

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

January 5, 2014 9:00 A.M.

† Those who are able may stand.

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

† OPENING SONGS

59 *My Life Is In You*

55 *Lord, I Lift Your Name on High*

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant which will never be forgotten.

People: **We come together early in this new year to join in a covenant service. Our purpose is to be reminded of our deep need of God's Grace.**

Leader: All persons must recognize their sinful condition and remember that they cannot experience forgiveness outside the Grace of God.

People: **Then we must acknowledge that our need of His Grace is deeper than forgiveness for wrong acts, but goes to the cleansing work of His Spirit at the very core of our beings.**

All: **So we embrace an opportunity for a fresh experience of His Grace. Let us re-dedicate ourselves to the covenant relationship provided for us through Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

GATHERING SONG

54 *Lord, Be Glorified*

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERING *How Many Kings?* Tiffany Schmidt, Vocalist

BRING GIFTS FORWARD 88 *We Bring the Sacrifice of Praise*

SCRIPTURE LESSON 1 John 1:5 to 2:6 N.T., p. 211

A COVENANT SERVICE

MEDITATION

HYMN 596 *I Surrender All* Verses 1 and 4 only

COMMITMENT

Pastor: As Christ's servants, we must give up control of ourselves to Christ. Do not offer your body to sin, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life to be instruments of righteousness, because you are under Grace."

All: We are yours, Lord. We dedicate ourselves to your service.

Pastor: In giving ourselves to the Lord, we affirm that we will heartily embrace what he has appointed us to do, both corporately and personally. Let him appoint you to your work. Christ has many services to be done; some are more easy and honorable, others more difficult and menial. Some are suitable to our inclinations and interest; others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves, as when he requires us to feed and clothe ourselves. Indeed, there are some spiritual duties that are more pleasing than others; as to rejoice in the Lord, to be a blessing and praising God. These are the sweet works of a Christian. But then there are other works, where to please Christ, we must deny ourselves. Find what Christ expects of you and then give yourselves totally to his will, without bargaining and without reservation.

All: Make us what you will, Lord, and send us where we are to go. Let us be vessels of silver or gold, or vessels of wood or stone; as long as we are vessels of honor, we are content. If we are not the head, or the eye, or the ear, one of the nobler and more honorable instruments, then let us be the hands, or the feet, as one of the lowest and least esteemed of all the servants of our Lord.

Leader: Lord, place us in your kingdom in the roles you have designed for us.

People: Lord, make all of us your servants.

Leader: In exalted places, or humble places.

People: Let us be full; let us be empty.

Leader: Let us have all things; let us have nothing.

People: We freely and gladly embrace our places in your kingdom.

COVENANT REQUIREMENTS

Pastor: Beloved, the commitment to Christ we have just expressed is the essence of discipleship. Only when we have laid all our hopes on Christ, giving ourselves freely to the merits of his righteousness—only then are we truly Christians. His people are a willing people. He will be our all in all, or he will be nothing.

HYMN 583

You Are My All in All

THE COVENANT

Leader: And now let us confirm our commitment by a solemn covenant to him. What would it take for us to make a covenant with God? What would it mean for us to commit ourselves to His plan for our lives in 2014?

First, it would mean the forgiveness of our sins and the constant realization of our continual need for the Grace of God in our lives.

Second, it would mean for us to resolve in our own lives to live as disciples of our Lord, forgoing our own selfish motives and living in our world as servants to others in the name of God.

Finally, it would mean not trusting in our own strength and abilities, but anchoring in the source of our strength and abilities; God himself. God is here in a very real way. His presence is here to give evidence of His promises to us.

Pastor: Will you trust him? If you are willing to trust Him, then join with your brothers and sisters in this holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

All are welcome to come forward to partake of the Lord's Supper, or Pastor Becky will come to you, if you wish.

† CLOSING SONGS

*57 Make Us One
66 Rise Up and Praise Him
69 Shine, Jesus, Shine*

BENEDICTION

All: And now may the covenant we have made on earth be sealed in heaven. And may God enable us to live faithfully before him. The Peace of Christ be with us all. Amen.

Serving Today

Music Director / Drums
Organist / Pianist
Bass Guitar
Guitar
Song Leader
Liturgist
Sound System
Graphics Operation
Coffee Hour

Andrew Purdum
Susan Stevenson Tressa
Jack Stephenson
Sean Patrick
Tiffany Schmidt
Rachel Zielinski
Doug Thorn
Rosemary Bechtel
Barb Fraunfelder