



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

Sunday, September 6, 2026– 10 A.M.
Sacrament of Holy Communion



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 “Gymnopédie no. 3” Satie

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Irene Joyce

INTROIT “Native Flute Song” Mehalko

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: When two or three gather, Christ lives in every moment.

People: Where two or three gather, Christ is present with them.

Leader: Where two or three gather to worship God,

People: Glad songs of praise are lifted, hearts are filled with hope.

Leader: When two or three gather to serve God's creation,

People: Christ is feeding the hungry, Christ is building shelters of peace.

† HYMN 404 “Faith of Our Fathers”

A READING FROM THE PSALMS Psalm 146
(New International Version)

Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord, my soul.

I will praise the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save.

When their spirit departs, they return to the ground;
on that very day their plans come to nothing.

Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the Lord their God.

He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them—
he remains faithful forever.

He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets prisoners free; the Lord gives sight to the blind,
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous.

The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless
and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.

The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the Lord!

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

People: Thanks be to God.

PRAYING IN SILENCE

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy, **ALL: Hear our prayers. Amen.**

ANTHEM “Waltz No.2” Shostakovich

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY “Flower Duet from *Lakmé*” Delibes

† 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 PSALMS Psalm 119:33-40
(New International Version)
Teach me, Lord, the way of your decrees, that I may follow it to the end.

REFLECTION “Lifelong Learners”

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

Pastor: On this Labor Day Sunday, let us lift up all people who labor, either for pay or as volunteers, in jobs or at school, at home or in the workplace, here at home and all around the world.

UNISON PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

All: We are workers, God, just like you. But we confess that our actions do not always affirm and honor each other. Our work is not always done in a spirit that is pleasing to you. Creator God, help us to be your people, working for a world where all workers are valued. A world where those who clean houses are also able to buy houses to live in. A world where those who grow food can also afford to eat their fill. And one where those who serve and care for others – in stores, schools, hotels, restaurants, nursing homes, and many other places –are, themselves, also served and cared for. A world where all workers everywhere share in the abundance that you have given us.
(silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Our God is a God of grace and transformation. When we ask, God gives us the courage and strength to live out our faith in the workplace and in the marketplace, as well as in the sanctuary.

All: We are all God's children, each of us called to the work of justice and fairness for all God’s people. Help us, Lord, to follow you more closely each day. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. Amen.

A BRIEF GREAT THANKSGIVING

RECEIVING THE BREAD AND CUP “*Suo Gân*” Welsh melody

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.

† HYMN 405 “I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord”

† BENEDICTION Wendell Berry (1934-2026)

*When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free. Amen.*

POSTLUDE “Earth and All Stars” Johnson, arr. Burkhardt

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.



A NOTE OF THANKS—We thank Ken Mehalko, Mike Elkins, and Sharon Heinrich for our music today!

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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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SERVING

TODAY – SEPTEMBER 6	NEXT SUNDAY – SEPTEMBER 13
Linda Plain	Greeters Linda Plain
Herb Hampson	Liturgist Barb Fraunfelder
Judi Pavisich	Head Usher Bill Robinson
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
Ken Mehalko	Special Music Chancel Choir
Linda Elkins	Summer Sunday School RALLY DAY!

Today’s altar flowers are given—

Happy Birthday to Gary Zielinski on September 1st!
In loving memory of Karen K. Morgan
Love Rachel, Penny, & Oliver

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—
Happy Birthday to Stacie Sauter on September 9th
and Eli Sauter on September 12th!
With love, Grammy

*In Remembrance of the 25th Anniversary
of September 11, 2001—Never forget*



Happy Birthday today to Bonnie Khavaran and Louis Gigliotti!



MARRIAGE CONGRATULATIONS

Wishing many years of love and happiness to **Mary Martha and Joe Hattery**, who were married at our church on September 5, 2026.

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BABY CONGRATULATIONS



Welcome to the world, **Cooper William Cox**, who was born on August 28, 2026, the son of **Chelsey and Jeremy Cox** and little brother of **Theo Cox**! Grandparents **Gina and Chris Cathcart** are thrilled, as is great-grandmother, **Dorothy Ritchie**!



Congratulations to **Courtney and Nick Gigliotti** on the birth of their daughter, **Gianna Louise Gigliotti**, on August 30, 2026. Grandparents **Sue and Lou Gigliotti** are over the moon with excitement at the birth of their first grandchild!

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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 \$ 2,218.00
Difference -(\$2,994.00)
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 week. 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!

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RALLY DAY IS NEXT WEEK!

A brand new Sunday School year is beginning on September 13th! We will be holding a Blessing of the Backpacks, Bags, and Briefcases during worship.



RALLY DAY SPECIAL OFFERING

Envelopes will be 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



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, 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, Jim Wonnacott

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), 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

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WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP—

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP OUTING!

On 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 \$59,822.43 in our capital campaign account, after spending \$6,343.29 for the balance of the acoustic panels. Parking lot repairs are completed, with parking lot striping scheduled. A new roof for Pilgrim Hall and the church building may be on the horizon. Things are happening, but we still have more projects on the list. Please make sure you designate your donation for "Capital Campaign." Thanks for your continuing support.

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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)

**THERE WILL BE A SIGN-UP FOR DESSERT DONATIONS
POSTED IN PILGRIM HALL**

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**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!

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



UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

- The Board of Trustees will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, September 8th at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Diaconate will meet on the third Tuesday of the month, September 15th at 10:30 a.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.

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



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...