



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

(Congregational)

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Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall, Pastor

Sunday, September 17 – 10:00 A.M.

Welcoming New Members

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 stand as you are comfortable.

PRELUDE “Lord, I Want to Be a Christian” Traditional Spiritual

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Irene Joyce

INTROIT “People Get Ready” Mayfield

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We come so that we can worship our God,

People: Whose words restore us to life.

Leader: We come so that we can follow Jesus,

People: Whose hopes for justice are crystal clear.

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

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

† HYMN 198 “Sing Hallelujah to the Lord” (with repeat)

A READING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT Exodus 15:1b-11
(New International Version)

I will sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted.

Both horse and driver he has hurled into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation.

He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.

The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name.

Pharaoh's chariots and his army he has hurled into the sea.

The best of Pharaoh's officers are drowned in the Red Sea.

The deep waters have covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone.

Your right hand, Lord, was majestic in power.

Your right hand, Lord, shattered the enemy.

In the greatness of your majesty you threw down those who opposed you.

You unleashed your burning anger; it consumed them like stubble.

By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up.

The surging waters stood up like a wall;

the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy boasted, 'I will pursue, I will overtake them.

I will divide the spoils; I will gorge myself on them.

I will draw my sword and my hand will destroy them.'

But you blew with your breath, and the sea covered them.

They sank like lead in the mighty waters. Who among the gods is like you, Lord?

Who is like you— majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

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 “Go Ye Into All the World” Butler

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

INTRODUCTION AND RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

QUESTIONS TO THE CANDIDATES

QUESTIONS TO THE CONGREGATION

Friends, do you profess Jesus as the center and cornerstone of your faith? **We do.**

Will you be faithful to these new friends as they join this congregation and begin the next leg of their journey of faith?

We promise our faithful companionship to these new members of our family.

Will you challenge them to strive to become the very best versions of themselves, upholding them in Christian love and holding them accountable to the Way of the Christ?

We will lovingly challenge these new members to strive to become the very best versions of themselves, guiding them to live into the faith they profess.

Will you allow yourself to be challenged and changed, shaped and transformed by these new members, together seeking God's will for our lives together?

With the help of God's Spirit, we will allow ourselves to be challenged and changed, shaped and transformed, living even more fully into our called identity as the family of faith, Strongsville United Church of Christ.

Let us pray together:

O God, we give you thanks, first for calling us to believe, then leading us to join together and gather into this church, the Body of Christ. We give you thanks for this Family of faith, and rejoice that you have led these newest members into our midst, adding their gifts and talents to ours. Together, may we live more fully in the Spirit, building one another up in Love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Amen.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY “Be Still My Soul” Sibelius

† 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 NEW TESTAMENT Matthew 18:21-35
(The Message)

The poor wretch threw himself at the king's feet and begged, 'Give me a chance and I'll pay it all back.' Touched by his plea, the king let him off, erasing the debt.

SERMON “Debts and Debtors”

† HYMN 406 “Wonderful Words of Life”

† BENEDICTION

May our lives be built upon the solid foundation of God's Word, so that with our lives shaped by our obedience to Christ, the world would yearn to be shaped in the same obedience to our perfect and holy King. May we be the church as the church is meant to be. **Amen.**

† RESPONSE “Father, Give Thy Benediction” Moore

† POSTLUDE “They'll Know We Are Christians” Scholtes



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 17 **NEXT SUNDAY – SEPTEMBER 24**

Wayne & Bobbi Cook **Greeters** Roger & Judy Davis

Dave Williams **Liturgist** Bruce Keenen

Judi Pavisich **Ushers** Jan Meier

Tom Foley **Director of Music** Tom Foley

Mike Elkins **Associate Director of Music** Mike Elkins

Sharon Heinrich **Organist** Sharon Heinrich

Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich **Sound** Doug Thorn/Jim Heinrich

Chancel Choir, Ken Mehalko **Special Music** Chancel Choir



A NOTE OF THANKS—

We thank our **Chancel Choir, Ken Mehalko**, along with **Mike Elkins, Tom Foley**, and **Sharon Heinrich** for their music today.

The altar flowers are given—

Celebrating our 32nd Anniversary on September 21st!

Barbara & John Toth



Our steeple will light the sky this week—

Happy 21st Birthday to Abby Craig on September 21st!

With love, Grammy

Happy Birthday to Sally Herzog on September 22nd and to

Erik Joyce and to Dale Hawk on September 23rd!



Happy Birthday today to Greta Rich and to Ben Matchett!

**Happy Anniversary today to Kathie & Gary Paul
and to Brandt & Gelin Camp!**

**BOOK STUDY--A YEAR OF BIBLICAL
WOMANHOOD**

Beginning on **October 16th**, Pastor Heidi and Linda Elkins will be leading a monthly book study based on Rachel Held Evans's wonderful book, A Year of Biblical Womanhood.

Based on Old Testament rituals and practices, the book chronicles Rachel's attempts to follow these ancient practices in a modern world. The group will meet at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of each month, for one hour. Please let Pastor Heidi or Linda know if you're planning to join us or write “Book Study” on your attendance card. **If you need a copy of the book, Elaine Coffey will be ordering them in bulk. Please text or call her at (502) 214-0426 if you'd like to place an order.**



NEW CHURCH MEMBERS!

Welcome to our church family and please join us for cake following the worship service!



Karen Bates and her partner, Colette, are Strongsville residents, who have been together for 28 years. Karen has come to our church seeking community and spiritual guidance and instruction. Karen is a musician and sings and plays guitar. She has already been “voluntold” to serve communion and usher. Karen’s sponsors are **Linda and Mike Elkins**.



Colette Emerson lives in Strongsville with her partner of 28 years, Karen, and their cats, Bella and Biscuit. Colette came to our church seeking community and shared faith and believes she has found that here. She has taught Sunday School classes this summer already and is signed up to be a substitute teacher this fall. **Linda and Mike Elkins** are serving as Colette’s sponsors.



Judy and Les Fox live in Valley City and come to us from University Circle United Methodist Church. They have found many old and new friends here at Strongsville UCC and are happy to be joining our friendly, loving community. Les and Judy have been married for 23 years and have 5 grown children and 10 grandchildren. **Mary Ellen Zimmerman**, a friend from UCUMC, is their sponsor.



Pam and Doug Hansen, Strongsville residents, were invited to come to our worship services by their friend, Martha Hattery. They tried it and they liked the sense of belonging that they felt here. Pam and Doug have been married for almost 19 years and have 5 grown children between them. **Martha and John Hattery** are sponsoring them.



Audrey McQueen has been attending our worship services for several years and has decided to become a member and make it official. Audrey lives in Strongsville and works part-time at McDonald’s. **Judy Carte** is sponsoring Audrey.



Ken Wills lives in Cleveland, but has lived in several places all over the country. He has been bringing his mom, Claire Wills, to church for a number of years. Ken is a teacher and has recently started the next step of his teaching career at Menlo Park Academy. Ken’s sister, Allison Miller, and her family are long-time members. Ken is being sponsored by **Elaine Coffey**.



PENNY SUNDAY – Start saving those coins and dollars! The next Penny Sunday will be **September 24, 2023** and will go to the **New Life at Calvary Church in Cleveland**. The roof was torn off their building during last month’s tornadoes and the damage is extensive to their sanctuary and there are innumerable repairs needed.



SUB NEEDED!

(Not that kind of sub!) We will soon be needing a substitute camera operator to record our worship services on Sunday mornings. If you are willing to learn how to use the church’s video camera, please indicate your interest on the back of your attendance card.

OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Joan Beckwith, Laurie Meister, Ruth Milidonis, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar, Maggie Struhar

Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Barb Camp, Jennifer Cockrell, Sam Cuyler Jr., Sue Hawk, Irene Jannsohn, Carole Kapcar, Bobbie & Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Bruce Lerch, Reggie McCray, Roy Merkle, Lola Millhoane, Kenn Oerkfitz, Gary Paul, George Pavisich, Joyce Reed, Dorothy & Bill Ritchie, Bill Schneider, Peter Smith, Robert Sperber, John Toth, Sharon Wilson, Claire Wills, Marty Winch



Extended Church Family: Edward and Sharon Acton (Sally Herzog’s friends), Dorene Baldrige, Amy Carroll (Marty Winch’s sister), Angie Colosimo (Judi Pavisich’s friend), Barbara Davis (Don & Sandy Gleichauf’s friend), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen’s friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung’s friend), Joanne Garipey (Sally Herzog’s friend), Dana Hardy (Craig’s wife), Vic Irelan (Don & Sandy Gleichauf’s friend), Diane Mason (Lora Rung’s friend), Rudy Matjazic (Judi Pavisich’s friend), Donna McDonald (the Ritchies’ friend), Linda McNabb (Ginger Rothel’s sister-in-law), Mae O’Shea (Sandy O’Shea’s mom), Thomas O’Shea (Sandy’s dad), Sylvia Pakish (Don & Sandy Gleichauf’s friend), Jeff Peacock (former member), Zora Roundtree (FL4A volunteer), Mike Rung (Lora’s brother), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes’ friend), Vicki Smith (Venner Clarinets), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung’s friend), Tom (friend of Judi Pavisich), Don Wills (friend of Judi Pavisich), The people of Ukraine, victims of violence, those affected by natural disasters

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

OFFERINGS RECEIVED

Weekly Offering Needed	\$ 3,617.01
Last Week’s Offering Received	\$ 8,394.00
Difference	+\$ 4776.99



Thank you very much for your support.



PLEASE BE AWARE: Due to a bank change, all checks to the church should be made out to **United Church of Christ or UCC or United Church of Christ (Congregational)**. Please do not use “Strongsville” or “SUCC” in the “Pay to the Order of” line. Thanks!

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

- The Diaconate will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, **September 19th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Official Board will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month, **September 26th** at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.



LAST CHANCE! SCHEDULE YOUR DIRECTORY PHOTO APPOINTMENT RIGHT AWAY!

Each family or individual that is photographed for the directory will receive a free 8x10 of their photo and a free copy of the directory. So much has changed since our last pictorial directory and this is an excellent opportunity to have a studio portrait of you or your family. We would like **EVERYONE** to be included!

Do you know someone who would like their senior or engagement photos taken? There is NO COST except if you would like to purchase photos. Anyone can sit for portraits, even if they are not a part of the directory.

We will have in-person and online scheduling available so that you can come when it’s convenient. Dates for photography will be:

Wednesday, September 20th 2 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.—full!

Thursday, September 21st 2 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.—evening only

Friday, September 22nd 2 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.—daytime only

Saturday, September 23rd 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.—only a few spots!

We need volunteers to help with the sign-up process for our families. Please see Irene Joyce if you can help.

ALSO, IF YOU HAVE ANY UPDATES TO YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION, PLEASE MAKE SURE THE CHURCH HAS YOUR CURRENT INFORMATION—THANKS!

ONLINE SCHEDULING INSTRUCTIONS FOR FAMILY APPOINTMENT SETTING


- Go to the Universal Church Directories website (www.ucdir.com)
- Click on the box on the right side of the homepage entitled “photography appointment scheduling login”
- Enter your church code **oh2687**. Enter your church password **photos**
- Click on the Enter button
- Click on the desired photography date
- Click on the Reserve Time button beside the desired photography appointment time
- Enter the appropriate information in all required fields (indicated by the asterisk *)
- Click on the Schedule Appointment button at the bottom of the screen to reserve the photography appointment time in your family’s name
- If you have more than six family members being photographed, please reserve two appointments consecutively (such as 6:00 and 6:10)
- Print the next screen to use as a reminder of your family’s photography appointment
- Contact the church office to change or cancel your photography appointment.**

PLEASE NOTE: In-person scheduling is available today in the church office.





FREE LUNCH FOR ALL—
Wednesdays 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
 Our Free Lunch for All Program welcomes everyone to enjoy a nutritious meal and warm fellowship.

GIFT CARDS
PLEASE DON'T FORGET ABOUT THIS EASY, CONVENIENT PROGRAM THAT BENEFITS THE CHURCH. You can order gift cards by calling **Jim Joyce** at 216-346-4161 in advance with your order. **Limited stock is available for purchase on Sunday mornings.**




BEE A BUSY BEE IN 2023—September - November
 New sign-up sheets in the Gathering Area are waiting for your name to be added as a greeter or usher. No experience is necessary—we will show you everything you need to know! Everyone is welcome to be a part of our church life.







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 being accepted during those hours, but please try to limit your donations to what you can carry downstairs. **Thanks, as always, to our dedicated volunteers!**



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.

PANERA PALS
 Are you able to give less than an hour of your time on a Monday or Friday morning to pick up and/or sort Panera bread, bagels, and pastries? Please contact the church office if you can help with this worthwhile ministry.





The Strongsville Food Bank is searching for a coordinator for the Food Bank. It is a compensated volunteer position. The coordinator is paid for 20 hours per week, however it may entail 30+ hours to fulfill the duties of the position, therefore the volunteer designation.

Qualifications for this job include organizational skills, effective communication skills, and Word/Excel knowledge for record keeping.

If you are interested or want more information about this position, please ask for a complete job description or send a resume at strongsvillefoodbank@gmail.com.

CHURCH OFFICERS FOR 2023 **Elected January 29, 2023*

Moderator: Greg Dickson **Vice-Moderator:** Jen Barry
Treasurer: Sally Herzog **Clerk:** Judy Gaumer

Sunday School Co-Superintendents
 Linda Elkins Mary Densmore*

Board of Trustees
 Diana Creecy Chris Goff* Herb Hampson Cathy Hawk
 Sarah Hayes Cheryl Sobek* Dan Winrod*
 Laura Winrod* Rachel Zielinski

Endowment Fund Subcommittee
 Greg Dickson Linda Stepan Dave Williams*

Diaconate
 Teri Barbish Jean Bittinger* Elaine Coffey
 Bobbi Cook* Wayne Cook* Judy Davis*
 Carole Kapcar* Sharon Maresco Linda Ponstingle Cherie Teagno
 Barbara White* Mary Ellen Zimmerman*

Christian Education Committee
 Serena Abruzzino* Mary Densmore*
 Linda Elkins Amanda Marshall Lora Rung

Music Committee
 Richard Densmore Ingrid Dickson
 Pam Keenen Ken Mehalko* Mike Willis*
ex officio: Sharon Heinrich Tom Foley Mike Elkins

Stewardship Committee
 Judi Pavisich Bill Schneider* Richard Taylor
 Rob Toth Mary Willis*

Mission and Outreach Committee
 Judy Carte* Sarah Hayes Bobbie Krisak Lora Rung*
 Jennifer Sekorky Peter Smith * Bev Wehr
 Mary Ellen Zimmerman*