


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

JANUARY 2014 NEWSLETTER

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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<p style="text-align: center;">JANUARY 5 Second Sunday after Christmas</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Covenant Service <i>Renewal of our Covenant with God</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communion at Both Services</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP 9 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Rachel Zielinski</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Hour: Barb Fraunfelder</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Communion Servers: Cathy Hawk, Lora Rung</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 11 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Reception of New Members</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Rachel Zielinski Nursery: Barb Fraunfelder Greeter: Volunteer(s) Needed Ushers: Tom and Judy Gaumer</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">JANUARY 12 First Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sermon: <i>We Are Family</i> Scripture: Acts 10:34-43</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP 9 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Pam Keenen</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Hour: Dianne Maringer</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 11 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Pam Keenen Nursery: Lora Rung Greeter: Volunteer(s) Needed Ushers: Volunteers Needed</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">JANUARY 19 Second Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sermon: <i>The Psalmist in Each of Us</i> Scripture: Psalm 40:1-11</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP 9 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Dan Masuga</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Hour: Vicky Masuga</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 11 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Jim Studer Nursery: Gina Cathcart Greeter: Volunteer(s) Needed Ushers: Volunteers Needed</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">JANUARY 26 Third Sunday after Epiphany</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sermon: <i>God's Wisdom</i> Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:10-25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Annual Meeting of Congregation after 11:00 A.M. Worship (preceded by Pancake Breakfast)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP 9 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Kenn Oerkfitz</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coffee Hour: (Annual Meeting)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 11 A.M.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Liturgist: Kenn Oerkfitz Nursery: Sarah Hayes Greeter: Roy Merkle Ushers: Volunteers Needed</p>

SWISS STEAK DINNER

Saturday – February 1, 2014

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

Reservations Only: **(440) 238-8192**

NOTICE NEW NUMBER!

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.



THE THRIFT SHOP

The Thrift Shop will be closed on Thursday, January 2. Regular hours of 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. will resume on Thursday, January 9, 2014.

We'll have a special sale each week.

Join our email list, and you will know our weekly sales!

Stop in for some amazing bargains.

Gina Cathcart was the winner of our afghan raffle. Congrats, Gina!

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Thank you to all who helped make and sell candy. We had a couple new people—newcomers are always welcome! Thanks also to all who purchased candy. When all the money is in and all expenses are paid, we should have a profit of \$413. Thank you!

Betty Craig
Candy Chairman

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, Debbie Krause, Connie Rebar, Erla Mae Schultz at Medina Village

Church Family: Dan Davis, Holly Elkins, Janet Kato at The Altenheim, Betty Kovach, Dolores Matchett, Barbara Morgan, Katie Renfro, Rich 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), Tom Davern (relative of the Woodwards), 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), Kerrin Shafer (friend of Irene Jannsohn), James Smith (brother of Katie Renfro), 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.

IN SYMPATHY



Our love and prayers are extended in sympathy to the family of our church member, Louetha Rieth, on the occasion of her passing on November 24, 2013, in Pennsylvania. A memorial service will take place in our sanctuary on January 31, at 11:30 a.m.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

On Sunday Mornings:

Greet, Serve at Coffee Hour, Usher

Please see a member of the Diaconate.

Collate Annual Reports in Pilgrim Hall

Sunday – January 13, 2013 – during Coffee Hour and after worship

Help at the Dinner and Provide Bakery Donations for the Swiss Steak Dinner on February 1, 2014

Please sign up on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall.

DIACONATE DAILIES

On Friday, December 13, we hosted our first Blue Christmas Service, which was a service of remembrance and hope. We remembered those who passed away with bows for the Remembrance Tree and also sought hope during the Christmas season. Thank you to all who helped with the service, served at the reception afterward, or provided refreshments. A big thank you to Susan Tressa, Sandy O'Shea, Desiree Johnson, Ken Mehalko and Lisa Heinrich for their beautiful music. Seventy-one people attended this special service at 7:30 p.m.

Thank you to all who provided treats on December 15 for the Diaconate Cookie Sale, which generated \$196 for Diaconate projects for our church. Special thanks to Dianne Maringer for organizing the event.

We are starting a new procedure in our nursery. If your children use the nursery, we ask that you please sign your children in and out on our sheets located on the counter.

We hope everyone has noticed our beautiful new choir chairs! We would like to thank those who have donated to this special item, and please ignore our dust as we move some things around in the choir loft to better arrange the space for the Choir and Praise Band.

Help is needed on Sunday mornings with coffee hour, ushering in our worship services, and greeting/passing out bulletins on Sunday morning. To help with any of these activities, to serve on the Diaconate in 2014, or to help with an event, please talk with any member of the Diaconate:

Gina Cathcart, Beth Giuliano, Cathy Hawk, Sarah Hawk, Sharon Heinrich, Dianne Maringer, Vicky Masuga, Ginny Churnega Oerkfritz, Lora Rung, Cheryl Sobek, Bev Wehr, Rachel Zielinski

NEW SIGNUP CHARTS IN PILGRIM HALL

The 2014 signup charts for Greeters and Altar Flowers are now on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Please help in these areas if you can. Assistance is greatly appreciated!



For the Altar Flowers chart – when you sign your name, please indicate how many vases you want that day. Our church typically has two vases on the altar on Sunday morning, but we can accommodate up to four vases. The cost is \$15 per vase. Additional information is on the flower form that is beneath the flower chart in Pilgrim Hall.

OFFICIAL BOARD

For specific information relative to each board, committee or group's individual report, please check the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Each group has been busy with many activities or actions supporting our church.

Just a reminder to those boards, committees or groups who have items they are considering for the church's Strategic Plan, the deadline to submit your final recommendations to members of the Review Committee was December 20. For any questions please contact Joyce Reed, Dale Hawk, Ed Sobek, Dan Masuga or Rachel Zielinski.

Please mark your calendars for the following upcoming events:

Annual Meeting with Pancake Breakfast is January 26.
The Swiss Steak Dinner is February 1.

Joyce Reed
Moderator

WORSHIP TEAM

Worship Team is a committee formed by Pastor Becky shortly after she became our pastor. The committee's purpose is planning and evaluating our worship services.

Currently serving on Worship Team are Barb Fraunfelder, Sharon Heinrich, Andrew Purdum, Pastor Becky, Jack Stephenson, Doug Thorn, Susan Tressa, Bev Wehr, and Rachel Zielinski. (Jim Heinrich and Pam Keenen have also attended meetings.)

New members are welcome. The next meeting is Wednesday, January 8, at 9:00 a.m. The group meets every other Wednesday.

THANK YOU

Thank you so much for all the cards, prayers, and get-well wishes. They made me feel that people were concerned about me.
Betty Kovach

Thanks to all for your prayers, cards, and phone calls during my recent surgery. I appreciate everyone's best wishes.
Bill Ritchie

THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Thank you to everyone who supported this outreach. We surpassed our goal of 50 baskets and created a "Feeding the Homeless" fund! Special thanks to Rachel Zielinski for organizing the assembly of baskets, and to Rachel Zielinski and Sarah Hayes for taking baskets to Transitional Housing. The following letter was received from Transitional Housing Inc.:

November 27, 2013

Dear Rev. Stephenson:

THANK YOU for your generous donation of Thanksgiving food for Transitional Housing residents. Your contribution is much appreciated. All contributions make a significant difference in helping us continue to achieve our mission of helping formerly homeless women with the supportive services they need to achieve independence!

It is because of the generosity of our old and new friends that we can work through challenging times, without compromising the program that has provided over 2,000 women with the skills to become independent, self-sufficient, educated and reunited with their children and families!

We remain truly grateful for ALL of the generous donations we receive throughout the year, and thank you for your continued support. We know that we could not continue to grow and serve the women who depend on us without your help!

*With sincere gratitude,
Sherri Brandon
Executive Director*

Thank you and your congregation for the kind donations. It will be a blessed holiday season here at Transitional Housing because of donors like you.

*Maggie Byrne
Development Director*



2014 ALL-CHURCH FAMILY RETREAT AT PILGRIM HILLS

Please join us for the 2014 Retreat, now taking place at Pilgrim Hills. The Retreat will take place on President's Day weekend from February 14 to February 16, 2014. The price will be the same as last year:

\$65 for adults over 13 \$20 for children 9-12,
\$10 for children 3-8 FREE for children under 2

The price includes 2 nights of lodging and 5 meals.

A sign-up sheet is posted in Pilgrim Hall. The planning meeting will take place Sunday February 9, 2014, in the sanctuary after the second service. Since we will be at a new location for the first time in 34 years, please feel free to contact either Charles or Aimée Jannsohn with any questions, comments or concerns.

You may call us at 440.895.1858,
e-mail us at jannsohn@cox.net
or visit our Facebook event page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/232817476878357/>
(You might need an invite from a host,
but we can figure that out!)

Strongsville UCC

HAPPY NEW YEAR'S DAY 2013

MOONROCK BOWLING

Wednesday - January 1 - 8pm to 10pm

Only \$9.95 per person for
ALL-YOU-CAN-BOWL & SHOE RENTAL

Please see Dale Hawk or Irene Joyce
for more information.

**PLEASE JOIN YOUR CHURCH
FRIENDS AT FAIRVIEW LANES
21347 Lorain Road in Fairview Park
FOR LIGHTS, MUSIC & FUN !**

SPONSORED BY THE YOUTH GROUP



A WIDER VISION OF THE CHURCH

At the November meeting of the Official Board, a presentation was made by members of the Mission and Outreach Committee explaining what it would mean for the congregation to become a GLOBAL MISSION CHURCH. After a power point presentation and discussion, it was voted that we move in that direction, thus expanding the definition of "mission" beyond our local and national boundaries.

Our church is already taking "mission" in a serious and energetic way: nine programs dealing with Local Outreach; five programs with National Outreach emphasis; and two International Outreach—OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) plus a child sponsorship with Keerthana, a seven-year-old child in a school in Vellore, India, contributing \$30 a month toward her schooling via voluntary donations.

Global Ministries is a joint program of the United Church of Christ and The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), overseeing our 150 adult missionaries in 80 countries. Becoming a Global Mission Church means that we commit ourselves to:

- * Pray regularly for partners, missionaries and the world
- * Educate ourselves about global issues
- * Seek justice for the "least of these" in the international community
- * Receive the gifts of the global church—i.e. start a relationship with an adult missionary from a country of our choosing
- * Give to the work of global mission, through our OCWM emphasis

This is a rather large undertaking and will require that we both work and grow in our understanding of what it means in specific ways. The possibilities are unlimited. Keep watching for updates in 2014.

ADVANCE NOTICE OF IMPORTANT EVENT

On Sunday, February 23, Dr. Peter Makari, Area Executive for Middle East and Europe, Global Sharing of Resources Ministry of the Wider Church Ministries, UCC, will speak at both services, touching on what the UCC in its missionary endeavors is doing in the Middle East and Europe.

Details will be provided in the February Church Newsletter.



COMMUNITY COMPASSION CONTRIBUTION PROCEDURE

If someone comes to the church asking for financial help, please refer them to Pastor Becky or church secretary Sharon Heinrich. It is church policy NOT to give cash to individuals.

Money collected in the "crazy" green and silver striped can in the Gathering Area each week goes into the minister's discretionary fund for those in financial need.

Thank you for your contributions to the Community Compassion Contribution can, which reaches out to the community.

The Mission and Outreach Committee

STEEPLE LIGHTING

For the Week of December 1, 2013

*In Remembrance of Jane C. Graves on Her Birthday,
December 4*

Edith Graves and Roberta Carpenter

For the Week of December 15, 2013

*Happy Birthday on December 17 to Bill Craig
With love, Mom*

*To Celebrate Our Daughter Lisa's Birthday Today
Bill and Dorothy Ritchie*

For the Week of December 22, 2013

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to All!
Thank you for your prayers
Betty Bushea*

*In Loving Memory of
Garry and Shirley Manley and Garry (Corky) Manley
Holly Elkins*

*In Loving Memory of Alfred Graves
during the Holidays and Always
Edith Graves*

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.



FROM THE ORGAN RESTORATION COMMITTEE

The Committee wishes to thank everyone for a successful and celebratory concert with the Strongsville City Jazz Swing Band on December 8. In case you missed it, the concert featured several jazz arrangements of Christmas music, including two numbers with our very own Kyrie Singers. Approximately 81 people attended, and the event made a total of \$1,241 for the Organ Restoration. The account balance is now \$30,395.18, which does not include the money tied up in the gift card program. The ORC plans to begin Phase III in the spring or summer of 2014.

Our thanks goes out to everyone involved, whether you attended the concert, helped pass out programs, put out cookies or any of the other multitude of tasks that is involved with putting on an event like this.

We also want to thank Pastor Becky and Jack Stephenson for hosting the band for dinner at their house after the concert. We especially want to thank Ken Mehalko, Jim Wonnacott and all the members of the Strongsville City Jazz Swing Band and also the Kyrie Singers for the gracious donation of their time and talents.

We hope to be able to do this event next year with even greater success.

Thank you

The Organ Restoration Committee



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 chairs to recognize individual donations.

SCHEDULE FOR ANNUAL REPORTS

December 31 – Annual Reports are due in the church office.

January 2-10 – Annual Reports booklets are prepared and printed.

January 12 – Annual Reports are collated in Pilgrim Hall. Volunteers are needed.

Beginning January 12 – Members may pick up their Annual Reports booklets at the church. If you need a copy mailed to you, please call the church office at (440) 238-6697.

FINANCIAL OFFICERS OF CHURCH GROUPS:

Please turn in your financial statements to the Auditing Committee through the Church office now. It is extremely important that all books be audited before the Annual Meeting on January 26, 2014. 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 reconciliation 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! For questions or concerns, please call the church office, (440) 238-6697.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Many offices in the church are available for this year. Please consider saying yes when a member of the Nominating Committee asks you to serve. Some of the positions available include:

Diaconate is the board that 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.

The Board of Trustees oversees the finances and physical plant of the church.

The committees of the Trustees are Building and Grounds, Finance, and Long Range Planning.

Remember the old but true saying "Many hands make light work" and plan to be a part of one of these boards or committees. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

NEWS FROM OUR FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Here is some news about our giving envelopes. They are provided by Church Budget, Envelope and Mailing Company. There is an envelope for each week and sometimes for special events, like Christmas. They are sent out on a quarterly basis. The next quarter is January through March. The envelopes should have been received about the third week of December (maybe a little later due to the holiday).

Giving envelopes are provided to members and friends, each assigned a unique number. The envelope has two sections – Ministries and Operations is one, Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) is the other. It is helpful if the money amount is noted in each of the sections if you wish your payment to be split between the two sections. If there is no notation, the total donation will go to Ministries and Operations. This is also known as Administration and Operations on the giving statement. This money pays the church's bills - our ongoing daily, weekly, monthly expenses.

Your envelope may also be used for other giving, such as Strive for Five (also called Royalton Road Property), or Altar Flowers or Steeple Lighting or any other of our special offerings. Be sure to note the envelope what the giving is for so that the payment is noted accordingly for your giving statement and our financial reports.

If possible, especially for Strive for Five, please write a separate check for the amount of that donation.

These funds are deposited in a separate account than our regular giving, and reports are generated and impacted as well. It makes everything balance better if separate checks are written. Also, separate envelopes are still acceptable with the forms and payment for altar flowers, steeple lighting, poinsettias and lilies.

Also, even though you receive weekly envelopes, you may make your contribution in whatever way fits best for your budget. For example, you may write one check a month and use just one envelope. Or one check for two weeks, using one envelope. Your payment may be in cash. You do not need to turn in the other unused envelopes. Save them for a special offering, e.g., altar flowers or steeple lighting (making sure you mark the envelope what that donations is for) or just toss them out.

If you do not have your numbered envelope with you at church, it is fine to use an envelope from the pew. There is one titled "Pew Envelope for Gifts and Offerings". Check if it is a Regular Offering or Special Offering and note your name, envelope number (if you know it), address (optional). Be sure the writing is clear so that the payment is posted correctly to your account! Note if the payment is for Ministries and Operations or OCWM. If there is no notation, it will be assigned to Ministries and Operations as stated previously. Be careful that you pull the correct envelope for your giving. There are also envelopes for special offerings and the Organ Restoration Fund in the pews.

Contributions may also be made through your bank with a check being sent by the bank to the church. This is something you set up directly with your bank, directing your payment to the church. You select what type of bill you want to pay (depending on your bank, it may be under Charities), enter the bill information (Strongsville United Church of Christ, 13740 Pearl Road, Strongsville, OH 44136, 440-238-6697 and include your envelope number), choose how much you want to pay and when.

Thank you all for your continued giving and support to our church. As we continue with our Stewardship Campaign to collect 128 pledges for 2014, may we give from our hearts, now and always.

If you have any questions or concerns about this information or about your specific giving, please feel free to contact me.

Barb Fraunfelder, Financial Secretary
Phone - (440) 331-3673
Email - bfraunfelder@ameritech.net

JOURNEY IN FAITH MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Pastor Becky will once again teach a 12-week membership class entitled *Journey in Faith*, beginning **on Thursday, January 16**. Members, as well as potential members, are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Topics covered are *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*.

Class dates are Thursday evenings—January 16, 23, 30; February 6, 13, 20, 27; March 6, 13, 20, 27; April 3. The class will be held at the church from **7:00 to 9:00 p.m.**

A sign-up sheet is on the Gathering Area bulletin board or call the church office at (440) 238-6697.

