

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (CONGREGATIONAL)

13740 Pearl Road, Strongsville, Ohio 44136

Rev. Rebecca Stephenson, Pastor Church (440) 238-6697

Website strongsvilleucc.com Email strongsvilleucc@gmail.com

December 21, 2014 9:45 A.M. Fourth Sunday of Advent

† *Those who are able may stand.*

PRELUDE *One Small Child*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

† **HYMN 249** *O Come, All Ye Faithful*
Choir sings verse 1; Congregations joins in verses 2 and 3.

CALL TO WORSHIP *after Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26*

Leader: We come to witness a miracle.

People: We sing the miracle of God’s steadfast love.

Leader: New life bursts forth in unexpected ways.

People: We shout the good news: God’s covenant endures forever!

Leader: The desert blooms; what was barren is fertile!

People: With our mouths we proclaim God’s faithfulness to all generations: God is the Rock of our Salvation! Amen!

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE

The Charles Jannsohn Family

Leader: Today we light again the candles of Hope, Love, and Joy. And we add the fourth candle—the candle of Peace. Christ is the Prince of Peace, who comes to reconcile us with God and with one another. Christ helps us to see that peace is possible. *(Light three purple candles and one pink candle.)* Let us pray together . . .

Congregational Prayer: **O God, let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me. In the name and spirit of the Prince of Peace we pray. Amen.**

† **HYMN 245** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* Verse 4 only

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

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.

PIANO RESPONSE *Silent Night*

ANTHEM *Never Been a Night Like This* Lloyd Larson
David Kay, bass Mike Soltis, drums

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE Lora Rung

THE OFFERINGS
OFFERTORY *Mary, Did You Know?* Lowry and Greene
Riley Sheppard, Vocalist

† **DOXOLOGY** (No. 815)

† **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

SCRIPTURES Luke 1:39-56 New Testament, p. 49

SERMON *“The Faith of a Virgin”*

† **HYMN 280** *One Small Child* Verses 1, 3 and 4

† **BENEDICTION**

† **RESPONSE** *O Thou Joyful, O Thou Wonderful*

† **POSTLUDE** *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

Serving Today

Worship Accompanist Elena Taylor
Interim Choir Director Ken Mehalko
Bell Choir Director Barbara Fraunfelder
Liturgist Dale Hawk
Greeter Roy Merkle
Ushers Dick and Ha Bennett
Nursery Cheryl Sobek
Coffee Hour Tom Gaumer

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 21, 2014

11:15 A.M.

† Those who are able may stand.

OPENING SONG *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SONG *Away in a Manger*

CALL TO WORSHIP *after Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26*

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Leader: New life bursts forth in unexpected ways.

People: We shout the good news: God's covenant endures forever!

Leader: The desert blooms; what was barren is fertile!

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Congregational Prayer: **O God, let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me. In the name and spirit of the Prince of Peace we pray. Amen.**

† **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

GATHERING SONG *Sanctuary*

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*debt*s)

OFFERING *Mary, Did You Know?* Lowry and Greene
Riley Sheppard, Vocalist

THE WORD OF GOD Luke 1:39-56 New Testament, p. 49

MEDITATION *"The Faith of a Virgin"*

SONG *Angels We Have Heard on High*

† **BENEDICTION**

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Songs are from the white *Contemporary Worship Songbook*.

Serving Today

Worship Accompanist	Elena Taylor
Song Leaders	Barb Fraunfelder, Kyra Krause, Clay Williams
Acoustic Guitar I	Jake Williams
Acoustic Guitar II	Eric Wroblewski
Electric Guitar	Herbert Parker
Bass Guitar	Jack Stephenson
Violin	Julia Soltis
Clarinet	Emily Phan
Drum Set	Mike Soltis
Drum Pads	Aidan Hurtig, Christian Habart-Scott
Liturgist	Dale Hawk
Graphics Operation	Michele Mihlack
Coffee Hour	Tom Gaumer

December 2014

- 21 Sun Diaconate Cookie Sale
24 Wed Christmas Eve – 7:30 p.m. Family Service
11:00 p.m. Candlelight Service
28 Sun KFC Penny Sunday
Combined Sunday School Class
January Newsletter Distribution / Pickup
31 Wed Annual Reports Deadline

SERVING NEXT SUNDAY – DECEMBER 28, 2014

Liturgist	9:45 Kenn Oerkfitz	11:15 Kenn Oerkfitz
Greeter		Lola Millhoane
Ushers for 9:45 a.m.		Volunteers Needed
Graphics Operation for 11:15 a.m.		Michele Mhlack
Coffee Hour		Cheryl Sobek

ANNOUNCEMENTS – DECEMBER 21, 2014

Welcome, visitors! We are so glad you have chosen to worship with us this morning. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. **Members, please wear your nametags** to assist others to get to know you.

This morning's altar flowers are given—

*In Celebration of Our 50th Wedding Anniversary
Tom and Judy Gaumer*

Our steeple will light the sky this week—

*In Memory of Baby Clare Molnar
In Memory of My Dad, Ray Higham
Happy 86th Birthday, Mom, on December 24
Happy 30th Birthday, Jonathan, on December 18
Happy 45th Birthday, Rachel, on December 30
Dianne and John Maringer*

Coffee Hour – All are welcome to the cake provided by Tom and Judy Gaumer this morning.

Holiday Cookie Sale – The Diaconate is holding its eighth annual Holiday Cookie Sale today in Pilgrim Hall, where you can buy all your favorite cookies.

The Wednesday Free Lunch Program is now in operation. All are welcome to attend this free weekly lunch. Volunteers are asked to be at the church no later than 9:00 a.m. to prepare meals. 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. A signup sheet is on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area. Donations of canned or dry goods will be accepted, and monetary donations will be appreciated.

The Christmas Fund welcomes gifts. For 112 years, the Christmas Fund, formerly known as Veterans of the Cross, has been a way in which members of the United Church of Christ have reflected the light of Jesus Christ in caring for men and women who have faithfully and selflessly served the church and now find themselves facing unforeseen financial crises. The Christmas Fund provides pension supplementation, health premium supplementation, emergency grants and Christmas "thank you" gift checks to individuals and families in need. We ask that you prayerfully consider supporting this year's appeal to the best of your ability. We know that the recipients are most grateful. Offering envelopes for The Christmas Fund are in the pew racks. Thank you for your support!

The Mission and Outreach quilt was won by Irene Jannsohn on December 14, and the raffle generated \$615 for the Mission and Outreach Committee. Thanks to all who purchased raffle tickets and to Ha Bennett for creating the beautiful quilt.

The Thrift Shop is giving away the 33 1/3 rpm records that are in boxes on the floor by the Royalton Road entrance door. Please feel free to help yourself!

Membership Class – Pastor Becky will again teach a 12-week Journey in Faith class that will meet on Thursdays, beginning January 8, 2015, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the church. Members, as well as potential members, are welcome and encouraged to attend. Topics covered include: *Establishing the Group, The Bible as Our Authority, Discovering Jesus, What We Believe and How We Got Here, The Nature of the Church, From the Early Church to Us, We Are ALL Gifted, Investigating the Local Church, Christian Giving, Understanding Different Levels of Living and Giving, The Meaning of Christian Covenant, and Investigating Worship.* Both members and nonmembers will enjoy the camaraderie and the knowledge that Pastor Becky shares. To sign up, please mark the back of your Attendance Card, or see the signup sheet in the Gathering Area.

MISSING: 2 LARGE PINK LAUNDRY BASKETS that are used at church dinners for towels and aprons. One has been gone since before the Turkey Dinner; and the other, since the Turkey Dinner. Please return them. Thank you.

2015 All-Family Winter Retreat at Pilgrim Hills – Mark your calendars now and sign up TODAY for the Annual All-Family Winter Retreat at Pilgrim Hills. The Retreat will take place on 2015 President's Day weekend: February 13, 14 and 15. The sign-up sheet and the "I Will Bring" sign-up have been posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. We are getting an earlier start this time around, 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 18, 2015; and payment in full will also be due that day. We won't have as much wiggle room as in years' past, so please sign up early. We will have our regular planning meeting on Sunday, February 8, at the Church at a time and place to be determined. If you have any questions, please contact Charles Jannsohn.

Thank you very much to all who, on December 12, supported the Jazz Christmas Concert fundraiser, which raised \$725 for our Music Ministry!

Women's Fellowship – The profit from the Candy Sale was \$435.97. Thank you to everyone who helped or supported the sale in any way.

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 Southwest Commons, Betty Kovach at Parkside Villa, Debbie Krause, Connie Rebar, Erla Mae Schultz at Medina Village

Church Family: Betty Babics, Betty Bushea, Marie Bury at Parkside Villa, Jim Davis, Rachel Kovatich, Dolores Matchett, Barbara Morgan, Ann Sullen at Cleveland Clinic, Rachel Zielinski at University Hospitals

Extended Church Family: Bob Allwood (brother-in-law of Dale Hawk), Marianne Allwood (niece of Dale Hawk), Don Antos (friend of Judy Carte), June Brewer (niece of Ed Powers), Ryan Brubeck, Audrey Curry (mother of Pam Keenen), Zachary Crouse (grandson of Barbara Morgan), Nicole Dangelo (daughter of Ginny), Sister-in-Law of Ginny Dangelo, Rebecca Deeb (Goddaughter of Lora Rung), Victor DiChiro (father-in-law of Rob Wentz), Pam Doubell (friend of Sue Gigliotti), Donna Fargo (mother of Sally Herzog), Ruth Fraley (relative of the Jannsohn family), Irene Hagemeyer (niece of Betty Craig), Phyllis Keenen (mother of Bruce), Christine Knudsen (friend of Lora Rung), Nancy Leasure (friend of Pastor Becky), Lily (friend of Lora Rung), Pat Masuga (mother of Dan), Paul Mihlack (father of Allen) at Southwest General, Barbara Sommers (mother of Sheri Martin), Trudie Taylor (sister of Karen Morgan), Bob Tomko (cousin of Ed Sobek), Donna Wadden (friend of Gayle Sperber), Marilyn Woodward Strongsville United Church of Christ (mother of David and Carol)

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Thank you to everyone for your kind words and gifts with regards to my brother and his family.

Jim Studer