

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(CONGREGATIONAL)
13740 Pearl Road
Strongsville, Ohio 44136

Rev. Rebecca Stephenson, Pastor

DECEMBER 4, 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: The Reign of God is drawing near:

People: The prophet calls us to change our lives!

Leader: Prepare the way for the Lord:

People: A just and peaceful path!

Leader: Welcome one another, for Christ welcomes you:

People: For the glory of God!

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE

The Hawk / Hayes Family

Leader: We re-light the candle of Hope and now also light the candle of Love. We know that God is love. We remember with thankful hearts the gift of Jesus, who came as a baby in a manger, lived and loved among us, was killed on a cross, and arose! Love endures forever. (*Light two purple candles.*) Let us pray together. . .

Congregational Prayer: Dear God of love, thank you for the gift of your Son who has brought perfect love to earth. May our concern for others be so real and sincere, that others will see the living Christ in us. Amen.

† HYMN 245 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel Verse 2

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Pastor: Let us, the members of Strongsville United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

People: We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

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 "Prepare the Way of the Lord" William Rowan

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Little Holy Child" Howlett P. Smith
Gary Hackett, vocal solo and guitar

† 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 Matthew 3:1-12 New Testament, p. 175

SERMON "Then Along Came John"

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

*All are welcome to come forward to partake of the Lord's Supper, or
Pastor Becky will come to you, if you wish.*

COMMUNION INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" Rowland Hugh Prichard

† HYMN 258 "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

† BENEDICTION

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

† POSTLUDE "The King Is Coming" William Gaither

This morning's altar flowers are given—

*In Memory of Our Loved Ones
Jim Nicoulin and Claudia Bader*

The steeple will light the sky this week—

*In Loving Memory of Jane C. Graves
Roberta and Dan Carpenter.*

Our love and prayers are extended in sympathy to Karen Morgan and family on the passing of her sister, Trudy Taylor, on December 1. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, December 17, at 11:00 a.m. in our sanctuary. A catered luncheon will be served afterward. Donations of desserts are appreciated; if you can help, please contact Ginny Oerkfitz.

"Reap What You Sow" Basket Raffles – The drawings for the two "Reap What You Sow" baskets will take place today after the singing of the last hymn of the worship service. The congregation is requested to take their seats after the last hymn.

Women's Luncheon is Tuesday, December 6, at 11:30 a.m. upstairs at Pomeroy Restaurant. Please see or call Lola Millhoane, (440) 238-3037, **TODAY** to make your reservation. All ladies are welcome!

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

Weekly Offering Needed \$3,900
Weekly Offering Received 11/27/2016 1,182
Difference - \$2,718

SERVING TODAY

Greeter – Linda Plain
Morning Announcements – Sally Herzog
Liturgist – Dale Hawk
Coffee Hour – Ed and Cheryl Sobek
Director of Music – Elena Taylor
Bell Choir Director – Barb Fraunfelder
The Chancel Choir
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 11, 2016

Greeter – Sally Herzog
Morning Announcements – Irene Joyce
Liturgist – Jim Studer
Coffee Hour – Cathy Hawk

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 Mihlack at Southern Hills, Harvey Pincombe, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields, Doris Soucie, Trudie Taylor at Royal Oak Nursing and Rehab Center

Church Family: 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, Joe Valli

DECEMBER 2016

4 Sun	Drawing for the 2 Basket Raffles, after worship Deadline for Women's Luncheon Reservations Deadline for Special Orders for Gift Cards for Christmas
6 Tue	Women's Luncheon at Pomeroy, 11:30am Worship Committee Meeting, 7:30pm
9 Fri	Blue Christmas Worship Service of Remembrance, 7:30pm
13 Tue	Diaconate Meeting, 7pm
16 Fri	Strongsville City Jazz Christmas Concert, 7:30pm
17 Sat	Christmas Open House at the parsonage
18 Sat	Christmas Fund Offering received for retired ministers Children's Christmas Pageant with potluck afterward, 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:** Women's Luncheon at Pomeroy House, 11:30 a.m.
Worship Committee, 7:30 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.
Journey in Faith Class, 7 p.m.
Bell Choir Rehearsal, 7 p.m.
Chancel Choir Rehearsal, 8 p.m.
- Friday:** Blue Christmas Service of Remembrance, 7:30 p.m.

BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE of Remembrance and Hope

Friday – December 9, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.
in Our Sanctuary



Blue Christmas is a worship service remembering those who have passed away, while seeking hope during the Christmas season. You are not alone . . . we welcome you. Come, join us in fellowship. After the service, a reception will be held in Pilgrim Hall.



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.

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 has 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.

Today is the last day for the Mitten Tree. After worship today, the Mitten Tree items will be removed, and the tree will become the Family of Faith Tree decorated with Christmas ornaments donated by members and friends. To donate an ornament, please bring it to the church office and include your name. Official Board will prepare a tag with your name, attach it to your ornament, and hang the ornament on the tree. Your ornament will NOT be returned to you, so please do not bring expensive heirloom ornaments.

Our congratulations to the Bell family on the birth of twin boys, Cooper Erhardt and Trevor Anton, on Sunday, November 27, 2016!

Southwest Community Chorus Christmas Concert is TODAY at 3:00 p.m. in the United Methodist Church, 170 Seminary Street, Berea. Tickets cost \$10 for adults and free for children 12 and under and are available at the door.

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! **Christmas special orders need to be placed no later than TODAY.**

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.

**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!**

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!

