCC Memorial Fund via the church office.

ADVENT GIFT FOR YOU—Advent packets are ready for pick-up during church office hours—9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday through Friday!

This has been a really rough year for us all. We would all like nothing better than to stand shoulder-to-shoulder and sing "Silent Night" with our candles flickering in the breeze. If, by the grace of God, the virus numbers drastically improve, things may change. For now, we continue finding God in all places, seeking the babe in the manger and looking to the future in hope.



NEED AN EASY WAY TO CHRISTMAS SHOP? GIFT CARDS!



You can still order gift cards by calling **Jim Joyce** at 216-267-5043 in advance with your order. Hurry—limited stock available!

You may pick up your cards at the church office with your payment at a convenient time. **Thank you to those who continue to support this project by purchasing gift cards!**