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



Church Telephone: (440) 238-6697 Email: StrongsvilleUCC@gmail.com Website: www.strongsvilleucc.com

Rev. Heidi Denman McDougall Pastor

Worship 10 a.m. (+online)

DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Prayer for the Season

This month, I invite you to sit with the words of our Heartland Conference Minister David Long-Higgins. May this season be filled with wonder over the little things, beginning with the babe in a manger. Blessed Advent and Merry Christmas!

> Loving God, awaken me to the gift Of ordinary little things.

The kindness of strangers whose door opening Fashions a flash of friendship.

> The feel of breath moving in and out, Gift to a body I did not make.

The flower that persists, even as snow flies, Daring to cover the joy it offers.

The wonder of children helping me see anew, Noticing things long lost in my taken for granted world.

The unexpected call from a friend Too long silenced by seconds strangely become years.

The taste of foods, sacramental all In their awakening dance of delight, On a tongue often occupied with too much speech.

The red light that pauses my hurried journey, too often missing Your rising in everything and everyone all around, Revealing miracles close, yet distanced, by needless worry.

Yes, God, grant me the grace of a grateful heart Awakened and conscious of your persistent gift, Pressing Your presence, tending the little things, shaping larger things with Your Holy motion of love.

And may the joy you offer and the joy I desire Become one, little by little, bit by bit, yes, thank You.

Love, Joy and Peace, Pastor Heidi and Chuck

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5 – 10 a.m. Second Sunday of Advent Sacrament of Communion Greeter: Linda Plain Liturgist: Judi Pavisich Ushers: Linda Plain

Special Music: Chancel Choir, Carol Konet

SUNDAY – DECEMBER 12 – 10 a.m. Third Sunday of Advent Greeter: Volunteer needed Liturgist: Bruce Keenen Ushers: Volunteers needed Special Music: Bell Choir



SUNDAY—DECEMBER 19 – 10 a.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent Christmas Pageant Greeter: Volunteer needed Liturgist: Dale Hawk Ushers: Volunteers needed



Special Music: Sharon Heinrich/Mike Elkins



SUNDAY – DECEMBER 19 – 7 p.m. BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

FRIDAY – DECEMBER 24 – 7 p.m. Family Christmas Eve Service SUNDAY – DECEMBER 24 – 11 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service



SUNDAY – DECEMBER 26 – 10 a.m. First Sunday after Christmas Greeter: Irene Joyce Liturgist: Dave Williams Ushers: Elaine Coffey Special Music: Hymn Sing **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**, go to **Worship**, and click on **Service Videos.**

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCynOZfg4uKoX7HMnKOR bXfQ/videos

MITTEN TREE—FAMILY OF FAITH TREE



We are collecting hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, and socks for the needy this year. From now through December 5, 2021, bring your items to the church during office hours and they will be placed on the Mitten Tree. After the 5th,

the items will be given to the homeless shelter and the tree will become the Family of Faith tree. If you have not donated an ornament for yourself/your family, you may bring it to the church office and your ornament will join the others on our tree!

IN CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

We recently heard that **Shirley Sayles**, the sister of **Henry Klink**, our former choir director, passed away on October 12, 2021. Our deepest condolences to Shirley's family and to Hank.



Our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of **Lou Szabo**, who passed away on November 14, 2021. Lou and his wife Marj were active members here for many

years.He was 98 years old.

BABY CONGRATULATIONS



Welcome to the world, **Quinn** Felicity Colles, daughter of Hilary and Griffin Colles, who was born on October 24, 2021 at 8 lbs., 7 oz. Quinn is the little sister of Cory, the granddaughter of Holly and Marty Schafer, and the great-

granddaughter of Joyce and George Reed.

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Sunday, December 19th at 7 p.m. This season of

pandemic has been tough on all of us. So much loss: of family, of friends-- of



freedom to gather and enjoy life. Have you been able to slow down long enough to actually listen to your spirit- and grieve? Join Pastor Heidi for a **Service of Healing & Reflection.** We will take a pause to pray, meditate and grieve as we feel led-- *together*. Invite a friend. Your heart will thank you.

OUR PRAYER LIST

Please provide updates for this list to the church office. Thank you.

Long-Term Care or Homebound: Janet Kato, Marge McKinney, Ruth Milidonis, Karen Rak, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields

Church Family: Serena Abruzzino, Joan Beckwith, Eddy Bond, Mary Carey, Elaine Coffey, Kathy Cockrell, Betty Craig, Christina Craig, Sam Cuyler Jr., Sam Cuyler, Sr.,



Linda Elliott, Tom Foley, Ramona Glaze, Sue Hawk, Bob Heddleson, Steve Herzog, Paul Hirt, George Kapcar, Tony Koussa, Wayne Krisak, Karl & Sharon Kuhlenschmidt, Millie Lafave, Vicky Masuga, Judy Maur, Reggie McCray, Heidi & Chuck McDougall, Laurie Meister, Roy Merkle, Michele Mihlack, Lola Millhoane, Gary Paul, Judi Pavisich, Joyce Reed, Dorothy & Bill Ritchie, Ginger Rothel, Peter Smith, John & Maggie Struhar, Keith Sullen, Sharon Wilson, Sally Vetovitz, Peg Weakley, Claire Wills, Marty Winch, Mary Ellen & Bob Zimmerman

Extended Church Family: Dorene Baldridge, Fred Beba (Theresa's husband), Jackie Berkheimer (Judi Pavisich's friend), Amy Carroll (Marty Winch's sister), Judy Carte's sonin-law, Ryan, Hunter Colao (Barb & Mark Camp's grandson), Ron Colosimo (Judi Pavisich's friend), Mary Ann Csory (Judi Pavisich's friend), John Dickson (Greg's dad), Kim Filiatraut (Sarah Keenen's friend), Elizabeth Fulford (Lora Rung's friend), Dana Hardy (Craig's wife), Kelly Kling (Strongsville Emergency Food Bank), Julie Kowell (Sarah Cathcart Wilhoit's friend), Diane Mason (Lora Rung's friend), Donna McDonald (the Ritchies' friend), Zachary McKeever (Pastor Heidi and Chuck's great-nephew), Linda McNabb (Ginger Rothel's sisterin-law), Mae O'Shea (Sandy O'Shea's mom), Thomas O'Shea (Sandy's dad), Carrol Riley (Marjorie Morrison's dad), Terry Robson (Barb & Mark Camp's friend), Mike Rung (Lora's brother), Amanda Shannon (Sarah & Jon Hayes' friend), Chris Vozniak (Lora Rung's friend), Jimmy Walken (Kristen Burgess's uncle), Sandra Wentz (Debbie's daughter-in-law) Please contact Pastor Heidi if you would like to pray for others via the email prayer chain.

THANK YOU NOTES

Many, many thanks from **Pastor Heidi** and **the pastor's** wife (Chuck) for the delicious soups and dinners, the cards, the texts, the lawn care. . . . I could go on. You are blessing in our lives in oh, so many ways. Truly, we are all in this-- together. Peace to your spirit.



THANKSGIVING "BASKETS"—THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO **CONTRIBUTED!** 29 local families were served through our congregation's generosity!

LIVE NATIVITY AND OPEN HOUSE: Thank you to everyone who participated and especially to Dale & Cathy Hawk, Rachel Zielinski, Doug Thorn. Jim Heinrich. and Bruce Keenen for spearheading this event.

MUSIC NOTES

Many thanks to Dave Williams, Sarah Keenen, Dick K. Ingersoll, Ralph Heimburger, Carol Foley, Sharon Heinrich, Tom Foley, Mike Elkins, and of course, our faithful Chancel Choir and the Bell Choir for sharing their music with us in November for our worship services.



SWINGIN' SOUNDS OF THE SEASON CHRISTMAS **JAZZ CONCERT**

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17th at 7 p.m. LIVE MUSIC featuring Strongsville's Jazz Band and vocalist Cindy Smith! (Masks required) Tickets will be \$10 (\$5 for kids under 10) and we will have a

reception following the concert.

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

Formerly known as Veterans of the Cross, this special offering of the United Church of Christ 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 throughout December. Offering envelopes will be in the pew racks.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS MAIL BOX



To send Christmas greetings to fellow members and friends, the church "mail box" will again be available in the Gathering Area. Please remember to check the box for greetings you receive.

Also, please do not put cards in the box for friends who are not in town for Christmas. The church office cannot mail vour personal Christmas cards. Cards left after Christmas will be discarded. Thank you.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

CHRISTMAS **PAGEANT IS DECEMBER 19th**

ATTENTION

FAMILIES: Parents. please allow time



after church on **December 12th** for our children to rehearse the Christmas pageant. If your child can not be a part please let Sarah Hayes and Rachel Zielinski know ASAP so she can reassign parts. Thank you!

_____ WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP CHRISTMAS TEA

Sunday, December 5th 1 P.M. in Pilgrim



Hall--All ladies of the church are welcome. Please see or contact

Elaine Coffey or Sharon Heinrich if you have not already signed up to attend.

Because of setup in Pilgrim Hall for the Tea on December 5th, we won't host coffee hour there, but fellowship will take place in the Parlor.



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP QUILT RAFFLE TICKETS ARE \$1.00 EACH OR 6 FOR \$5.00 FREE PERSONALIZATION! The Winner can get any name of their choice embroidered on the quilt. Drawing will be held on December 12, 2021

Please see Judi Pavisich for tickets. ______

FREE LUNCH FOR ALL HAS RESUMED!



2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month at 11:30 a.m. (Limited space

for seating, carryout is available with reservations)

Reservations only. Please call 440-238-5389 by the Friday prior DECEMBER DATES: 12/8 AND 12/22

______ **KEEP RECYCLING YOUR PAPER, MAGAZINES, AND CARDBOARD!**

PLEASE FLATTEN ALL BOXES WHEN RECYCLING CARDBOARD.

River Valley Paper Company

GIFT CARDS

THINK AHEAD FOR CHRISTMAS! Please order your Christmas gift cards early--AN EASY WAY TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR



HOLIDAY SHOPPING NEEDS!

You can order gift cards by calling **Jim Joyce** at 216-267-5043 in advance with your order. **Limited stock is available.**

Thank you to those who continue to support this project by purchasing gift cards!

Are you ordering gifts

online? If so, why not benefit the church while



you make your purchases from Amazon? It's incredibly easy! Here's what you do:

1. Instead of typing amazon.com into your

- search bar, type in smile.amazon.com.
- 2. Select United Church of Christ

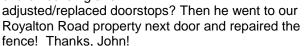
Congregational Strongsville by clicking this link: <u>https://smile.amazon.com/ch/34-1298100</u>

3. Shop as you would normally—that's it!

Your addresses, billing information, and shopping cart are still saved and your Prime membership privileges still apply. A small percentage of your purchase price will go toward supporting the church.

UNSUNG HEROES

Did you know that **John Toth** went around the church building and



Did you know that our church was able to provide size 13 work boots for a man who needed them for his new job? Thanks so much!

Do you ever wonder what happens to some of the stuff you donate to our Thrift Shop? Here is what happens to the shoes we don't sell: Our donations were a portion of 4,080 pairs of shoes



collected, which amounted to a total of 7,400 pounds of shoes that were shipped to third world countries where individuals sell them in micro businesses .The Thrift Shop has donated throughout the 17 months it took to collect that many pounds of shoes. The rep said this quantity lifts 25 families out of poverty. Thank you donators!!

Did you know that **Barb Camp, Cathy Hawk, Linda Ponstingle, Doug Thorn**, and **Barbara White** took the time and effort to decorate the interior of our church for Christmas? Many thanks for your hard work!

MISSION-OUTREACH COMMITTEE



The Strongsville Emergency Food Bank has always been supported by our congregation. We would like

to resume having you drop donations off at the church. The Kuhlenschmidts have agreed to transport the non-perishable food items to the Food Bank for us, which makes this ministry possible. Many thanks to Karl and Sharon. Please remember, we do not accept expired goods. The needs for the food bank in December would be CANNED CORN and CANNED FRUIT!

SPONSORSHIP OF CAROLINE IN INDIA Our church sponsors a child in India through the United Church of Christ. Cost is \$30 per month. Thank you to everyone who signed up for 2021: Sign-ups for 2022 will be posted in Pilgrim Hall!

CHRISTMAS FOR VETERANS—Thanks to



your generosity, the Mission Outreach Committee, with the help of our Sunday School kids, put together 60 gift bags for veterans in Cuyahoga County!

WE NEED <u>YOU</u> IN 2022!

Sign-up sheets in Pilgrim Hall are waiting for **your name** to be added as a communion server, greeter, usher, coffee hour helper, or bread/pastry



sorter. Don't know how to do any of those things? No worries—we will show you everything you need to know! No experience is needed and everyone is welcome to be a part of our church life.



BREAD BUDDIES!

Thank you so much to our faithful bread transporters and sorters: Judy Carte, Jim Dettmer, Maria Graeff, Mike Elkins, Cathy Hawk, Sharon Heinrich, Sally Herzog, Linda Kapcar, Sharon & Jim Maresco,

Pastor Heidi & Chuck McDougall, Sharon Lempner, Rick & Cherie Teagno, and John Toth who continue to make the Panera Bread ministry possible!

ADDRESS CHANGES/ADDITIONS

To update your Church Directory:

Liz Mulhan

9230 Independence Blvd. #406 Bldg. 2 Parma Heights, OH 44130



GIVING OPTIONS



If you are interested in giving electronically, Here's how: You can customize your giving based on how, when, and how much through E-Offering. Log on to our church website at www.strongsvilleucc.com and click

"Donate Now". You will be taken to the church's myEoffering page. Simply click on the "Sign-up" button and you will then fill

in your personal information and "Register". Follow the prompts to set up your payment, one-time or ongoing. You can also set up your giving through Bill Pay on your bank's website. You may also mail a check to

Strongsville UCC

13740 Pearl Road Strongsville, OH 44136 or drop it off in the church's mailbox.



GOD'S WORK—OUR HANDS Our 2022 Stewardship campaign: pledge cards received to date: 51

NEWS FROM OUR FINANCIAL SECRETARY **Mike Elkins**



Below is a monthly report listing the budget income we need to receive from Pledges and Offerings and the amount received from October 31 through November 21, 2021. Thank you to everyone who supports our church and its ministries.

Offering Needed \$14,597.48 for 4 Sundays Offering Received 17,819.75 \$ 3,222.37



FIT CLUB Time to "Work-y off that Turkey." Fit Club will meet on Wednesdays at 5 p.m. You do not have to be fit to be a member of Fit Club! _____

THRIFT SHOP



The Thrift Shop is OPEN on Thursdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. with lots of interesting merchandise. Donations are being

accepted, but you must call the church first to arrange a time for drop-off.

THRIFT SHOP BONUS HOURS The 3rd Thursday of the month,

December 16, 2021 — 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. (We're still open on Thursdays from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.)



TOTE BAGS NEEDED! The Thrift Shop is in need of large reusable tote bags (like the ones you can get at Marc's). Please bring them to the Thrift Shop if you can spare a bag or two.

STEEPLE LIGHTING

Week of November 7th

Happy Birthday to Zach Craig on November 13th! With Love. Grammv

Week of November 14th Happy Birthday to Katie Lett on November 18th and Adam Craig on November 20th!! With Love, Grammy

Week of November 21st

Happy Anniversary to Debbie & Larry Wentz on November 24th! With Love. Mom Happy 13A Anniversary to Ingrid & Greg Dickson!

Week of November 28th

Happy Birthday today to Stephen Popovich !-- With Love, Grammv

To light the steeple, the minimum donation is \$5.00. Multiple dedications are welcomed for each week. Please email the church at strongsvilleuuc@gmail.com. Thank you to

everyone who lights our steeple!

ALTAR FLOWERS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

The altar flowers are given— November 7th In loving memory of William A. Fraunfelder Barb Fraunfelder



Zielinski November 14th

Remembering our mom, Lorna M. Robinson—10 years since God called you home. Love ya, Mom! Becky and Bill Robinson

In celebration of our Great Grandson Cory's Birthday on November 15th. Special love to our 2lbs 2oz surprise 8 years ago! Such a blessing to our family! Great Grandparents George & Joyce Reed

November 21st

In honor of my grandson, M.J. McNabb—Happy 16th Birthday! Love, Grandma and Ronnie (Rothel)

November 28th

Celebrating our 21st anniversary on November 26th Ken Mehalko & Bev Wehr

You may provide fresh flowers on any Sunday you wish because multiple vases are accepted on Sunday mornings. The cost is \$15 for one vase, \$30 for two vases. Near the flower chart in Pilgrim Hall are forms for submitting your bulletin information or better yet, email the church at strongsvilleucc@gmail.com. Envelopes for enclosing your payment to the church office are also available. Thank you!

A NEW FLOWER CHART FOR 2022 IS POSTED IN PILGRIM HALL

CHURCH OFFICERS FOR 2021

Officers elected on Jan. 26, 2020, have an asterisk* by their names. ** = appointed by the Official Board

Moderator	Rachel Zielinski
Vice-Moderator	Rob Toth*
Treasurer	Sally Herzog
Clerk	Judy Gaumer*

Sunday School Co-Superintendents Linda Elkins** Serena Abruzzino**

Board of Trustees

Greg Dickson Mike Clotworthy* Myron Costin* Bill Giuliano Dale Hawk Sandy Pogozelski Ed Sobek Linda Stepan Rob Stepan

Endowment Fund Subcommittee

Irene Jannsohn* Joyce Reed

Diaconate

Jennifer Barry Barbara Camp Gina Cathcart* Kristen Clotworthy Elaine Coffey* Cathy Hawk* Sarah Hayes Linda Plain Linda Ponstingle Nicole Stevens Marty Winch Barbara White* Mary Ellen Zimmerman*

Christian Education Committee

Serena Abruzzino* Kristen Clotworthy Mary Densmore Linda Elkins Suzi Foley Sandy O'Shea Lora Rung

Music Committee

Richard Densmore* Ingrid Dickson Ken Mehalko Pam Keenen*

ex officio: Sharon Heinrich Tom Foley Mike Elkins

Stewardship Committee

Serena Abruzzino* Sue Gigliotti* Beth Giuliano Judi Pavisich** Bill Schneider**

Mission and Outreach Committee

Judy Carte Sarah Hayes** Bobbie Krisak Michele Mihlack Gary Paul Lora Rung* Jennifer Sekorky** Bev Wehr

ANNUAL REPORTS

Chairmen of church organizations: Annual reports are due in the church office on December 31st. Please be kind to the new, inexperienced Church Secretary and get your reports in on time. Thank you!!! Once completed, Annual Reports will be available for pickup prior to the Annual Meeting.



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place Sunday, **January 30, 2022**, and will be preceded by the traditional Pancake Brunch. All are encouraged to

attend this meeting.

FINANCIAL OFFICERS OF CHURCH GROUPS:

Please turn in your financial statements to the Auditing Committee through the church office by December 31st. It is extremely important that all books be audited before the Annual Meeting on January 30, 2022. All organizations are required to submit:

- 1. ALL bank books (savings and/or checking).
- 2. ALL bank statements for each month for each account. Checking accounts statements should show completed reconcilement on the back.
- 3. ALL monthly recap forms.
- 4. ALL bank deposit slips, withdrawal slips and bank check receipts (if received), attached to monthly recap forms.
- 5. ALL receipts and bills paid.
- 6. Copy of Annual Financial Report (original provided to church office for Annual Report).

Thank you for your cooperation.

WOULD YOU LIKE A WAY TO SERVE GOD AND SERVE YOUR CHURCH AT THE SAME TIME? How about volunteering to serve on a church board or committee?



The Nominating Committee, through the Official Board, will be looking for church members to fill the many open positions on our boards. Please consider saying **YES** when a member of the Nominating Committee asks you to serve. Some of the

positions that are available include:

Moderator, who presides over the Official Board and represents the church in the community

Vice-Moderator, who works in tandem with the Moderator, serves on the Nominating Committee, and enlists volunteers for dinners and other Official Board events.

Treasurer: Manages the outgoing finances of the church in conjunction with the Financial Secretary

Diaconate, which oversees the worship operations and church services. The committees of the Diaconate are Acolytes, Altar, Coffee Hour, Funeral, Greeters, Membership, Nursery, Pastoral Relations, Special Events and Ushers.

Board of Trustees, which oversees the finances and physical plant of the church. The committees of the Trustees are Building and Grounds, Finance, and Long-Range Planning and Memorial/Endowment.

Mission & Outreach, which sponsors projects and our church's benevolence in the local, national, and international communities, including the 5 for 5 offerings through the United Church of Christ

Stewardship, which administers a yearly campaign to assess and inspire giving of time, talent, and treasure

Christian Education, which oversees the Sunday School and Adult Education programs

Music Committee, which supervises all aspects of the Music Ministry

Remember the old but true saying, *Many hands make light work.* Plan to be a part of one of these boards or committees. Thank you for your consideration.

ANNUAL ALL FAMILY WINTER RETREAT

save

February 18 - 20, 2022 Templed Hills Camp in Bellville, Ohio



The Church's Annual All-Family Winter Retreat will take place on President's Day weekend 2022: The sign-up sheet to attend and the sign-up sheet for things to bring and to volunteer will soon be posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Please reserve your spot and room now, as rooms will be first-come, first-served. The cut-off to sign up—January 9th—will be strictly enforced. Space is limited to 14 families. Also, please let us know if you have any special dietary needs. Finally, those that wish to come down on Saturday only—we would be happy to have you there, but we also need your reservation by January 9th, and the cost is \$10 per meal. Please contact Irene Joyce or Rachel Zielinski if you have any questions.

Here is the cost:

ADULTS (12 and up): \$75 CHILDREN (6-11): \$20 CHILDREN (5 and under): FREE

Important dates to remember:

JANUARY 9, 2022: Reservations close; **MONEY DUE** JANUARY 9, 2022: Special dietary needs reported FEBRUARY 13, 2022: Retreat planning meeting in the church after the worship service

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS



- The Board of Trustees will meet on the second Tuesday of the month, December 14th at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Diaconate will meet on Monday, December 13th at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.
- The Official Board will not have their regular meeting in December.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

for Humanity



Are you interested in learning more about hands-on work in the community? Our congregation is invited to stop by at Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity's Open House Lunch & Learn on Friday, December 10th or Saturday, December 11th, both days 11- 2pm at 10510 Hulda Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. A light lunch will be provided and a short presentation will be held at 12:30pm.

ALTAR POINSETTIA FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Order deadline is **Sunday**, **December 5**, **2021**. Please complete this form and place it to the Church office with your cash or check payment. The cost is \$6.00.

Wording for bulletin: _____

Given by:

Number of plants: ____ X \$6.00 / plant = \$_____

Please make your check payable to **Strongsville United Church of Christ,** and place it with your order in the offering plate, under the office door, or mail it to:

Strongsville United Church of Christ 13740 Pearl Road Strongsville, OH 44136

Thank you for placing a poinsettia plant on the altar!

For Church Treasurer's Records 2021 Christmas Poinsettia

Total number of plants: _____

Amount enclosed: \$_____

Offering envelope number: _____

Cash/Check No.

Name:

Order deadline is Sunday, December 5, 2021.





The United Church of Christ (Congregational) 13740 Pearl Road Strongsville, OH 44136

www.strongsvilleucc.com

