


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
Contemporary Worship 9:00 A.M. Sunday
Traditional Worship 11:00 A.M. Sunday

FEBRUARY 2014 NEWSLETTER

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES		
<p style="text-align: center;">FEBRUARY 2 Fourth Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p>Communion at Both Services</p> <p>Sermon: <i>What Be Your Attitude?</i></p> <p>Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP 9 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Lora Rung</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Hour: Sharon Heinrich</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communion Servers: Lora Rung, Rachel Zielinski</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 11 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Dale Hawk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nursery: Gina Cathcart</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Greeter: Jim Studer</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communion Servers: Bill and Beth Giuliano, Cathy Hawk, Sharon Heinrich</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FEBRUARY 9 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sermon: <i>The Lighthouse</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Scripture: Matthew 5:13-16</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP 9 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Charles Jannsohn</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Hour: Bev Wehr</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 11 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Charles Jannsohn</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nursery: Rachel Zielinski</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Greeters: Tom and Judy Gaumer</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FEBRUARY 16 Sixth Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sermon: <i>Yes or Know</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Scripture: Matthew 5:21-37</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP 9 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Tom Gaumer</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Hour: Gina Cathcart</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 11 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Tom Gaumer</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nursery: Beth Giuliano</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Greeters: The Bickley Family</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FEBRUARY 23 Seventh Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Guest Speaker: Dr. Peter Makari will speak about the Middle East at both worship services. During Coffee Hour time, he will welcome and answer questions.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP 9 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Barb Fraunfelder</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Hour: Lora Rung</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 11 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Lynne McCray</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nursery: Vicky Masuga</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Greeter: Roy Merkle</p>

DIACONATE DAILIES!!

As January comes to a close, one month is already over for 2014, and much is happening at church. We welcomed six new members to our congregation, and Pastor Becky has started at new Journey in Faith class. Also, we have had our Annual Meeting and election. I welcome our new Diaconate members and regretfully say goodbye to our off-going members—Gina Cathcart, Sharon Heinrich, Vicky Masuga and Lora Rung. Your dedication to our church is inspirational.

As February starts, many activities will be taking to life. We will be planning our Lenten and Easter services. If you would like to join one of our committees, we would love to have you. We have several committees with various duties including Acolytes, Altar, Coffee Hour, Funeral, Greeters, Membership, Special Events, Ushers and Worship Team. If you would like to serve on or help with any of our committees, please see a member of the Diaconate.

During the Annual Meeting we presented the goals that the Diaconate has chosen to work on for the coming year. They are:

- Increase youth participation in the worship services.
- Begin and develop a visitor follow-up program.
- Design a process to offer every person an “Extravagant Welcome”.
- Increase advertising including mailings, newspapers, TV and radio.
- Expand Coffee Hour.

We will be looking for ideas on development and implementation. If you have an idea on any of the goals, please let one of our Diaconate members know. We will be looking for volunteers to assist with the upcoming Coffee Hours, and we also need ushers. Please see the sign-up sheets in the Gathering Area or Pilgrim Hall. Also, if you would like to help with communion, please see Beth Giuliano. We are always happy to have you and your ideas!

Our Liturgist program is expanding. If you are interested in serving as a liturgist in the church services, please see Pastor Becky or Rachel Zielinski; and we will get you involved! We look forward to the coming year and events, and we will keep you posted on all opportunities!



Strongsville UCC

SWISS STEAK DINNER



Saturday – February 1, 2014

Seatings at 5:00 and 6:30 P.M.

Reservations Only: *Notice New Number—*
(440) 238-8192

Adults \$9.00 Ages 6-12 \$5.00
Under 6 years Free

Help is needed. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. For safety reasons, no children under age 6 (with or without parent) can be helpers in any capacity during the serving hours of 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Children who are 6 to 10 years old must have a parent helping them. The Thrift Shop will be open during the dinner.

NEWS FROM OUR FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Happy New Year! Just a few items to bring to your attention:

- The giving envelopes for the first quarter of 2014 were mailed and should have been received by the end of December, 2013.
- Giving statements were distributed at church on Sunday, January 19, and Sunday, January 26, 2014. If you were not at church to receive yours, it will be mailed to you.
- The giving statements contain donations for pledging for operations and ministries, OCWM, Royalton Road Property (aka “Strive for Five”) as well as any special offerings, e.g., Christmas, Easter, Steeple Lighting, Altar Flowers and many more. It does NOT include donations to the Memorial Fund, Endowment Fund or Organ Restoration Fund. Treasurers for these funds sent letters acknowledging the donation at the time the donation was received.

If you did not receive your envelopes or giving statement or have questions or concerns, please contact me.

Barb Fraunfelder
Phone: 440-331-3673
Email: bfraunfelder@ameritech.net





to the following people, who joined our church family on January 5, 2014:

Rosemary Bechtel
Ted and Kelly Bickley
Virginia Dangelo
Jamie Habart
Lori Kovatich

We are very happy to extend a warm welcome to them and their families!

THANK YOU

Many, many thanks to all for your prayers, calls, thoughts and kind wishes after my fall and short hospital stay in November 2013!! The winter weather is keeping me at home, but please know that I appreciate all your kind thoughts. God's blessing to you all. Doris Soucie

Thank you to all who collated annual report booklets on January 12, 2014. With everyone's help, the task was completed very quickly. Again, thank you very much. Sharon Heinrich

Thank you to everyone who helped prepare and serve the Pancake Breakfast on January 26 for the Annual Meeting!

GREETERS NEEDED

The Greeters Chart for the 11:00 a.m. service and other special services is posted in Pilgrim Hall. Greeters are needed for the coming month of March. Please help if you are available.

The 9:00 a.m. service is casual worship and has no signup chart for greeters.



WOMEN'S LUNCHEON



As of this writing, no luncheon is scheduled for February. However, if the weather permits, a luncheon will be decided at the last minute. For more information, please contact Lola Millhoane at (440) 238-3037.

ANNUAL WINTER RETREAT



Our church's annual winter retreat will be held at a new location: Pilgrim Hills in Brinkhaven, Ohio, which is about 90 minutes south of Strongsville. The retreat will take place from Friday, February 14 (arrival after 6 p.m.) through Sunday, February 16 (departure at 2 p.m.).

We're happy to announce that the costs to attend will remain the same for the fourth year in a row:

Adults: \$65
Children ages 9-12: \$20
Children ages 3-8: \$10
Children ages 2 and under: Free.

These costs include 2 nights' lodging and 5 meals. The sign-up sheet is posted in Pilgrim Hall. Please sign up ASAP. Sleeping accommodations are as follows:

1] 4 double cabins (Boardwalk Cabins 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8) with 6 bunk beds and 1 single bed each. (Bunk beds do not have to be used as bunk beds.)

2] Fellowship Cabin, which has 6 separate rooms with 2 beds each and 1 larger room with 5 beds.

Both cabins are about a 2-minute walk from the main lodge where we will have meals and do our group activities.

Be sure to join us for a semi-brief planning meeting on Sunday, February 9, in the sanctuary immediately following the 11 a.m. worship service.

Although we held the previous 33 retreats at the same location, let's consider this a new adventure! Pilgrim Hills is larger (by 100 acres) than Temple Hills and has more activities, indoor and out. And the staff is super-friendly and accommodating already!

Questions? Please call Charles and Aimée Jannsohn at (440) 895-1858 or email: jannsohn@cox.net. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to relax and spend quality time with church family and friends!

"UPPER ROOM" DISCUSSION GROUP

The discussion group, which was meeting on Sunday morning during coffee hour, is now on hiatus and will not meet until further notice. The group is currently considering a monthly film presentation.



ORGAN RESTORATION COMMITTEE UPDATE



The ORC met on January 5. Pastor Becky has encouraged us to consider doing larger fundraisers that reach out into the community instead of keeping everything within the church. To that end, we have decided to do a clambake

in 2014 and a community dinner dance/auction some time in 2015. We will be setting up separate subcommittees to work on each of these events and are actively seeking people to work on these projects. If you are interested in working on the Clambake Committee, please see Sandy O'Shea. If you are interested in joining the Dinner Dance Committee, please see Bruce Keenen.

We will be holding a Congregational Meeting on March 2 to update you on our progress. We are halfway through the renovation and hope to begin the next phase (the Choir division) after Easter of this year. This meeting will update the congregation on what has been done, what remains to be done, and how we plan to get there. We also will be starting a formal recognition program for donors and will update you then. Most of all, we want to thank the congregation for their support in this endeavor. To date we have raised \$138,000!

The ORC account currently has \$36,800.90, not including gift cards.

SHOW TICKETS AVAILABLE



Linda Plain has tickets available for the show **FLASH DANCE** on Friday, April 11, at 7:30 p.m.—orchestra seats for \$62.50; and on Sunday, April 13—mezzanine seats for \$49.50. Just for your

information, the male lead in the show is Corey Mach, a graduate of Strongsville High School.

Linda also has tickets for **JERSEY BOYS**, on Sunday, May 18, for the 1:30 p.m. matinee show for a cost of \$74.50 each.

Both shows are excellent and will be a sellout! Please contact Linda Plain for tickets—
Email: lindaplain416@aol.com Phone: (440) 668-4848

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday – March 15, 2014

for the

ROAST PORK, KIELBASA & SAUERKRAUT DINNER



PAPER RECYCLING



The paper bin from River Valley Paper Company is in our church parking lot. **Please break down boxes before putting them into the bin.**

Acceptable items: brown paper bags, cardboard, catalogs, hard and soft bound books, magazines, mail, newspapers, office and school paper, phone books

Unacceptable items: aluminum, glass, metal, plastic of any type, styrofoam, trash

Thank you for recycling! This project generates funds for our church. Thank you again for your support!

TAILGATE PARTY POTLUCK

The Stewardship Committee invites you to a "Tailgate Party Potluck" to wrap up our stewardship campaign. Please join us Sunday, February 9, in Pilgrim Hall after the 11 a.m. worship service for food, fun, and games. Please see the sheet in Pilgrim Hall for a list of what we're providing as well as suggested tailgate munchies you can sign up to bring. We're going to have a great time! Everyone is welcome.



"Sporty" attire is encouraged, so get that Browns jersey out of storage!

WORSHIP TEAM NEWS



The Worship Team met on Wednesday morning, January 22. With deep concern, we heard that Susan Tressa will need to be on medical leave for 6 to 8 weeks due to a flair-up of her health issues. While she is away, a substitute pianist will be hired. Our thanks to Peter, a Baldwin Wallace student, and to Sharon Heinrich, who filled in for her for Sunday's services on January 19. I know that we all wish Susan a smooth and steady recovery.

The team started planning for the Easter season, which will begin with an Ash Wednesday service on March 5. We will again have the Sunday night family dinners and informal services each week during Lent. There will also be Holy Thursday and Good Friday services. More details will follow in the March Newsletter.

In addition, the team hopes to purchase a keyboard (in the near future) for use in the Contemporary Services.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, February 5, at 9:00 a.m. New members are welcome.

Bev Wehr

MEMORIAL FUND DONATIONS FOR MUSIC CHAIRS

The new chairs in the sanctuary were recently purchased after a search by Music Committee members. These 30 chairs are needed for the choir on a routine basis, for special programs, and can be used for extra sanctuary seating. Some key features are the neutral color, stackability (with a book rack in place), and comfort.

The chairs are being paid for by the Memorial Fund and by contributions. \$50 supports the purchase of a chair. If you would like to help, please write a check to the Strongsville UCC Memorial Fund, and forward it to Greg Dickson, along with the information if you're purchasing it in memory of or in honor of someone.

The Committee is investigating a way to label the chairs to recognize individual donations.



In Sympathy

Our love and prayers are extended in sympathy to the family of Kerrin Shafer on the occasion of her passing on January 2, 2014. Kerrin was the daughter of Peggy Baum and the daughter-in-law of former church organist Donalee Munson—all of whom had been members of our church. A memorial service was held on January 11 at the church.



KITCHEN NOTES



Thanks to all who contribute to the Coffee Hour Fund. With the continual increase in the cost of paper products, etc., your donation is greatly appreciated. All products are available to all church groups. However, if you use the last of any of these items—paper towels, napkins, cups, coffee, tea, sugar, or drinks for the children—please use the sheet on the refrigerator to write down what is needed, or inform the church office or Betty Craig, (440) 238-5389, so that replacements can be purchased. Thank you!

Please remember to name and date your food in the church refrigerator. Thank you!

Donations of bakery are needed for the first Sunday of each month. Please put your bakery in the kitchen before the worship service. Thank you!

SERVING MEALS AT ZION UCC

Our congregation continues to serve meals for the poor at Zion UCC on Cleveland's West Side. The date is the first Saturday of the month—February 1, 2014.



To participate, please sign up on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area and coordinate carpooling with others who are also serving on that day. Thank you!

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.

Long-Term Care or Homebound Members: Bill Betz at Chapel Hill Community in Canal Fulton, Edith Graves at Century Oak Care Center, Betty Kovach at Emeritus at Brookside Estates (15435 Bagley Road in Middleburg Heights), Debbie Krause, Connie Rebar, Erla Mae Schultz at Medina Village

Church Family: Dan Davis, Holly Elkins, Margot James, Janet Kato at ManorCare of Parma, Dolores Matchett, Barbara Morgan, Joyce Reed, Susan Tressa

Extended Church Family: June Brewer (niece of Ed Powers), Logan Churnega (grandson of Ginny Churnega), Audrey and Gene Curry (parents of Pam Keenen), Zachary Crouse (grandson of Barbara Morgan), Rebecca Deeb (Goddaughter of Lora Rung), Victor DiChiro (father-in-law of Rob Wentz), Donna Fargo (mother of Sally Herzog), Ruth Fraley (relative of the Jannsohn family), Elizabeth Fulford (friend of Lora Rung), Irene Hagemeyer (niece of Betty Craig), Kate Heisler (friend of Lora Rung), Janine Kaltenstein (cousin of Vicky Masuga), Phyllis Keenen (mother of Bruce), Erik Kratky (friend of Sarah Hawk), Rick Mahon (friend of the Woodwards), Pat Masuga (mother of Dan), Barbara Sommers (mother of Sheri Martin), Trudie Taylor (sister of Karen Morgan), Bob Tomko (cousin of Ed Sobek), Marge Tressa (mother of Rich)

Please inform the church of updates, (440) 238-6697.

ANNUAL REPORTS 2013

Annual Report booklets are available in the Gathering Area at the church. If you want a copy mailed to you, please call the church office, (440) 238-6697.

DR. PETER E. MAKARI – SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23

We are happy to share the news that Dr. Peter Makari, Ph.D. will be with us for both the 9:00 a.m. and the 11:00 a.m. services on Sunday, February 23, to speak about the Middle East with its unique and volatile governments and about the people who make the news daily.

Dr. Makari, an Egyptian-American, has lived in the Middle East, working with Christian churches and the Middle East Council of Churches. He is currently serving as Area Executive for the Middle East and Europe, Common Board for Global Ministries, of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He also served as Co-Chair of the National Council of Churches Interfaith Relations Commission.

He earned an M.A. in Middle East Studies from the American University in Cairo and a Ph.D. in Politics and Middle East Studies from New York University. He is the author of several books which deal with Middle East history and contemporary problems. He, his wife and two daughters are members of Olmsted Community Church (UCC) in Olmsted Falls, Ohio.

Following the 9:00 a.m. service, we are invited to the Church Parlor, where Dr. Makari will lead in a question-and-answer period. Any light he can shine on one of the most explosive and intriguing areas of the world will be appreciated. This is the first of what we hope will be some informative programs revolving around our congregation's becoming a Global Ministries church. Our two denominations currently have 150 adult missionaries in 80 countries. Please remember them in your prayers.

CUE SEMINARY – FEBRUARY 23

Much-needed support for our three Midwest CUE Seminaries (Chicago – United – Eden) will be appreciated on Sunday, February 23. Seminaries are the seed-bed of the church, and their financial health is critical to the future of the UCC. Thanks to generous members, we have always been supportive of this important special offering. Please use the enclosed envelope, knowing that our gifts are sincerely appreciated!

A NEW ADOPTED FAMILY

Thanks to Kelly Kling, Director of the Strongsville Food Bank, we have received the name of a new "family in need" in Strongsville. They consist of a mother and father, daughter (17), and two sons (11 and 10). Our former family recently moved to another community; they wish to thank the congregation and The Thrift Shop for many generous gifts throughout the year. We remained in contact with the family through visits and phone calls, and we wish them Godspeed and God's love during their move and relocation.

Mission and Outreach Committee

ABOUT OUR LITTLE GIRL IN INDIA

We have just received a note from Ms. Linda Lawrence, the Child Sponsorship Program Manager of Global Ministries, about **Keerthana**—our eight-year-old "adoptee" and student at the Village Farm School near Vellore, India, whom we are supporting by sending \$30 monthly to the school.

"...She was quite happy to receive your package with photos (of our congregation, people, and activities—thanks to Doug Thorn). She has written a thank-you letter, which you will soon receive; the postal system operates very slowly during the season.

"Your Christmas Greetings with three coins enclosed (a shiny dime, a nickel, and a penny—each with an image of a U.S. president) were received a couple of days ago. Keerthana is very intelligent and takes an active part in all the extracurricular activities that take place at school. She is cheerful and friendly.

"Thank you for sponsoring Keerthana to continue her studies at King's School. After the sudden demise of her father, she was helpless and desperate. Then came the positive note that you have come forward to sponsor her. Praise God, and thank you for your kindness and generosity. You can see Keerthana dancing for our Christmas program on You Tube – www.kings Matric. Hr. Secondary school xmas program. (We viewed it and enjoyed it. You will too.)

"Wishing you a merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year 2014. With many thanks and prayers . . .

Vatsala, Head Teacher, KMHSS

Mission and Outreach Committee

THE ELIMINATE PROJECT

Clay Williams has brought to the attention of the Mission and Outreach Committee a special project called "The Eliminate Project". Kiwanis is partnering with UNICEF to eliminate maternal/neonatal tetanus, a highly preventable disease that kills one baby every nine minutes.

The Mission and Outreach Committee is making a donation to this worthy cause and encourages members of our congregation, who are interested in helping, to make a donation.

Donations can be made with a check payable to the "Kiwanis International Foundation" and by writing "The Eliminate Project" on the memo line. The check can be inserted in a plain envelope or a pew envelope marked "The Eliminate Project" and placed in the offering plate.

Thank you for your support.

“...AN ENCOURAGING WORD”

How did we, as a congregation, do with one of the more important barometers of church vitality and spirit? Fairly well, thank you.

Benevolent giving, helping friends and neighbors whom we haven't met or know, but who are in need of a helping hand, is one hallmark of a strong church, i.e. the Good Samaritan story and the theme of many other Bible stories. As a congregation we have good news to share.

Overall Benevolences increased from **\$9,230.73 in 2012** to **\$12,795.09 in 2013**.

OCWM giving—gifts that support the many areas of ministry of the UCC—increased \$606—to \$6,945. Not every special offering saw an increase in 2013, due, perhaps, to other special worthy offerings received during the year such as Organ Restoration, the purchase of new property, and Thanksgiving Baskets. The following is a summation of our benevolent contributions for 2013:

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
OCWM	\$6,945.00	\$6,339.00
CUE Seminaries	215.00	155.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	738.75	1,054.00
Strengthen the Church	376.10	423.00
Neighbors in Need	509.23	764.00
Christmas Fund / Veterans of the Cross	1,530.00 (2 years)	0
Missions	327.00	0
Special Relief Fund	275.00	0
Thanksgiving Baskets	1,510.00	0
Other Benevolences	369.00	435.00

Donations to the Strongsville Food Bank and The Thrift Shop were not tabulated. Member donations toward the support of Keerthana, our child sponsorship program in Vellore, India, at \$30 per month, are also not included.

Our benevolent giving—over and above local church expenses—is just over 6%. Our goal is to become a 10% church. We hope to move in that direction during 2014. Thank you for your thoughtful support!

Mission and Outreach Committee