

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

JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

	TRADITIONAL 9:45 A.M.	CONTEMPORARY 11:15 A.M.
<p>JANUARY 3 <i>Second Sunday after Christmas</i> Scriptures: John 1:1-18 Sermon: <i>The Word Made Flesh</i> Communion at Both Services</p>	<p>Liturgist: Kelly Bickley Morning Announcements: Kim McKenzie Coffee Hour: Bev Wehr</p>	<p>Liturgist: Dale Hawk Morning Announcements: Kim McKenzie Coffee Hour: Bev Wehr</p>
<p>JANUARY 10 <i>The Baptism of Christ</i> Scriptures: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 Sermon: <i>The Ministry Begins</i></p>	<p>Liturgist: Jim Studer Morning Announcements: Irene Joyce Coffee Hour: Volunteer Needed</p>	<p>Liturgist: Dan Masuga Morning Announcements: Irene Joyce Coffee Hour: Volunteer Needed</p>
<p>JANUARY 17 <i>Second Sunday after Epiphany</i> Scriptures: John 2:1-11 Sermon: <i>Water to Wine</i></p>	<p>Liturgist: Pam Keenen Morning Announcements: Natalie Daniels Coffee Hour: Volunteer Needed</p>	<p>Liturgist: Jack Stephenson Morning Announcements: Natalie Daniels Coffee Hour: Volunteer Needed</p>
<p>JANUARY 24 <i>Third Sunday after Epiphany</i> Scriptures: To Be Determined Sermon: To Be Determined</p>	<p>Liturgist: Tom Gaumer Morning Announcements: Denise Bell Coffee Hour: Rosemary Bechtel</p>	<p>Liturgist: Tom Gaumer Morning Announcements: Denise Bell Coffee Hour: Rosemary Bechtel</p>
<p>JANUARY 31 <i>Fourth Sunday after Epiphany</i> Scriptures: Jeremiah 1:4-10 Sermon: <i>It's Tough to Be a Prophet</i></p>	<p>Liturgist: Jim Nicoulin Morning Announcements: Kim McKenzie Coffee Hour: Tom Gaumer</p>	<p>Liturgist: Betty Craig Morning Announcements: Kim McKenzie Coffee Hour: Tom Gaumer</p>

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Question: Pastor, how is the church doing?

The church is doing well. This year we continued to grow in our attendance and activities. While our growth was not as fast as in years before, we are moving in a positive direction. Several new programs are reaching the community with the Grace of the Lord, and we are growing in our reputation in the community.

Question: Pastor, how are you doing?

I am doing well. After a little setback while on vacation, I have recovered well. I want to thank all those who have been concerned for my health, and I want to assure you that I am moving full speed ahead. I also want to assure everyone that I plan on serving Strongsville UCC for years to come with great joy in my heart.

Question: What are we doing next year?

Next year looks to be a promising year for all of us. We will be moving forward with the Tent Revival. In January we will be planning and enlisting all of the local churches to participate in the revival. I am so excited about the possibilities that the Revival will provide.

We will also be focusing on our 200th anniversary that will happen in 2017. There are lots of wonderful events and special services that will happen as part of the celebration.

We will also continue to focus on the Year of the Child. This will be a major focus and will require all of us to be creative and active in bringing the Gospel to young people.

Question: I've heard that we might get a youth/assistant pastor. Is this true?

I am hopeful that we will be able to hire a part-time assistant pastor or youth director. We REALLY need to make a step in faith and hire a person to help us reach out to young people and families. I believe that this person will be a strong catalyst to help us grow. The decision to hire a new person will be up to you and may be a topic of discussion at this year's Congregational Meeting in January.

Happy New Year!

Pastor Becky

IN SYMPATHY

Our love and prayers are extended in sympathy to Rev. Thomas Olcott, his daughter Brenda, and family on the passing of his wife Lois on November 28, 2015.

Rev. Olcott served as our interim minister from January 1997 to June 1998.

If you wish to send the family a card, their address is
Rev. Thomas Olcott and Family
319 Harbor Pointe Drive, Apt. 5,
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464.



THE THRIFT SHOP

January is a great time to visit the Thrift Shop. We have lots of coats and jackets to keep the entire family warm this winter.

Are you wondering what to do with those Christmas presents that you know you will never use or wear? Donate them to the Thrift Shop! Our customers appreciate new items.

We will be open on Thursdays in January from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and hope to see you in the shop. Please remember that tax receipts for donations are available.

GIRL SCOUT GOLD PROJECT AWARD

I am currently a Senior Girl Scout working on my Gold Project award. I am planning on completing my project this upcoming spring/summer. I would like to build an outdoor worship area along with a labyrinth on the church property adjacent to the parking lot. In order to do my project, I need to raise funds of approximately \$300-\$400. To do this, I have decided to have a bake sale in conjunction with the February 6 Swiss Steak Dinner. Please consider stopping by and purchasing my baked goods at this time to help fund my project. I appreciate your support.

Gina Gigliotti

FROM THE DIACONATE



The Diaconate thanks all who baked and bought goods at our Holiday Cookie Bake Sale. The event made \$196.25!! Merry Christmas to all!

LOCATION FOR DONATIONS for Strongsville Food Bank

Many thanks to the congregation for your continuing support of the Food Bank donations. Just a reminder that the Mission Outreach Committee moved the donation area to alongside our glass display case in Pilgrim Hall. Thank you again for your support.



GREETINGS FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE!

This year's campaign is well underway, and the committee has already received many pledge cards! As we continue to add ornaments to our tree, please stop by the table to visit, ask questions; and, if you haven't already, turn in a pledge card.

The committee is also pleased to announce the launch of the online giving option on the church website! In January, with your next quarterly batch of envelopes, you will also receive a letter from our partner, Church Budget, detailing the website and its functionality. Church Budget's online giving solution, My EOffering, provides members with an additional giving option that is greener and will help in saving the church money on postage and envelopes. If you are interested in using this service, or you have questions regarding your giving, please let me know!

Have a Blessed New Year!

Natalie Daniels, Stewardship Chair
Danielsnatalie1@gmail.com

JOURNEY IN FAITH MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Pastor Becky will again teach a Journey in Faith class, that will meet on **Thursdays** for 11 weeks **beginning January 14, 2016**, 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 within the group and the knowledge that Pastor Becky shares. To register, please, tell Pastor Becky, call the Church Office at 440-238-6697, or see the signup sheet that will be posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Thank you to all who helped with our candy making and sale. Our profit was \$243.67.



CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

(in alphabetical order)
and their chairmen / contacts

- Advertising Committee** – Dale Hawk
- Bell Choir** – Barb Fraunfelder, Director
- Chancel Choir** – Joshua Konow, Director
- Children's Music Program** – Elena Taylor, Director
- Christian Education Committee** – Jamie Habart
- Diaconate** – Denise Bell
- Endowment Fund and Memorial Fund** – Greg Dickson
- Free Lunch Program** – Pastor Becky Stephenson
- Mission and Outreach Committee** – Kelly Bickley
- Music Committee** – Pam Keenen
- Official Board** – Kim McKenzie, Moderator
- Organ Restoration Committee** – Jim Heinrich
- Praise Band** – Elena Taylor, Director
- Stewardship Committee** – Natalie Daniels, Darla Wickline
- Sunday School** – Irene Joyce, Jamie Habart
- The Thrift Shop** – Lola Millhoane
- Trustees** – Gary Paul, Rachel Zielinski
- Women's Fellowship** – Lola Millhoane
- Women's Retreat** – Kim McKenzie

STEEPLE LIGHTING

Week of December 13, 2015

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

Week of December 20, 2015

*In Memory of Baby Clare Molnar, Robert White,
and My Dad, Ray Higham*
Love, Dianne

*To My Church Family and Friends—
Wishing You a Blessed Christmas
and a Happy New Year!*
Love, Lola

To light the steeple, the minimum donation is \$5.00. Donation forms are on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Multiple donations for the same week will be accepted. For more info, please call the church, 440-238-6697. Thank you to all who light the steeple.



NEWS FROM OUR FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The following monthly report lists the budget income we need to receive from Pledges and Offerings and the amount actually received. This information also appears weekly in our Sunday worship bulletin.

For November 22 through December 13, 2015

Offering Needed: \$12,760
 Offering Received: (Sep. 21 through Oct. 11) 11,379
 Traditional: \$8,253 Contemporary: \$3,126
 Difference (\$1,381)



RECYCLING

The River Valley Paper Company picked up:

September – 3,480 lbs. of recycled material at \$20 per ton for a total payment of **\$37.75**

October – 8,100 lbs. of recycled material at \$25 per ton for a total payment of **\$101.25**

THANK YOU for recycling. Just a reminder - we collect newspapers, office and school paper, phonebooks, magazines, catalogs, brown paper bags, mail, hard and soft bound books, and cardboard.

We're finding the weight of cardboard is not as much as paper so if boxes are not collapsed, they are taking up valuable space. So, PLEASE collapse boxes before placing them in the recycling bin.

FUN FACTS – Published by River Valley Paper Company (and posted on our Pilgrim Hall bulletin board):

WE SAVED:	SEPT. 2015 Our 3,480 lbs. of recycled paper saved:	OCT. 2015 Our 8,100 lbs. of recycled paper saved:
Trees	29.58	68.85
Pounds of CO2	435	1,012.50
Cubic yards of landfill space	5.74	13.37
Gallons of water	12,180	28,350
Kilowatts of electricity	7,134	16,605
Homes heated for 6 months	1.74	4.05
Pounds of air pollutants	104.40	243.00

THANK YOU for RECYCLING!!

GIVING STATEMENTS

Giving Statements for the year 2015 will be distributed at church during January, 2016. Any not handed out will be mailed by U.S. Mail service by the end of January. If you have any questions or concerns about your giving, contact me by phone at 440-331-3673 or by email – succfinancialsecretary@gmail.com.

Barb Fraunfelder

2016 ANNUAL ALL-FAMILY CHURCH WINTER RETREAT AT PILGRIM HALLS

The Church's Annual all-family Winter Retreat at Pilgrim Hills will take place on President's Day weekend 2016: February 12, 13 & 14. The sign-up sheet to attend and the sign-up sheet for things to bring and to volunteer have been posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Please reserve your spot and room now, as rooms will be first-come, first-serve. The cut-off to sign up—January 17—will be strictly enforced this year. We will not have the same luxury as we've had in the past, in which we were able to take reservations up until the event weekend. 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 17, the cost is \$10 per meal.

Here is the cost breakdown:

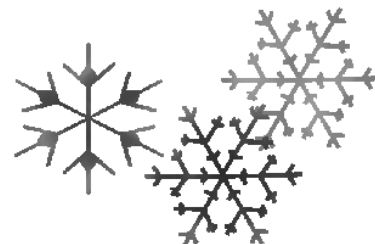
ADULTS (12 and up): \$65
 CHILDREN (6-11): \$10
 CHILDREN (5 and under): FREE

Important dates to remember:

JANUARY 17, 2016:
 Reservations close AND MONEY DUE

JANUARY 31, 2016:
 All special dietary needs must be reported.

FEBRUARY 7, 2016:
 Retreat planning meeting at church after Traditional Service in the pre-school Sunday School room



ANNUAL REPORTS

Chairmen of church organizations:
Annual reports are due in the church
office on December 31. Thank you!!!



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place Sunday, January 31, 2016, 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 31. It is extremely important that all books be audited before the Annual Meeting on January 31, 2016. 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.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

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

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.

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 in advance for your consideration.

ANNUAL REPORT BOOKLETS

After they are printed and assembled, the booklets will be available for pickup at the church. **If you want a copy mailed to you, please call the church office at (440) 238-6697.**

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

Long-Term Care or Homebound Members: Ethyl Jeglie at Elmcroft of Sagamore Hills, Janet Kato at Western Reserve Masonic Community in Medina, Betty Kovach at Parkside Villa, Connie Rebar, Erla Mae Schultz at Medina Village

Church Family: Jim Davis at Southwest General, Linda Elliott, Laurie Meister, Michele Mhlack, Eileen Pincombe, Denzil Richards, Sharon Ritchie, Barb Stayrook, Keith Sullen, Judy Thurn, Leah Tressa Forget, John Wood

Extended Church Family: Ryan Brubeck, Emelyn Carels (sister of Irene Jannsohn), Dylan Churnega (grandson of Ginny Churnega Oerkfitz), Zachary Crouse (grandson of Barbara Morgan), Audrey Curry (mother of Pam Keenen), Rebecca Deeb (Goddaughter of Lora Rung), Angie Dickinson (friend of Lola Millhoane), Donna Fargo (mother of Sally Herzog), Kim Filiatraut (friend of Sarah Keenen), Elizabeth Fulford (friend of Lora Rung), Kay Gritti (friend of Lola Millhoane), Irene Hagemeyer (niece of Betty Craig), Amanda Hover (granddaughter of Betty Kircher), Phyllis Keenen (mother of Bruce), Pat Kolba (mother of Kelly Bickley), Jessica Lane (granddaughter of Len and Bev), Lily (student of Lora Rung), Maggie (friend of the Bickleys), Sue Mason, Pat Masuga (mother of Dan), Dolores Mhlack (mother of Allen) at Southern Hills, Debbie Morey (sister of Steve Herzog), Carrol Riley (father of Marjorie Morrison), Keith Stewart (cousin of Carol Woodward), Trudie Taylor (sister of Karen Morgan), Bob Tomko (cousin of Ed Sobek), Kathleen Wickline (mother of Darla)

