



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Congregational)
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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor
Sunday, September 13, 2026– 10 A.M.
Rally Day



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 "The Heavens are Telling" Beethoven
WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Lora Rung
INTROIT "People Get Ready" Mayfield

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We come together so that we can worship God as the Body of Christ,

People: God's word restores us to life.

Leader: We come together so we can learn to follow Jesus,

People: Whose hopes for justice are crystal clear.

Leader: We come together so that we can learn from the Spirit,

People: Whose teachings help us to understand how to live as God's people.

† HYMN 586 "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"

A READING FROM THE PSALMS

Psalms 103-1-13

(New International Version)

Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—

who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,

who redeems your life from the pit and crowns

you with love and compassion,

who satisfies your desires with good things

so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

God made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel:

The Lord is compassionate and gracious; slow to anger, abounding in love.

God will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;

God does not treat us as our sins deserve

or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,

so great is God's love for those who fear him;

as far as the east is from the west,

so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion on his children,

so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

DEDICATION OF CANDELABRAS

Many thanks to the Memorial & Endowment Funds and the Diaconate for making possible the purchase of our beautiful new brass candelabras and vases. We wish to dedicate them in honor of everyone who lets their little Christ light shine and lights the Way for generations to come.

UNISON PRAYER

Blessed are you, Lord God of our salvation, for you sent your son Jesus Christ to be the Light of the World, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death, to bring life and hope to all creation, and so that, through him, we might also become a light to lighten all nations. May we, too, let our light so shine and our joy in you be so obvious that all who see us will come to see you more clearly in the Light of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SONG OF DEDICATION

"This Little Light of Mine"

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

"Go Ye Into All the World"

Butler

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE—RALLY DAY/BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS-BAGS-BRIEFCASES—BACKPACK PARADE

Congregational Response: **Loving God, hold us and our prayers.**

Congregational Response (Last time): **We thank you, God, and love you. Amen.**



RALLY DAY

CLASS OF HOPE

Colette Emerson, teacher

Lena Ashforth Charlotte Boden

Theo Cox Henry Hayes

Elliott Joyce Brecken Raymond

Ember Schneider Leo Thorn

CLASS OF PEACE

Linda Elkins, teacher

Everett Ashforth* Joey Brack*

Ella Hayes* Alaya Hitchens* Lacey Marshall*

CLASS OF FAITH

Lora Rung, teacher

Riley Marshall, assistant

Mason Bittinger Natalie Brack* Jack Hayes

Autumn Schneider Oliver Zielinski Penny Zielinski

*Receiving a Bible today

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"Great is Thy Faithfulness"

Runyan

† 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 18: 21-35

(The Message)

At that point Peter got up the nerve to ask, "Master, how many times do I forgive a brother or sister who hurts me? Seven?" Jesus replied, "Seven! Hardly. Try seventy times seven."

REFLECTION

"Are you kidding me???"

† HYMN 33

"Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

† BENEDICTION

The Billabong/Jeff Shrouder

Know that the ever-present mystery we name God is in your past forgiving you, in your present loving you, and in your future meeting you. And may the blessing of the Source of life, love and hope, the Word of life, compassion and wisdom and Breath of life, grace and truth surround, sustain and surprise you, this day and all your days. Amen.

† POSTLUDE

"This Little Light of Mine"

arr. Raney

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.



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**.

SERVING

TODAY—SEPTEMBER 13

NEXT SUNDAY—SEPTEMBER 20

Lynne McCray

Greeters

Irene Joyce

Barb Fraunfelder

Liturgist

Lynne McCray

Bill Robinson

Head Usher

Mary Ellen Zimmerman

Tom Foley

Director of Music

Tom Foley

Mike Elkins

Associate Director of Music

Mike Elkins

Sharon Heinrich

Organist

Sharon Heinrich

Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich

Video/Sound

Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich

Chancel Choir

Special Music

Satori Winds



Today's altar flowers are given—

May our members enjoy peace and many blessings from our Heavenly Father. Honoring our grandchildren, Isla and Chloe. Bonnie Khavaran

In loving memory of Jan Meier on her 89th birthday, September 15th --Love, The Breakfast Bunch

A 2026 SIGN-UP SHEET FOR ALTAR FLOWERS IS POSTED IN PILGRIM HALL.

Please note: the cost of flowers is \$18 for 1 vase and \$36 for 2 vases. We still have a few Sundays available in 2026!

Our steeple will light the sky this week—

With gratitude to Linda Elkins for her work with our Sunday School



Happy Birthday today to Donna Dickinson and Rev. Rebecca Stephenson!



A NOTE OF THANKS—We welcome the return of our **Chancel Choir, Tom Foley, Mike Elkins, and Sharon Heinrich** and thank them for today's music!



MEMORIAL SERVICE

A Celebration of Life for **Jan Meier** will be held on Tuesday, September 15th (her birthday!) at 11 a.m. at the Middleburg Heights Community Church 7165 Big Creek Pkwy, Middleburg Heights, OH 44130, followed by a luncheon. Memorials in Jan's memory may be made to Strongsville United Church of Christ or MHCC.

OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed \$ 5,212.00
Last Week's Offering Received \$ 2,929.00
Difference -(\$2,283.00)

Thank you very much for your support.

PLEDGES RECEIVED: 62



FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL: PENNY SUNDAY THANK YOU!



Thanks to everyone who contributed to Snow School last month. We collected \$294.24. The next Penny Sunday will be **September 27th** and will go to the Alzheimer's Association.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO TAUGHT A SUNDAY (OR 2!) IN THE SUMMER!

RALLY DAY

A brand new Sunday School year is here! Please join us for cake following the worship service!



RALLY DAY SPECIAL OFFERING

Envelopes are in the pews for a special collection to offset the cost of curriculum and Sunday School supplies.



STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING TO PLAN THE 2027 CAMPAIGN:

Sunday, September 20th following worship.

COMING SOON...

BLESSING OF THE BEASTS

Sunday, September 27th at 3 PM

BRING YOUR DOGS, CATS, GUINEA PIGS, RABBITS, TURTLES, LIZARDS, OR ANY OF YOUR FAVORITE ANIMALS!



OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Irene Jannsohn, Connie Rebar

Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Jen Barry, Jean Bittinger, Mark Camp, Judy Carte, Diana Creecy, Sam Cuyler Jr., Roger Davis, Colette Emerson, Roz Fotos, Sue Hawk, Jim Heinrich, Cindy Hurley, Carole Kapcar, Pam & Bruce Keenen, Bonnie Khavaran, Erv Koch, Jill Kundtz, Carol Konet, Bobbie & Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt,



Jim Maresco, Ken Mehalko, Barbara Morgan, Amanda Moulton, Ginny & Kenn Oerkfitz, Joyce Reed, Dorothy Ritchie, Ron Rothel, Jennifer Sekorky, Tracy Seneff, Peter Smith, Sandy Smith, Bruce Sperber, Linda Stepan, Debbie Thomas, Barbara White, Heather Williams, Jan Williamson, Claire Wills, Marty Winch

Extended Church Family: Teresa Beba (Free Lunch friend), Barbara Davis (Don & Sandy Gleichauf's friend), Allison Emerson (Colette's sister), David Fargo (Sally Herzog's brother), Dr. Natalie Feagin (Pentecostal Church of Christ), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend, Kathy Ghetti (friend of Ginger Rothel), Jennifer Gleichauf (Don & Sandy's daughter-in-law), David Gleichauf (Don & Sandy's grandson), Ellen Harrison (Linda Elkins' friend), Michaelene Hanrahan (Jim Joyce's sister), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Barb & Dale Holmberg (Tiffany Hassel's parents), Ben Hoty (Tony & Jo-Ann Hoty's son), Tami Klammer (principal of Snow School); Helen Leckwatch (Dale Parson's mother-in-law), George Love (friend of the church), Diane Mason (Lora Rung's friend), Linda McNabb (Ginger Rothel's sister-in-law), Jeff Peacock (former member), Michael & Judy Richter (Roz Fotos' friends), Bob Ritchie (Dorothy's grandson), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Vicki Smith (Venner Clarinets), Don & Pauline Wills (Judi Pavisich's friends), Julia Wright (Sandy & Don Gleichauf's granddaughter), the people of Ukraine, Sudan, Gaza, Iran, Venezuela and Israel, victims of violence and natural disasters, First Responders

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

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP—



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP OUTING!

Tomorrow, Monday, September 14th, at 5:30 p.m., the daytime and evening groups will

combine for dinner at Kalaveras Modern Mexican Cocina & Bar, 11204 Royalton Road, North Royalton. For a headcount to the restaurant and if you plan to attend, please contact Sharon Heinrich by Sunday, September 13th. Thank you.

MISSION OUTREACH NEWS:

We would like to support our local teacher staff at the Strongsville Elementary schools by providing some with \$25 gift cards to Target; Amazon, and Walmart. You can purchase a gift card from our own gift card program—very convenient and it helps the church, too!



THREE WITH GLEE!

Capital Campaign: We currently have \$17,548.43 in our capital campaign account, after spending \$42,780.00 for Parking lot repairs.

Capital Campaign: Income: \$107,412.00

Expenses: \$83,398.57

Pledges: \$90,776.00

Stated Pledge Goal: \$150,000.00

We are at 118% of Pledges

We are at 71% of the Pledge Goal

We started in March 2025, so September 2026 is the halfway point of the campaign. Please make sure you designate your donation for "Capital Campaign." Thanks for your continuing support.



PIG ROAST!

THE OFFICIAL BOARD WILL BE HOSTING A PIG ROAST FUNDRAISER AT THE CHURCH ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3RD!

5 P.M. - 7 P.M.

WE HAVE A LIMITED NUMBER OF TICKETS. THEY ARE \$30 AND ARE ON SALE NOW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 27TH.



(INCLUDES ROAST PORK, SMOKED CHICKEN, CHOICE OF 2 SIDES, ROLL & BUTTER, BEVERAGE, & DESSERT) (HOT DOG MEAL AVAILABLE FOR KIDS: \$10)



ATTENTION SINGERS & RINGERS: CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSALS ARE ON THURSDAYS at 7:30 p.m., AND WILL SWITCH TO 8 P.M. WHEN BELL CHOIR REHEARSALS START ON SEPTEMBER 17th at 7 p.m.

Can you carry a tune and read music? There's room in the choir loft for YOU! Can you read music and count? Come ring with us in Bell Choir! Please see Tom Foley or Mike Elkins if you'd like to be a part of our Music Ministry.

ARE YOU A GUITAR PLAYER? OR DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO PLAYS GUITAR AND IS LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO PLAY?

Our music team is looking for someone to play guitar in our Praise Band. Please see Tom Foley or Mike Elkins if you can help with this search!



FREE LUNCH FOR ALL— Wednesdays 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

We have been serving around 100 lunches every week, thanks to our dedicated volunteers!



UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

The Diaconate will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, **September 15th at 1 p.m.** in the Parlor.

- The Mission Outreach Committee will meet on the third Sunday of the month, **September 20th** following the worship service.
- The Official Board will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, **September 22nd** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.

SAFE SPACES IN THE CHURCH

In the case of a weather or other emergency, designated safe spaces in the church include the basement, the Parlor, the restrooms, and other spaces without windows such as interior hallways. In the event of an emergency, we will proceed in an orderly fashion to these areas.





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. **Please do not abandon items outside the church doors.**

CHURCH OFFICERS 2026

**Elected February 1, 2026 ** appointed by the Official Board*

Moderator: Rachel Zielinski *

Vice-Moderator: Herb Hampson*

Treasurer: Sally Herzog* **Clerk:** Judy Gaumer*

Sunday School Superintendent: Linda Elkins

Board of Trustees

Karen Bates Jen Barry* Greg Dickson*
Bill Giuliano* Chris Goff Les Fox* Cathy Hawk
Sandy Pogozeleski* Bill Robinson * Cheryl Sobek
Alex Tomoff Mike Willis

Endowment Fund Subcommittee

Linda Stepan* Dave Williams*

Diaconate

Jean Bittinger Elaine Coffey* Diana Creecy*
Bobbi Cook Wayne Cook Judy Davis
Judy Fox* Marsha Hemphill* 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

Jen Barry * Gina Cathcart Bobbi Cook*
Cathy Hawk Cindy Hurley** Sarah Hayes*
Lora Rung Mary Willis Mary Ellen Zimmerman



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 NEED YOUR HELP!

If you are the last or almost the last person to leave the church building on any given day, please make certain that all the lights are off, no water is running, and most importantly, that the door to the kitchen and the parking lot doors are locked and “undogged” using the Allen key provided. Thanks in advance for your diligence.



CHURCH FAMILY CARE TEAM

If you like to cook or bake or reach out to others in love . . . as winter and circumstances continue to make it hard to stay connected, your Diaconate would LOVE to have you be a part of our team! (You don't need to be a member of the Diaconate to participate, and you may come and go as you are led.)

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...

THERE'S STILL TIME TO PLEDGE FROM YOUR H.E.A.R.T.!

Hospitality, Engagement, Activities, Resources, Time, Talent, & Treasure
United Church of Christ 2026 Estimate of Giving

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 \$ _____

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*

