



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Congregational)
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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor

Sunday, October 26, 2025– 10 A.M.
Sacrament of Holy Baptism
Penny Sunday



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 always welcome here.

† Please stand as you are comfortable.

PRELUDE "Sweet, Sweet Spirit" Akers

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Irene Joyce

INTROIT "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" Traditional Spiritual

GENEROSITY MOMENT Sarah Toth

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We have gathered in God's holy presence, the One who etches grace on our hearts.

People: This is the place where God will transform us into disciples.

Leader: We glorify our God, who yearns for justice, not just for a favored few, but for the least of our world.

People: This is the place where God will write compassion on our souls.

Leader: We give thanks to God for unceasing grace; we remember God's persistence in saving us.

People: This is the place where God will breathe the Word into our lives.

† HYMN 63 "All Creatures of Our God and King" (vv. 1, 2, 5)

A READING FROM THE WISDOM LITERATURE Sirach 35:12-17
(NSRV)

Give to the Most High as he has given to you
and as generously as you can afford.

For the Lord is the one who repays, and he will repay you sevenfold.

Do not offer him a bribe, for he will not accept it

and do not rely on a dishonest sacrifice,

for the Lord is the judge, and with him there is no partiality.

He will not show partiality to the poor,

but he will listen to the prayer of one who is wronged.

He will not ignore the supplication of the orphan,

or of the widow when she pours out her complaint.

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 "I Will Lift Up My Eyes" Larson

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE Penny Sunday



THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Evelyn Rose Bembenick
Daughter of Rachel and Augustine Bembenick
Godparents: Lisa N. and Noah R. Shriver



WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY WORDS

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES FOR THE FAMILY

CONGREGATIONAL PROMISE

Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support and care to Evelyn and her family, as she is baptized and learns to live and grow in the way of the Christ? **(We promise our love, support and care.)**

PRAYER OF BAPTISM

Christ be with you. **(And also with you.)** Let us pray.

Gracious 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 the child baptized this morning, that she 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 EVELYN ROSE BEMBENICK

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Let us pray together:

Gracious God, you have filled the world with joy with the gift of Jesus. Bless this child, Evelyn Rose; fill her with your strength and courage for life's journey; joy for all to see; freedom of love; hope for a new life. May she never be ashamed to confess her personal faith in you. Bless us, O God, that we, too, may be faithful to your Word, united in the peace of Christ and the company of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

HYMN "Child of Blessing, Child of Promise"

Child of blessing, child of promise, Baptized with the Spirit's sign;
With this water God has sealed you, Unto love and grace divine.

Child of love, our love's expression, Love's creation, loved indeed
Fresh from God, refresh our spirits; Into joy and laughter lead.

Child of joy, our dearest treasure, God's you are; from God you came.
Back to God we humbly give you; Live as one who bears Christ's name.

Child of God, your loving Parent, Learn to know whose child you are.
Grow to laugh and sing and worship; Trust and love God more than all.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Breathe on Me, Breath of God" Jackson

† 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 **Luke 18:9-14**
(The Message)

Jesus commented, "If you walk around with your nose in the air, you're going to end up flat on your face, but if you're content to be simply yourself, you will become more than yourself."

REFLECTION

† HYMN 562 "Be Thou My Vision"

† BENEDICTION Rev. Dr. John Squires

As we end this time together as a gathered community, we prepare to serve in all the scattered places of our lives. Go in the knowledge that God our Creator sustains and supports you in this service. Go with the assurance that Christ Jesus equips you for service amongst the strangers and the friends of your life. Go with trusting reliance on the Spirit who enables you to bear witness, to care lovingly, and to work for justice. May God's peace go with you. Amen.

† POSTLUDE "Toccata in D minor" Bach

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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**.

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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.



PENNY SUNDAY TODAY!

It's time to donate your coins, dollars, and checks to UCC for our Thanksgiving "Basket" program. On **November 30th**, Penny Sunday will be for G.R.I.N. (Golden Retrievers in Need).

TRUNK OR TREAT IS TODAY!

JOIN US FOR SOME FUN WITH OUR
SUNDAY SCHOOL KIDS IN THE CHURCH
PARKING LOT AFTER THE WORSHIP

SERVICE. Decorate your vehicle, bring some candy to share, and wear a costume, if you'd like!

Don't forget, we'll be decorating pumpkins and doing crafts during Sunday School class time!



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A NOTE OF THANKS—We thank our Chancel Choir and our music team: **Mike Elkins, Tom Foley, and Sharon Heinrich** for today's music.



In Loving Memory of our dad & grandfather, Chris Morgan
The Zielinski family

Happy Anniversary to Hayley & Joey McKane on October 28th and Tracey & Natalia Hill October 29th! Happy Birthday to Gabe Sauter on October 31st!
With love, Grammy
In loving memory of Barb Camp

A green bowl filled with red soup, topped with green garnishes. The bowl has a simple smiling face drawn on it. A silver spoon is placed inside the bowl. Three wavy lines above the bowl represent steam.

Bring a Friend

Now, let's keep up the good work!

- The Official Board will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, **October 28th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.



NEIGHBORS
@ NEED
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the [Council for American Indian Ministry](#) (CAIM). Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice.



We are sponsoring 2 veterans/first responders a month. THANK YOU to everyone who has already signed up for 2025-26!

We will not be collecting actual food items for those in need, but we still want to provide food assistance to those who may require it, so we will be accepting monetary donations or donations of food gift cards for the families on our list. If you would like to contribute, please give the gift cards to the church office or place a check in the offering plate, labeled "THANKSGIVING." **Also, if you know of someone in need, please contact Pastor Heidi or the church office.**



Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Mark Camp, Judy Carte, Elaine Coffey, Betty “Grammy” Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Roz Fotos, Sue Hawk, Bruce Keenen, Erv Koch, Bobbie & Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Roy Merkle, Amanda Moulton, Ginny & Kenn Oerkfitz, George & Joyce Reed, Dorothy Ritchie, Ron Rothe, Jennifer Sekorky, Tracy Seneff, Peter Smith, Bruce Sperber, Linda Stepan, Sharon Wilson, Claire Wills, Marty Winch



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

**HELP
WANTED!**

HELP WANTED!

The Board of Trustees needs someone to fill an unexpired term on the board. The Trustees oversee the building, property, and finances of the church. The Trustees meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. The Official Board would appoint the willing volunteer to complete the term ending in 2027. The church will be needing a new treasurer at the beginning of the year, as our treasurer, Sally Herzog, will be completing her 3rd term of service. The treasurer position is an elected office and is responsible for facilitating the payment of the church's bills and working closely with the Financial Secretary. Sally is willing to thoroughly train her successor. Please see Rachel Zielinski or Cathy Hawk if you can serve in either capacity.

Weekly Offering Needed	\$ 4,359.00
Last Week's Offering Received	<u>\$ 2,872.50</u>
Difference	-(<u>\$1,486.50</u>)

PLEDGES RECEIVED for 2026: 11



**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

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

Capital Campaign: We currently have \$61,699.08 in our capital campaign account. The tuckpointing has a few more areas to be completed. We have submitted the signed contract for the automatic door openers for the kitchen and main doors. The Trustees are reviewing the proposals that have been submitted for improving the acoustics in Pilgrim Hall and painting the hall. Please make sure you designate your donation for “*Capital Campaign*.” Yellow pledge cards are available in the Gathering Area. Thanks for your continuing support.

There IS such a thing as a **Free Lunch!**

Many thanks to all of our dedicated volunteers and to all who come and enjoy food and fellowship on Wednesdays! **PLEASE NOTE: The Free Lunch for All program will be on hiatus on December 24th and December 31st.**

On November 17th at 7 p.m., Our *Sisterhood* Book Study will continue. All are welcome!

**Hospitality
Engagement
Activities
Resources
Time, Talent, & Treasure**



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	\$
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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***



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.

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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.



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

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 Heimburger* 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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IMPORTANT INFO—Do you know where the AED and First Aid Kit are located in the church? They are adjacent to the doorway in Pilgrim Hall, just to the right of the confirmation classroom. We also have a Life-vac choking device to assist in the event that someone is choking. It is located just beneath the AED.

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YES! I'D LIKE TO BE PART OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY CARE TEAM.

NAME_____

PHONE _____

EMAIL_____



I AM INTERESTED IN:

_____ OFFERING OR RECEIVING COMMUNION AT HOME

_____CALLING FOLKS WHO WOULD LIKE TO JOIN PRAYER CHAIN, BUT DON'T USE EMAIL

_____ PREPARING AN EXTRA MEAL AND DELIVERING IT TO SOMEONE WHO'S HOMEBOUND

_____ HELPING COOK A DISH AND OR SERVE MEALS AT FUNERAL LUNCHEON

_____ BECOMING A "PHONE BUDDY" AND PERIODICALLY CHECK IN WITH SOMEONE WHO'S HOMEBOUND

_____ OFFERING AN OCCASIONAL RIDE TO TAKE MEMBERS TO APPOINTMENTS

_____ OFFERING AN OCCASIONAL RIDE TO OUR CHURCH SERVICES

_____ BE PART OF A CARD CREW TO SEND CARDS TO FOLKS ON HEIDI'S PRAYER LIST AND OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS

_____ I WOULD BE WILLING TO... _____