

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
(Congregational)
13740 Pearl Road
Strongsville, Ohio 44136
Rev. Rebecca Stephenson, Pastor



Church Telephone: (440) 238-6697
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Worship at 10:00 A.M. on Sunday

JANUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY – JANUARY 1 – 10:00 A.M.

Liturgist: Bev Wehr

SUNDAY – JANUARY 8 – 10:00 A.M.

The Sacrament of Communion

Liturgist: Kelly Bickley



SUNDAY – JANUARY 15 – 10:00 A.M.

Liturgist: Jim Nicoulin

SUNDAY – JANUARY 22 – 10:00 A.M.

Liturgist: Michele Mihlack

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PERFORMING ARTS SERIES CONCERT

4:00 P.M. in the Sanctuary
Reception after the Concert
Please see page 2 for details.



SUNDAY – JANUARY 29 – 10:00 A.M.

Liturgist: Kenn Oerkfitz

The Traditional Pancake Breakfast will follow worship.



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION
will begin at about 11:45 A.M.

HEADLINE NEWS

'Whiskey Offered to Man Who Brings Biggest Log'

In 1825, the old log house was replaced by a more 'elaborate, framed structure'. At its construction, 2 gallons of whiskey were offered to the man who would bring the first log onto the ground. One prominent citizen carefully prepared his log overnight. Early the next morning when he went for the timber, it was gone. A neighbor, also anxious for the stimulant, had in the night hitched on to the stick and took it to the sight thus winning the coveted prize. In those days, no house could be built unless the workers were provided with whiskey.



200th ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK

Please see Dianne Maringer on Sunday morning to get your copy. Price per book is \$12; mailing the book is an additional \$3 per book.



SIGN-UP CHARTS FOR 2017



The charts for Greeters, Ushers, Altar Flowers, and Coffee Hour are on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Help is greatly needed! Please sign up if you are able to assist. Thank you very much.

ADULT SOCIAL CLUB

Our next event is a potluck and game night at the church on Saturday, January 14, at 6:00 p.m. We will have our January meeting at that time to plan for our trip to the Rocksino in February. All adults are welcome. Please bring a covered dish to share and a game!

ARTS IN STRONGSVILLE

and

STRONGSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

SUNDAY – JANUARY 22, 2017 – 4:00 P.M.

Mary Beth Ions

Violin

and

Jim's Little Band

Freewill Offering ~ Reception after the Concert

All are welcome!

Whether on stage at Severance Hall with the Cleveland Pops Orchestra or in the orchestra pit for touring Broadway shows at Playhouse Square, violinist **Mary Beth Ions** brings her passion for music to these and many other venues in the Greater Cleveland area. She is equally at ease playing country fiddle, Classical concertos, Gershwin, Sinatra, Coldplay, Bruno Mars and Adele! She has provided back-up music for a wide variety of performers such as Rod Stewart, Josh Groban, Barry Manilow, Smokey Robinson and Mannheim Steamroller. Her diverse musical life includes performances at weddings, churches and synagogues, even symphonic concerts of Video Game Music. Mary Beth presents a one-woman violin show where she takes the audience on a musical journey from the Classics to music from the Trans-Siberian Orchestra!

A great believer in the power of music to heal and inspire, Mary Beth is dedicated to the mission of bringing live music up close and personal to those who might not otherwise experience it. She is thrilled to be a member of MetroHealth's Arts in Medicine Department and looks forward to enhancing patient experience with all genres of music.

Jim's **Little Big Band** is an 8-piece combo with vocalist, Cindy Smith, that will perform songs of the American Song Book in a "little big band" format directed by Jim Wonnacott.

LITURGISTS FOR JANUARY 2017

January 1 – Bev Wehr

January 8 – Kelly Bickley

January 15 – Jim Nicoulin

January 22 – Michele Mihlack

January 29 – Kenn Oerkfitz

SAVE THE DATE!!!

Strongsville UCC

SWISS STEAK DINNER

Saturday – February 4, 2017

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

Reservations Only: (216) 598-6198

Adults \$15.00 Ages 6-12 \$6.00 Under 6 Free
Ticket available for purchase on January 8.

Help is needed – especially on Friday for browning meat. The sign-up sheet will be posted on Pilgrim Hall's board. 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 6 to 10 must have a parent helping them.

The Thrift Shop will be open.



STEEPLE LIGHTING

Week of December 4, 2016

In Loving Memory of Jane C. Graves
Roberta and Dan Carpenter

Week of December 11, 2016

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

Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow
Barb Fraunfelder

Week of December 18, 2016

Merry Christmas to My Brother, My Mom and Dad
Love, Holly

*To My Church Family – Merry Christmas to All and a
Blessed New Year*
Margot James

Week of December 25, 2016

In Memory of Baby Clare Molnar
In Memory of My Father, Ray Higham
For My Mother's 88th Birthday on Christmas Eve
Love, Dianne

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 questions, please call the church, (440) 238-6697. Thank you to all who light the steeple.

THE THRIFT SHOP

January is a great time to shop or donate to The Thrift Shop. We have lots of winter items to keep everyone in the family warm. We are also the perfect spot to donate any clothing, décor, or household items that you no longer need. Why put that book back on the shelf? Donate it to the shop. Children's clothing is always appreciated, and it sells. Greeting cards, with or without envelopes, are also needed.

We are open Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and also during church dinners. Hope to see you soon!

“REAP WHAT YOU SOW” RAFFLES

The winners of the two “Reap What You Sow” basket raffles that took place on December 4 were our church member, Irene Joyce, and Kris Heinrich from Rotary. These raffles were the effort of several members as part of the \$3 Project.

IN SYMPATHY

Our love and prayers are extended in sympathy to Karen Morgan and family on the passing of her sister, Trudie Taylor, on December 1, 2016.

The funeral was held on December 17 at Sunset Chapel in North Olmsted.



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, (440) 238-6697. Please provide updates for this list. Thank you.

Long-Term Care or Homebound Members: Eric Brand, Betty Bushea, Margot James, Ethyl Jeglie at Elmcroft of Sagamore Hills, Janet Kato at Western Reserve Masonic Community in Medina, Dolores Mihalack at Southern Hills, Harvey Pincombe, Connie Rebar, Trish Shields, Doris Soucie

Church Family: Shirley Brand, Betty Craig, Steve Herzog, Lori Kovatich, Pam Peacock, Denzil Richards, Melinda Slavik, Leah Tressa Forget, Kyle Woodward

Extended Church Family: Bri Brostek, Thom Cerny, Dylan Churnega, Zachary Crouse, Audrey Curry, Edie Deitcher, Hollie Paine Dodge, Kim Filiautraut, Elizabeth Fulford, Matthew Geletka, Dan Karoly, Sue Mason, Pat Masuga, Debbie Morey, Tonette Putrino, Carrol Riley, Keith Stewart, Frank Toth, Joe Valli

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Once again I have been in search of members using their talents in small ways to help in the operation of the church. I have not been at a loss.

Jim Joyce put a lock on the unisex bathroom [somewhat handicapped] to make it more private.

Jim Dettmer, Lloyd Bridle, and Rachel Zielinski are doing things to make the rental property ready for our new renter,

Ken Mehalko brought the Strongsville Jazz Concert to the church to raise money for the music program. **Many volunteers** from the church and Music Committee helped host a party after the concert.

Other stewardship opportunities:

Fifty-one giving families have made a pledge for the 2017 year. Giving a pledge is helping each giving unit to set their sights on helping the church carry out its ministry to preach the word, care for one another and take Christ to the outside world. **You all still have time to make this commitment between you and the Lord.** Only the financial secretary and you know your commitment.

Volunteer for one of the offices that are currently up for election. In January we will elect new people to the various boards and committees. This is an excellent time to use your talents and interests to help the church. All you need is that interest and the time. For information about the work of the various boards and committees, please see **Sally Herzog, Rachel Zielinski, or Dianne Maringer**, who are on the Nominating Committee.

Hope you each received all you wished for Christmas including the real knowledge of what God was giving us. May you be moved by this gift to continue to give your time, talent and treasures [contributions].

God's continued blessings.

Kenn Oerkfitz



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Concert on January 22, 2017

Bakers, Kitchen Helpers, and Ushers are needed.

Greeters on Sunday Mornings

Please see the signup sheet in Pilgrim Hall

Ushers on Sunday Mornings

Please see the signup sheet in Pilgrim Hall

NEWS FROM OUR FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Lori Kovatich

As of December 26, the **\$3 Projects** have raised \$3,828.00. Thank you to all who have participated, donated and given of your time and talents!

The **Jazz Concert** donations benefiting the Music Ministry are \$1006.00 as of the end of December.

This is a busy time of year as we are working on completing the 2016 financials and opening 2017. The **Financial Reports** for 2016 are being prepared for inclusion in the Annual Report.

Giving Statements will be distributed in January (or early February) for giving through 2016.

Recycling – The River Valley Paper Company picked up:

September – 5,120 lbs. of recycled material at \$20/ton.
Total payment: **\$54.31.**

October – 5,230 lbs. of recycled material at \$20/ton.
Total payment: **\$52.30.**

Just a reminder – we collect newspapers, office and school paper, phonebooks, magazines, catalogs, brown paper bags, mail, hard and soft bound books, and cardboard.

PLEASE collapse boxes before placing them in the recycling bin. The weight of cardboard is LESS than paper. If not collapsed, boxes take up valuable space.

FUN FACTS – Published by River Valley Paper Company (Posted on Pilgrim Hall bulletin board)

- The EPA estimates that 75% of the American waste stream is recyclable, but we only recycle about 30%.
- Recycling 1 ton of paper saves 4,100 kilowatt hrs. of electricity. That's enough to power an average home for 6 months!

WE SAVED:	September 2016 Our 5,120 lbs. of paper saved:	October 2016 Our 5,230 lbs. of paper saved:
Trees	44	45
Pounds of CO2	640	654
Cubic yards of landfill space	8	9
Gallons of water	17,920	18,305
Kilowatts of electricity	10,496	10,722
Homes heated for 6 months	3	3
Pounds of air pollutants	154	157

THANK YOU for RECYCLING!

News from Our Financial Secretary – continued

Below is a monthly report listing the budget income we need to receive from Pledges and Offerings and the amount received from **November 27 through December 25, 2016**. This information also appears on a weekly basis in our worship bulletin.

Offering Needed \$19,500 for 5 Sundays @ \$3,900/week
Offering Received 14,250
 Difference - \$ 5,250



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 for your consideration.

CHURCH CHRISTMAS MAIL BOX



Please remember to check the mail box in the Gathering Area for greetings you received.

Also, please make sure you did not put cards in the box for those who are currently out of town, because the church office cannot mail your personal Christmas greetings. Cards

left at the church after Christmas will be discarded. Thank you.

2017 ANNUAL ALL-FAMILY CHURCH WINTER RETREAT AT PILGRIM HILLS

The Church's Annual All-Family Winter Retreat at Pilgrim Hills will take place on President's Day weekend 2017: February 17, 18 and 19. 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 15—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 15, and the cost is \$10 per meal. Please contact Charles Jannsohn if you have any questions.

Here is the cost breakdown (no change from last year):

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

Important dates to remember:

JANUARY 15, 2017: Reservations close AND MONEY DUE
JANUARY 29, 2017: All special dietary needs must be reported.
FEBRUARY 12, 2017: Retreat planning meeting in the Pre-school Sunday School room at church after the worship service

OHIO CONFERENCE OUTDOOR MINISTRY UPDATE ON PILGRIM AND TEMPLED HILLS

Since contracting with UCCR (United Camps, Conferences & Retreats) to run Pilgrim Hills, the camp went from showing a financial loss for many years to generating a profit. Those profits were then turned into making capital improvements at the camp. Because of the success at Pilgrim Hills, the Board of Directors decided to remove Templed Hills from sabbatical and reopen the camp to be run by UCCR on a trial basis for 2 years. As a result of the decision to contract with UCCR, an earlier motion to put both camps up for sale with the intent of only selling one has been tabled.

The Board of Directors reports they have now spent \$50,000 on capital repairs and improvements at both camps, which was funded through profits and some generous donations. The next major capital improvement in 2017 will be to replace the large deck attached to the dining hall at Pilgrim Hills.

So what does this mean for the Strongsville UCC Annual All-Family Winter Retreat? Well, we know how much

everyone loved Templed Hills, but we are already locked in to a contract with a paid deposit at Pilgrim Hills for 2017. However, that hopefully means we will have the option to return to Templed Hills for the 2018 Retreat (February 16, 17 and 18, 2018). This is definitely something that can be discussed and perhaps voted on by those who attend, or are planning to attend, future retreats. Please see Charles Jannsohn if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.

A big thank you to Barb Fraunfelder for bringing this information to my attention.

ANNUAL REPORTS

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



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.**

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will take place Sunday, January 29, 2017, 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 29, 2017. 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.