

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
(CONGREGATIONAL)**

13740 Pearl Road  
Strongsville, Ohio 44136

Rev. Rebecca Stephenson, Pastor

**DECEMBER 11, 2016 – 10:00 a.m.**



**WELCOME!**

*We are grateful you chose to worship with us this morning.  
No matter who you are and where you are on life's journey,  
you are welcome here.*

*For questions about our church and ministries, you may call the  
church at (440) 238-6697. Please complete your Attendance Card  
and place it into the offering plate. We hope to see you again soon!*

† Please stand as you are comfortable.

**PRELUDE** "Here on a Silent Night" Don Besig

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Leave your exile behind; God is calling us home.

**People: We'll follow the Way through the desert.**

Leader: Enter the desert without fear; God's water will quench our thirst.

**People: We'll walk the Highway of God's people.**

Leader: Travel the Highway with joy; God is leading to life in abundance.

**People: We'll strengthen weak hands, and support feeble knees;**

**We'll encourage the fearful and calm the anxious:  
Rejoice! Be strong! God is with us!**

Leader: Come, let us worship!

**LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF JOY** The Clotworthy Family

**Leader:** We again light the candles of Hope and Love. Today we add the candle of Joy. Prophecy has been fulfilled. The long-awaited Messiah has come. Joy is the mood of all of us who seek Him. (Light two purple candles and one pink candle.) Let us pray together. . .

**Congregational Prayer:** Dear God, be patient with us. Many times we miss your glory and your joy in the common experiences of life. Fill us with wonder and joy at your creative and redeeming love, and your awesome and mysterious power. Amen.

† **HYMN 245** O Come, O Come, Emmanuel Verse 3

**SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS**

**THE PASTORAL PRAYER**

**OUR 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.**

**RESPONSE** "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord" George Whelpton

**CHORAL ANTHEM** "Ring the Bells!" Valerie MacKenzie  
Barb Fraunfelder, Hand bells

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION** I am a CHRISTIAN

Pre-School / Kindergarten Angels:  
Anna Bickley, Rowan Garcia, Riley Hawk

Directed by Aimée and Charles Jannsohn

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**THE OFFERING**

**OFFERTORY** "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" Traditional

† **DOXOLOGY 166** Tune: "Lasst uns erfreuen"

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise Him, all creatures here below. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

† **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**SCRIPTURES** Luke 1:47-55 New Testament, p. 49

**SERMON** "The Magnificat"

† **HYMN 278** "Angels We Have Heard on High"

† **BENEDICTION**

† **RESPONSE** "Surely, Surely" Eleanor Wright, arr. Adrian Westney, Jr.

† **POSTLUDE** "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" Henry T. Smart

**This morning's altar flowers are given—**

*Honoring the Birthday of Bob Kovatich*

**The steeple** will light the sky this week—

*Happy Birthday to Bill Craig on December 17*

*With love, Mom*

*Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow!*

*Barb Fraunfelder*

**Stewardship Committee** will meet briefly in the Parlor, right after the worship service.

**Change of Venue** – The memorial service for Karen Morgan's sister, Trudie Taylor, will take place at Sunset Chapel, 6245 Columbia Road in North Olmsted. Visitation is Saturday, December 17, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at Sunset Chapel; and the funeral is at 12:00 noon in the Chapel.

**Strongsville Food Bank** needs volunteers for the Christmas Village at Southpark Mall in December. The village will be on the second level near Sears and is open daily with two shifts: 12 noon to 4 p.m., and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Two adults are needed for each shift for greeting visitors, answering questions and ensuring safety of the display. This could be a volunteer opportunity for older children and teens, but they must be accompanied by an adult. Freewill offerings of cash or non-perishable foods are welcomed. This is a lovely display, so please pass the word to others to stop by and enjoy the display. Please contact Judy Carte at (440) 238-8283 or email her at [alacartej@gmail.com](mailto:alacartej@gmail.com)

Weekly Offering Needed \$3,900  
Weekly Offering Received 12/4/2016 3,334  
Difference - \$ 566

**SERVING TODAY**

Greeter – Claire Wills

Morning Announcements – Irene Joyce

Liturgist – Jim Studer

Coffee Hour – Rosemary Bechtel

Director of Music – Elena Taylor

Bell Choir Director – Barb Fraunfelder

The Chancel Choir

Hand bells – Barb Fraunfelder

Choir Accompanist – Sharon Heinrich

Bass Guitar – Jack Stephenson

Acoustic Guitar – Gary Hackett

Electric Guitar – Jake Williams

Mallet Percussion – Rob Toth

Drum Set – Mike Soltis

Technical Setup and Operation – Doug Thorn

Sound System – Jim Heinrich

**SERVING NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 18, 2016**

Greeters – The Bickley Family

Morning Announcements – Irene Joyce

Liturgist – Bill Schneider

Ushers – Ted and Kelly Bickley

Coffee Hour – Allen and Michele Mihlack

## OUR PRAYER LIST

Hospitals no longer provide names of members who are patients. If you or a family member would like a visit, please call the church, (440) 238-6697. Please provide updates for this list. Thank you.

**Long-Term Care or Homebound Members:** Eric Brand, Betty Bushea, Margot James, Ethyl Jeglie at Elmcroft of Sagamore Hills, Janet Kato at Western Reserve Masonic Community in Medina, Dolores Mhlack at Southern Hills, Harvey Pincombe, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields, Doris Soucie

**Church Family:** Steve Herzog at Fairview General, Pam Peacock, Denzil Richards, Melinda Slavik, Leah Tressa Forget, Kyle Woodward

**Extended Church Family:** Bri Brostek, Thom Cerny, Dylan Churnega, Zachary Crouse, Audrey Curry, Edie Deitcher, Hollie Paine Dodge, Kim Filiatraut, Elizabeth Fulford, Matthew Geletka, Dan Karoly, Sue Mason, Pat Masuga, Debbie Morey, Tonette Putrino, Carrol Riley, Keith Stewart, Frank Toth at University Hospitals, Joe Valli

## DECEMBER 2016

13	Tue	Diaconate Meeting, 7pm
14	Wed	Pipe Organ Tuning, 12:30pm
16	Fri	Strongsville City Jazz Christmas Concert, 7:30pm
17	Sat	Christmas Open House at the parsonage
18	Sun	Christmas Fund Offering received for retired ministers Children's Christmas Pageant and Potluck, 5pm
20	Tue	Advertising Committee Meeting, 7pm Trustees Meeting, 7pm
21	Wed	Adult Social Club Meeting, 7pm
24	Sat	Christmas Eve Worship, 7:30pm and 11pm
25	Sun	Christmas Morning Worship, 10am
27	Tue	Official Board Meeting, 7pm
28	Wed	Men's Luncheon, 11:30am
31	Sat	Deadline for Annual Reports

## MUSIC REHEARSALS DURING THE WEEK

Children's Choir - 7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays  
Band (for adults and children) - 8:00 p.m. on Wednesdays  
Bell Choir - 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays  
Chancel Choir - 8:00 p.m. on Thursdays

## STRONGSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church Telephone (440) 238-6697

Website strongsvilleucc.com

Email strongsvilleucc@gmail.com

## THIS WEEK

**Tuesday:** Diaconate Meeting, 7:00 p.m.  
**Wednesday:** Free Lunch Program, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Fitness Club, 7 p.m.  
Children's Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.  
Band Rehearsal, 8:00 p.m.  
**Thursday:** Thrift Shop, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Bell Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m.  
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 8 p.m.  
**Friday:** Strongsville City Jazz Swing Band Concert, 7:30 p.m.  
(Fundraiser for Music Ministry)  
**Saturday:** Christmas Open House at the Parsonage, 4 p.m.



## STRONGSVILLE CITY JAZZ SWING BAND

### CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Fundraiser for Our Music Ministry

Friday - December 16, 2016 - 7:30 p.m. in Our Sanctuary

\$10.00 Adults \$4.00 Ages 6-12 years

A reception in Pilgrim Hall will follow the concert.

Tickets are available for purchase today after worship.

Pastor Becky and Jack Stephenson cordially invite you to a

## CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

at their home - 2214 Substation Road in Medina

Saturday - December 17, 2016 - 4:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

SUNDAY - DECEMBER 18 - 5:00 P.M.

## CHILDREN'S PAGEANT + POTLUCK MEAL

All are welcome to come see our Sunday School children's pageant and enjoy a festive potluck meal together.

Please bring a dish to share for the potluck.



## CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS EVE - 7:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS EVE - 11:00 p.m. - Candlelight Service

CHRISTMAS DAY - 10:00 a.m.

If you would like to provide music on Christmas Day, please inform Pastor Becky. Thank you!



**2017 All-Family Winter Retreat at Pilgrim Hills** - Mark your calendars now and sign up TODAY for the annual retreat, which is on President's Day weekend: February 17, 18 and 19, 2017. The sign-up sheet and the "I Will Bring" sign-up are posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. We have to get an earlier start now as the reservation and payment processes for Pilgrim Hills have changed. We now must have full payment to the camp by the end of January. Reservations will close on January 15, 2017, and payment in full will also be due that day. We won't have as much wiggle room as in years' past and the rooms will definitely fill up, so please sign up early to ensure your spot and choice of lodging. We will have our regular planning meeting on Sunday, February 12, 2017 at the Church in the pre-school classroom after the service. If you have any questions, please contact Charles Jannsohn.

**Gift Cards** - You can easily get your Christmas gift-giving handled while helping your church by purchasing gift cards from the Organ Restoration Fund. We have a large variety of cards from restaurants, department stores, grocery stores, home improvement stores, clothing stores, sporting goods stores, and even hair salons. We are trying a new participant in the program: Honey Baked Ham. We have a limited amount to see if they sell, but we can easily order more for your holiday celebrations. We can also order from hundreds of other retailers, even if we don't ordinarily carry them in stock. Come to the table in Pilgrim Hall to see the list and place your order with Jim Joyce. Please don't wait until it's too late--get a jump start on your Christmas shopping. You'll be glad you did!

**200th Anniversary Church Cookbooks** - Please see Dianne Maringer to get your copy. Price per book is \$12; mailing the book is an additional \$3.

**Church Christmas Mail Box** is for giving Christmas greetings to church friends and is available in Pilgrim Hall. Please check the box for greetings you receive. Please do not put cards into the box for those who are not in town for Christmas, because the church office cannot mail personal Christmas greetings. Cards left after Christmas will be discarded.

**Adult Social Club** changed their meeting day from the second Wednesday to the third Wednesday of month at 7:00 p.m. at the church. All are welcome. Please mark your calendar for the Adult Social Club Game Night on Saturday, January 14, at church.

**Family of Faith Tree** is in the Gathering Area, decorated with Christmas ornaments donated by church members and friends. If you have not yet donated an ornament - or - if you'd like to donate an additional ornament, please bring it to the church office and include your name. A tag with your name on it will be made and attached to your ornament, and your ornament will be hung on the tree. Please know that your ornament will NOT be returned to you, but it will be part of the Christmas decorations each year. Please do not bring expensive heirloom ornaments. Thank you for celebrating with your church family in both the Mitten Tree and the Family of Faith Tree!

**Annual Reports** are due in the church office on December 31. The Annual Meeting of the congregation is Sunday, January 29, 2017.

**The Christmas Fund** is a special offering of the United Church of Christ which provides direct financial assistance to retired and active United Church of Christ authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you checks. A ministry of the Pension Boards, the offering is received annually on the Sunday before Christmas, which is December 18 this year. Offering envelopes are in the pew racks.