

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 (Congregational)
 13740 Pearl Road
 Strongsville, Ohio 44136
 Rev. Rebecca Stephenson, Pastor



Church Telephone: (440) 238-6697
Email: StrongsvilleUCC@gmail.com
Website: www.strongsvilleucc.com
Traditional Worship 9:45 A.M. Sunday
Contemporary Worship 11:15 A.M. Sunday

APRIL 2015 NEWSLETTER

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES		
APRIL 2 - MAUNDY THURSDAY	EVENING WORSHIP AT 7:30 P.M. with Communion	
APRIL 3 - GOOD FRIDAY	EVENING WORSHIP AT 7:30 P.M.	
<p style="text-align: center;">APRIL 5 <i>EASTER SUNDAY</i></p> <p>Scriptures: John 20:1-18 Sermon: <i>He Has Risen</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SUNRISE 6:30 A.M.</p> <p>Liturgist: Betty Craig Greeter: Needed Ushers: Needed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WORSHIP 9:45 A.M.</p> <p>Liturgist: Kelly Bickley Greeter: Linda Plain</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">APRIL 12 <i>Second Sunday of Easter</i></p> <p>Scriptures: Luke 24:13-27 Sermon: <i>Stranger Among Us</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL 9:45 A.M.</p> <p>Liturgist: Pam Keenen Greeter: Needed Ushers: Needed Coffee Hour: Gina Cathcart</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY 11:15 A.M.</p> <p>Liturgist: Dale Hawk Greeter: Needed Coffee Hour: Gina Cathcart</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">APRIL 19 <i>Third Sunday of Easter</i></p> <p>Scriptures: John 20:19-31 Sermon: <i>When We Get Behind Closed Doors</i></p> <p>ORC Pancake Breakfast 9:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. (Page 3)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL 9:45 A.M.</p> <p>Liturgist: Jim Studer Greeter: Needed Ushers: Needed Coffee Hour: Cathy Hawk</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY 11:15 A.M.</p> <p>Liturgist: Kenn Oerkfitz Greeter: Needed Coffee Hour: Cathy Hawk</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">APRIL 26 <i>Fourth Sunday of Easter</i></p> <p>Scriptures: 1 John 3:16-24 Sermon: <i>How Will They Know Who We Are?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL 9:45 A.M.</p> <p>Liturgist: Sarah Hayes Greeter: Roy Merkle Ushers: Needed Coffee Hour: Volunteer Needed</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY 11:15 A.M.</p> <p>Liturgist: Jim Nicoulin Greeter: Needed Coffee Hour: Volunteer Needed</p>

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

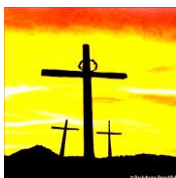
In just a few days, Holy Week will begin. Holy Week is the most sacred time of the year for Christians. During Holy Week we celebrate the Last Supper on Holy Thursday. We then gather together on Good Friday to remember the crucifixion of our Lord. Finally on Easter morning we all come together to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

When I began my ministry, I was greatly surprised to find that many of us did not know about what happened on Holy Thursday and Good Friday. I was amazed that so many Christians appeared in church on Easter dressed in their finest spring outfits to celebrate Jesus' being resurrected from the dead without knowing what He went through and how important the resurrection is. It seemed to me that many didn't have a clue of what Jesus went through or why he did it in order to get to Easter Sunday. This lack of understanding was further brought home to me when on one Sunday in Lent early in my ministry, a couple church members came to me disturbed that I was wearing a crucifix. "Why do you wear that cross with Jesus hanging on it? We are not Catholic, and we have an empty cross." Somehow many of us had missed the point that you can't get to the empty cross without going to the one with Jesus on it first.

Then it came to me that we don't want to think about the death of our Lord on a cross. We want to turn our faces away when we think of seeing the horror that must have happened when He was nailed to the cross and lifted high in the air and left to die. It makes us uncomfortable to think of the pain and suffering that he must have endured. However, what he endured on the cross is the exact reason why we must not turn our eyes away. It is because he suffered so much on the cross that we can understand what he gave for us. It was exactly his suffering that makes the resurrection so glorious.

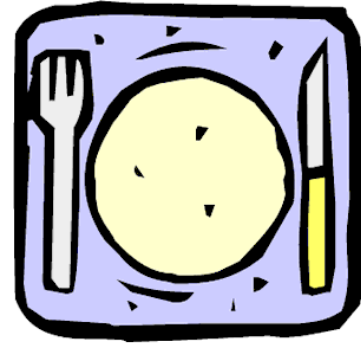
When we experience his suffering and death, the celebration of his resurrection becomes even more exciting; for we are assured that we too will be able to overcome death and suffering and receive the kingdom of heaven. For those of us who walk the journey from Holy Thursday through Good Friday, Easter becomes the grandest celebration of the year. It's a time to have balloons and festive foods—a time to sing *Christ the Lord has Risen Today* and really feel the glorious thing God has done for us. On Easter I can sing *I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today* and REALLY MEAN IT. I hope you will journey with the Lord this Holy Week and celebrate Jesus with me on Easter morning.

Pastor Becky



WEDNESDAY FREE LUNCH PROGRAM

The program is in operation! All are welcome to attend this free weekly lunch. Volunteers who prepare meals are asked to be at the church no later than 9:00 a.m. Servers can arrive at 10:00 a.m. Doors open at 11:30 a.m., and lunch is served from 11:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Volunteers are needed – talk with Pastor Becky or call the church, (440) 238-6697.



iSACRA

I will be walking the 5K on Saturday, May 16, in Fairfax, Virginia, to support the iSACRA. I was born with sacral agenesis, which is a rare birth condition characterized by the absence of the lower spine and spinal cord. This fundraiser will support families and parents of children to put out more information to doctors and hospitals regarding this rare birth condition. Please help me raise funds by sponsoring me and donating funds – any amount is appreciated – cash or check payable to **iSACRA**. A signup sheet is on the Gathering Area's bulletin board. Thank you for your support.

Michele Mihlack

NEWS FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Barb Fraunfelder

This is a monthly report listing the budget income we need to receive from Pledges and Offerings and the amount actually received from February 22 through March 22, 2015. This information is also appearing on a weekly basis in our worship bulletin.

Offering Needed: \$15,950

Offering Received (Feb. 22 through Mar. 22) \$12,757
Traditional: \$10,682 Contemporary: \$2,075

Difference: (\$3,193)

BIRTHS



Our congratulations to . . .

*Rachel and Gary Zielinski on the birth of their twins,
Penelope Kate and Oliver Richard,
on Tuesday, February 24, 2015*

and also to . . .

*the Masuga family—parents Jake and Lauren,
sister Adalyn Jill, grandparents Dan and Vicky,
and great-grandmother (Banny) Lola Millhoane—
on the birth of baby girl, Piper Dani,
on Monday, March 16, 2015!*



Calling All Women! The third annual Women's Retreat will be held August 14 through 16, 2015 (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) at Pilgrim Hills. Please join in for a GREAT weekend! Cost is \$93.60 and is due by Sunday, June 14, 2015.

If you have any questions or want to sign up, please email Kim McKenzie at davekimmckenzie@cox.net or call Kim at (216) 401-8738. Look for the sign-up sheet in April.

IN SYMPATHY

Our love and prayers are extended in sympathy to . . .

Allen and Michele Mhlack on the passing of Allen's father Paul on March 12. The funeral mass took place on March 16 at Holy Martyr Church in Medina.

Dorothy Ritchie and family on the passing of her brother, Wilson Lansell, on March 18 in Florida.

Jamie Habart and son Christian on the death of Jamie's father, James Habart, on March 25. The funeral will be held on Monday, March 30, at 11:00 a.m. at Jardine's Funeral Home in Strongsville.



STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

Please join in for the Strategic Planning Meeting on Saturday, April 25, 2015, at noon in Pilgrim Hall at the church. Your opinion and ideas do count and will help the church to carry forward with goals to succeed!

COFFEE HOUR FUND

Thank you to all who contribute to the Coffee Hour Fund. Besides Coffee Hour, these contributions now also provide supplies for the Wednesday Free Lunch Program. Your support is greatly appreciated.



THE THRIFT SHOP

The Shop will be open Thursday, April 5, for the final bag sale. All bags will be only \$5. Excluded from the Bag Sale are jewelry, cards, and Easter items. Overfill will be charged \$1.00 extra. This will be your last chance to purchase winter items in the shop.

We will be closed April 12 for a thorough cleaning and restocking. The shop will then reopen on Thursday, April 19, when our spring and summer items will be for sale.

If you are available to help clean, price, or restock the shop just let us know.

ALL YOU CAN EAT! PANCAKE BREAKFAST

*Fundraiser for the
Pipe Organ Restoration Fund*

Sunday – April 19, 2015

9:00 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

Pancakes, Sausage, Scrambled Eggs,
Coffee, Tea, Milk, Juice

\$8.00 Adult – ages 13 and over

\$5.00 – ages 6-12

Free – Children under 6 years

OFFICIAL BOARD

The profit from the Roast Port Dinner on February 28 was \$1,205.41. Thank you again to all who supported the dinner in any way.



ECUMENICAL SOFTBALL TEAM

An Ecumenical Softball Team is being formed. If you are interested to play on the team, please call the church office, (440) 238-6697, or tell Pastor Becky. Thank you!



Diaconate Sponsored Fundraiser

WING NIGHT

Friday – May 1, 2015 – 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

at

Sidelines Sports Bar & Grill

1165 Pearl Road
Brunswick, Ohio

\$20.00 per person includes wings, penne pasta with marinara sauce, garden salad, hot dogs, pop, draft beer. Cash bar also available.

Additional fun events for the evening:
Chinese Auction Side Boards / 50/50
Heads / Tails game

Tickets for this event are on sale Sunday mornings from Diaconate members.

Anyone willing to provide theme baskets/gifts for the auction, please sign up on the board in Pilgrim Hall. Thank you!



STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

What is stewardship? The dictionary definition is fairly broad: *the office, duties, and obligations of a steward; the individual's responsibility to manage his life and property with proper regard to the rights of others* (Merriam, 1977). If this definition is applied to our congregation, then we are all stewards. We all have some amount of ownership over the congregation and its function. With this in mind, the Stewardship Committee is excited to take the reins and drive this idea forward.

So, without further ado, here is your 2015-2016 board:

Co-Chairs: Natalie Daniels and Darla Wickline; Barb Bridle, Kris Fischer, Sue Gigliotti, Laurie Meister, Linda Plain; Youth Representatives: Gina Gigliotti and Chris Minnick; and Ex-Officios: Barb Fraunfelder and Kenn Oerkfitz.

We had our first meeting on Sunday, March 15; and we plan to meet monthly to think of ways to support the church. Although the official campaign doesn't come until later in the year, that doesn't mean we all can't take action now! For those who are interested in ways to grow their stewardship, here are some ways to do so:

1. **Give:** From the heart. This isn't just money. It's donations of food and clothes, as well.
2. **Participate:** Another way to give. There are plenty of ways to do this: church events, during the service, and in the community.
3. **Invite:** Bring a friend, family member, or tell a stranger about the church! Don't underestimate the power of a strong reference!
4. **Learn:** Join a bible study class. **START** a bible study class! Ask questions! Need suggestions? Just ask!

Remember, the Stewardship Committee represents YOU! If you have suggestions, questions, etc., please let us know!

200TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK

As part of our church's 200th anniversary in 2017, Strongsville UCC will be printing a new, one-of-a-kind cookbook! We would like to include old recipes passed down through generations from your families and friends. Also we want any new recipes you are currently loving! Please submit all recipes in an envelope with your name and phone number to Marty Winch, Dianne Maringer, or place the envelope under the church office door. Thanks!



♪ ♪ CHURCH MUSIC REHEARSALS ♪ ♪

Wednesday Evening

Praise Band - 8:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Thursday Evening

Children's Choir - 6:30 to 7:15 p.m.
Children's Band - 7:15 to 8:00 p.m.
Bell Choir - 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Chancel Choir - 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

MISSION AND OUTREACH NEWS

Weekly Food Bank Donations – Judy Carte continues to be our liaison to the Strongsville Food Bank, and you will see she lists the items the Food Bank needs most. The schedule below allows our church to more consistently give the Food Bank what they most need for the people who utilize it. The schedule will be as follows for now, until needs change. (We will notify you accordingly when they do.)

First Sunday	Canned fruit
Second Sunday	Pork and beans
Third Sunday	Family meals (such as chili, beef stew, ravioli)
Fourth Sunday	Toiletry items

CROP WALK on Saturday, April 25 – Walk with us! Our fund-raising goal for the walk is \$1,000. Sponsored by Church World Service, CROP Hunger Walk is the oldest hunger-fighting fundraising event in the U.S. It involves more than 1,600 communities each year – a mix of faiths, community groups, individuals and schools. Around 25 percent of the money raised fights hunger in each of those communities, with the remainder supporting the life-saving work of CWS – helping people around the world have enough food to eat and clean water to drink – and allowing children to have the best start at life possible.

Sign up to be a walker or donate on our Team Page:

<http://hunger.cwsglobal.org/goto/UCCCongregational>

There is also a sign-up in the Gathering Area. Kelly Bickley will have a table set up during Coffee Hour if you wish to donate by check.

“Unexpected Places” – General Synod 2015 –

Every two years, General Synod brings together thousands of faithful members of the United Church of Christ for formal church witness, inspirational worship, and fellowship with friends (new and old). In June 2015 [June 26-30], thousands from across the country (and abroad) will gather for General Synod 30 in Cleveland, Ohio — the birthplace of the United Church of Christ.

The Mission and Outreach Committee is looking for volunteers to help at General Synod! The registration fee for a volunteer is \$60. **The Mission and Outreach Committee will pay for half of any volunteers’ registration fee, so you need only pay \$30, not \$60.** We will provide funds for 5 volunteers. Since Synod is right in our backyard, let’s graciously offer our time and money June 26-30!! Please talk to Kelly Bickley to volunteer!

Vehicle Needed – Our Mission and Outreach Committee has adopted two families, who were recommended by Kelly Kling, the Strongsville Food Bank administrator. One family needs a vehicle. The father is using a loaned vehicle to get to work, but he had to return it at the end of February. If you have an old car or

van that you are thinking of donating to a charity, you can donate your vehicle through our church. Our church will provide a tax donation receipt to the donor. For more information, please contact Judy Carte, Mission and Outreach Committee liaison for the adopted families, or Kenn Oerkfitz, Church Treasurer.



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 at (440) 238-6697. Please inform the church of updates to this list.

Long-Term Care or Homebound Members: Janet Kato at Western Reserve Masonic Community in Medina, Sandra Kornick at Falling Water, Betty Kovach at Parkside Villa, Debbie Krause, Connie Rebar, Erla Mae Schultz at Medina Village

Church Family: Betty Babics at Akron City (Summa) Hospital, Betty Bushea, Irene Jannsohn, Jim Joyce, Denzil Richards, Melinda Slavik, Doris Soucie, Ann Sullen, Leah Tressa Forget *

Extended Church Family: Ryan Brubeck, Marie Bury, Dylan Churnega (grandson of Ginny Churnega Oerkfitz), Zachary Crouse (grandson of Barbara Morgan), Rebecca Deeb (Goddaughter of Lora Rung), Donna Fargo (mother of Sally Herzog), Ruth Fraley (relative of the Jannsohn family), Brian Gogerty (friend of the Heinrichs), Irene Hagemeier (niece of Betty Craig), Phyllis Keenen (mother of Bruce), Pat Kolba (mother of Kelly Bickley), Lily (student of Lora Rung), Pat Masuga (mother of Dan), Carrol Riley (father of Marjorie Morrison), Trudie Taylor (sister of Karen Morgan), Bob Tomko (cousin of Ed Sobek), Marjorie Tressa (mother of Rich), Kathleen Wickline (mother of Darla), Shirley Wilson (mother of Sue Hawk), Marilyn Woodward (mother of David and Carol)

* Leah’s address is:

Leah Forget
1604 Brentwood Street
Middletown, OH 44054

This list will be updated weekly. If you wish someone to remain on the list, please call the church, 440 238-6697.



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Meeting – Women's Fellowship will meet on Wednesday, April 1, at 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor. Betty Craig will lead devotions and be the hostess. The program will be presented by the Strongsville Police Department. Following the program, those who wish can enjoy the Wednesday Free Lunch in Pilgrim Hall. As always, all ladies are welcome!



Tote Bags – Women's Fellowship Spring Project will be to fill about 60 Tote Bags for the Strongsville Food Bank children, ages 5 to 12. The finished bag is about 11" x 12". Donations of any of the items listed below or monetary donations, so we may purchase items, would be appreciated. Monetary donations should be put into an envelope marked "Tote Bag Project" and placed in the church office. Collection will be now until Sunday, June 14. Travel size is best and can be found at Marc's or Target.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING IN FAMILY SIZE ITEMS.

soap (facial size or smaller)	small tissue packets
shampoo	small cars or trucks
body lotion	decks of cards
deodorant	activity books
tooth brushes	coloring books
toothpaste (small tubes)	small stuffed toys (<i>no bigger than 8"</i>)
wash cloths	blowing bubbles (small bottles)
combs or brushes	sidewalk chalk
pencils	
crayons (16 count)	



THANK YOU

Dear Church Friends,

I want to thank everyone for their prayers and cards after my surprise hospitalization and surgery. I feel I am on the road to recovery and can get back to everyday life. Lloyd and I hope to see everyone soon and get back to our church life.
Barbara Bridle

I want to thank my Strongsville UCC family for your prayers, cards and get-well wishes during my recent illness. I have appreciated your caring thoughts over the past several weeks and am glad to be finally feeling back to normal.
Sandy Pogozelski

STEEPLE LIGHTING

Week of March 1, 2015

Happy Birthday to Mikey Craig on March 2
With love, Grammy

In loving memory of
my mother, Clarabelle Herrington, and
grandmother, Theo Irene Robinson
Sharon R. Wilson

Week of March 15, 2015

Happy Birthday on March 17
to Natalia Hill and daughter Mia
With love, Grammy

In Memory of Edith Graves
Betty Craig

In Loving Memory of Edith Graves
Dan and Roberta Carpenter

Week of March 22, 2015

Happy Birthday to Bill Jr. on March 22
With love, Bill and Dorothy, Gina and Sharon

Week of March 29, 2015

Happy Birthday on April 1 to Rob Wentz
With love, Grammy

In Remembrance of the Birthday of My Dad,
Nicholas Paul, on March 31
Gary Paul

To light the steeple for a week, the minimum donation is \$5.00. Information and donation forms are on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Multiple donations for the same week will be accepted. Thank you to all who light the steeple.



MEN'S LUNCHEON

Just a reminder that Men's Luncheon takes place on the **Fourth WEDNESDAY of the month.**

The next Men's Luncheon date is **April 22 at 11:30 a.m.**
at their usual meeting place:

European's Best Restaurant and Bakery

19608 West 130th Street
Strongsville, Ohio 44136

As always, all men are welcome!

ALTAR FLOWERS

You may provide flowers on any Sunday you wish because multiple vases are accepted on Sunday mornings. However, the following are dates when vases are still needed in order to have two vases on the altar for Sunday worship:

June 21 – 1 vase
July 5 – 1 vase
September 6 – 1 vase
October 4 – 1 vase
October 25 – 2 vases
November 29 – 2 vases
December 13 – 2 vases

Please note: If you only attend the 9:45 a.m. service, you are welcome to take your flowers after that service. The Contemporary Service is casual, and it is okay if flowers are not on the altar.

The signup chart for altar flowers is on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area. Below the chart are forms and envelopes for submitting your bulletin information and payment to the church office.

Thank you very much for providing flowers for our worship services.

