

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
Blended Worship 11:15 A.M. Sunday

MARCH 2016 NEWSLETTER

WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

MARCH 6

*Fourth Sunday in Lent
One Great Hour of Sharing Offering*

Scriptures: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Sermon:
Parable of the Lost Son

LILY ORDER DEADLINE

Lenten Study 5pm in Pilgrim Hall

TRADITIONAL 9:45 A.M. Communion

Liturgist:
Pam Keenen

Morning Announcements:
Kim McKenzie

Greeter:
Linda Plain

BLENDED 11:15 A.M. Communion

Liturgist:
Lora Rung

Morning Announcements:
Kim McKenzie

Graphics Operation:
Adria Bond

MARCH 13

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Scriptures:
Isaiah 43:16-21

Sermon:
Something New

Lenten Study 5pm in Pilgrim Hall

TRADITIONAL 9:45 A.M.

Liturgist:
Ted Bickley

Morning Announcements:
Irene Joyce

Greeters:
The Bickley Family

BLENDED 11:15 A.M. Communion

Liturgist:
Bill Schneider

Morning Announcements:
Irene Joyce

Graphics Operation:
Lori Kovatich

MARCH 20

Palm Sunday

Scriptures: Luke 19:28-40

Sermon: *The Stones Will Sing*

Lenten Study 5pm in Pilgrim Hall

TRADITIONAL 9:45 A.M.

Liturgist: Jim Studer

Morning Announcements:
Natalie Daniels

Greeter: Roy Merkle

Coffee Hour:
Cathy Hawk, Kris Fischer

BLENDED 11:15 A.M. Communion

Liturgist: Dan Masuga

Morning Announcements:
Natalie Daniels

Graphics Operation:
Michele Mhlack

MARCH 24

Maundy Thursday

EVENING WORSHIP AT 7:30 P.M. IN PILGRIM HALL with Communion

Greeter: Bev Wehr

MARCH 20

Good Friday

TENEBRAE SERVICE AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE SANCTUARY

Greeter: Gina Cathcart

**MARCH 27
EASTER SUNDAY**

Scriptures:
John 20:1-10 and John 20:11-18

Sermon: *He Has Risen!*

SUNRISE 7:00 A.M.

Liturgist:
Jack Stephenson

Morning Announcements:
Denise Bell

Greeter:
Rosemary Bechtel

BLENDED 9:45 A.M.

Liturgist: Jim Nicoulin

Morning Announcements:
Denise Bell

Graphics Operation: Adria Bond

Greeter:
Peg Weakley

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

This past weekend I had the pleasure of attending the family retreat at Pilgrim Hills. There were 60 of us who gathered together for a weekend of fellowship and fun. During the weekend I witnessed the changes that seem to be happening among us. This weekend, unlike others in the past, there seemed to be an increasing number of very young children. I saw that some of the people who were once the children of the church returned to the retreat with families of their own. The presence of a growing number of very young children has renewed my belief that the church is going to continue for many years.

Camping ministry has long been part of our church's experience. Growing up, I often attended church camp; and when my children became old enough, I sent them to camp for a couple weeks each summer. At first they seemed unwilling to go to camp. They pouted and cried at being left at the camp; but when I came to pick them up at the end of camp, they didn't want to come home. Something special happened there.

When I was a young pastor I would volunteer to be the director of the entire camp for several weeks each summer. I would invite (sometimes coerce) other adults to volunteer as counselors for the weeks I was the director. On every occasion those counselors had such a moving experience that it became a spiritual high mark of their lives. Even today many reminisce about their camp days. I also know that many children first found their way to God in the camp setting. Also, almost all the pastors will tell you that going to camp helped lead them into pastoral ministry. The camping experience was and is a key factor in our faith development.

This year we will be increasing our participation with the church camp. Not only will we have the Family Camp, but will also host a Men's Retreat weekend, Women's Retreat weekend, Couples Retreat weekend, and hopefully a Youth Retreat weekend. I believe we will see the continued development of Christ's disciples among those who participate in in these weekends.

I would like to thank all the leaders who put the family retreat together. Many thanks to Charles, Aimée, Ingrid and Irene for all the work they did. Thanks to everyone

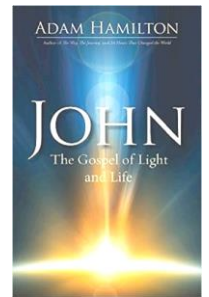
who went the extra mile to make this event special. Let's do it again next year!

If you haven't signed up for the future retreats, please consider doing so soon. You too may find a faith experience that changes your life.

Pastor Becky

LENTEN STUDY

Pastor Becky continues to lead a Lenten study on Adam Hamilton's book, John – The Gospel of Light and Life. Encounter the Gospel of John and experience a season of spiritual growth and life-changing renewal, while exploring the major themes of the Gospel. Along with Hamilton's comments, the book includes the entire text of the Gospel of John, divided into six parts for ease of reading and study. **Two study times are offered: Sunday evening at 5:00 p.m.** on March 6, 13 and 20, April 3; and **Tuesday daytime at 12:00 noon** on March 1, 8, 15 and 22, April 5. Both studies include soup and sandwich. Donations of side dishes, salads or desserts are welcome. All are invited to attend, even if you did not attend previous sessions.



TENT REVIVAL MEETING



All who want to help with the Revival will meet Wednesday, March 2, at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome!

YARD SALE MEETING

An initial meeting of all interested in the Yard Sale will take place Wednesday, March 9, at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome.



Strongsville UCC

ROAST PORK, KIELBASA & SAUERKRAUT DINNER

Saturday – March 5, 2016

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

Reservations Only: (216) 598-6198

Adults - \$10 Ages 6-12 - \$5 Under 6 – Free

Help is needed. The signup sheet is on Pilgrim Hall's bulletin 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 7:15 p.m. Children who are 6 to 10 years old must have a parent helping them. Adult help is needed.

The Thrift Shop will be open during the dinner.

OFFICIAL BOARD NEWS

During our meeting on Tuesday, February 23, we reviewed the calendar. During this review we have opened any board, committee or team to use the parking lot as a fundraiser during the City's major events. The Strongsville City Club will have their 30th annual Rib Burn-off on June 16, 17 and 18. The Strongsville Chamber of Commerce will host the annual Homecoming on July 13, 14, 15 and 16. Please notify me if your group is interested in any of the above dates. We will finalize the conditions of this fundraiser at the next Official Board meeting on Tuesday, March 29.

The Official Board has formed a Search Committee to begin the process of hiring an Associate Pastor. Thank you those that have volunteered to serve on this committee as this is a new position within the church.

The profit from the Swiss Steak Dinner on February 6 was \$2,293.63. Thank you again to all for their support.

I hope to see all you at the Pork Roast Dinner on March 5!

Kim McKenzie, Moderator
216-398-1462 or 216-401-8738
davekimmckenzie@cox.net

DIACONATE NEWS

Wing Night is back! Mark your calendars for Friday, May 6, from 6-9 p.m. Tickets for this Diaconate fundraiser will be \$20 and include beverages and all-you-can-eat buffet. There will be side boards and a basket raffle. Tickets will go on sale starting April 3.



Please consider donating a basket of new items that is theme-based. If you donate a basket, please write what the contents are and the approximate value of the basket. Baskets should be brought to the church and given to Cheryl Sobek or any Diaconate member.

**THE STRONGSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CONCERT SERIES**

Sunday – March 13, 2016 – 4:00 P.M.

featuring the music of

**The Venner Clarinet Choir
and**

**Rebecca Konow, Cellist
Joshua Konow, Pianist**

Freewill Offering

All are welcome!



**JOIN THE CHANCEL CHOIR
FOR THE EASTER SEASON!**

Rehearsals are Thursdays from 8-9:30 p.m. Come celebrate the joy of Easter with friends through great choral music!

Not a strong note reader? That's ok! Chancel Choir director Joshua Konow would be happy to work with you at the end of each rehearsal with any questions that you have. Learn to read notes, musical symbols and more!

On Palm Sunday and Easter, the Chancel Choir will be joined by a brass quartet and timpani for an even more festive atmosphere. Be a part of these special services! New singers are welcomed at any time.

See you there!

♪ ♪ **CHURCH MUSIC REHEARSALS** ♪ ♪

Wednesday Evening

Children's Choir – 7:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Praise Band - 8:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Thursday Evening

Children's Instrumental - 7:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Bell Choir - 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Chancel Choir - 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

If you'd like to be part of our church Music Ministry or for more information, please contact:
Elena Taylor about Praise Band and Children's Music
Barb Fraunfelder about Bell Choir
Joshua Konow about Chancel Choir

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Due to unforeseen circumstances, there will be **NO** sale of Easter candy this year.

NEWS FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY
Barb Fraunfelder

This is a monthly report, listing the budget income we need to receive from Pledges and Offerings and the amount received **from January 24 through February 14, 2016**. This information also appears on a weekly basis in our worship bulletin.

Offering Needed (for 4 Sundays): \$14,180

Weekly amount was \$3,190 for January. With the approval of the 2016 budget, the amount for February and ongoing is \$3,900 per week.

Offering received January 24 through February 14:

Traditional \$9,473
 Blended \$1,067

Total Offering \$10,540

Difference – \$3,640

GIVING STATEMENTS

Giving Statements for the year 2015 have been distributed or mailed. If you did not receive a statement and wish to have one, please contact me.

GIVING

As you may know, in providing your contribution to the church you may place it in an envelope in the church offering plate or mail in your payment. Or you may give electronically through your bank or through our new eOffering.

Note: you may access the eOffering through our website: strongsvilleucc.com. Look for the box that says *DONATE NOW with myeOffering*.

Also, if you are preparing a check for your giving, you may write one check to cover several weeks and place it in one offering envelope. All envelopes do not need to be turned in. The giving is posted with the Sunday's date it is received.

If you are giving to more than Pledges / Offerings – Ministries and Operations, you may write one check to include other types of giving, e.g., OCWM. However, if possible, please continue to give separately for the Royalton Road Property pledges (cash or check).

If the donation is associated with a form that goes to our church secretary, e.g., steeple lighting, altar flowers, lilies, please continue to include a separate check or cash with your form. That is processed separately.

For questions or concerns, please contact me - by phone 440-331-3673 or email – sucfinancialsecretary@gmail.com

RECYCLING

The River Valley Paper Company picked up—

November – 5,370 lbs. of recycled material at \$20 - \$25 per ton for a total payment of **\$58.18**

December – 8,100 lbs. of recycled material at \$15 per ton for a total payment of **\$26.86**

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)

	NOVEMBER 2015 Our 5,370 lbs. of recycled paper saved:	DECEMBER 2015 Our 8,100 lbs. of recycled paper saved:
WE SAVED:		
Trees	45.65	30.43
Pounds of CO2	671.25	447.50
Cubic yards of landfill space	8.86	5.91
Gallons of water	18,795	12,530
Kilowatts of electricity	11,008.5	7,339
Homes heated for 6 months	2.69	1.79
Pounds of air pollutants	161.10	107.40

THANK YOU for RECYCLING!!!

THE THRIFT SHOP

The Thrift Shop is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year with 35 cent sales. Check the church website, or even better, be a part of the Thrift Shop emails to learn what the sales will be each week. If you are not part of our email list, please send a request to

uccthriftshop@yahoo.com

and you will be added.

March is the time to shop for Easter décor, cards, and clothing besides our usual items for sale. Please remember tax receipts are available in the shop for donations. We are open Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will also be open during the Roast Pork Dinner.

**2016 RECAP OF THE
36TH ANNUAL ALL-FAMILY WINTER RETREAT
AT PILGRIM HILLS**

The church held its annual All-Family Winter Retreat at Pilgrim Hills on President's Day Weekend (February 12 – February 14). This was our 3rd year at Pilgrim Hills after spending the previous 33 years at Temple Hills. There were 59 total attendees for the weekend with 2 extra Saturday-only guests.

The weekend started off with a mixer game on Friday night called "Who Dis?" that was won by past-Retreat MVP Sarah Herzog. On Saturday, the temperatures dipped to near zero and our morning hike crew was reduced to just 4 people: Greg Dickson, Jack Stephenson, Sandy O'Shea and Devin Thorn. What a brave group they were! Despite the cold, we had our normal Saturday fun time with candy guessing (final numbers off due to Pastor Becky), group games, late-night chili dogs and, of course, everyone's favorite: CRAZY BINGO! Our group games included a Disney Movie Challenge (won by Isabella Jannsohn on a tie-breaker), "What the Loaf?" (won by Rachel Pogozelski) and another version (our third) of The Best Game, in which we divided into 7 different teams and tried to figure out who was the best at various activities and trivia questions. The winning team included Ingrid Dickson, Greg Dickson, Irene "Oma" Jannsohn, Maggie Fraley, Isabella Jannsohn and Isabella's friend Mariah Thompson. The Best Game was a big hit again, so if you were ever wondering who in the church is the best jumper, balloon blower or fastest pickle eater, you will have to attend the Retreat!

Sunday started off with a Sunrise Service led by Aimée Jannsohn, in front of the fire with 12 present for the theme, "He Leadeth Me." Our regular Sunday Service had the theme "For God So Loved the World" and was led by Irene Joyce with help from Jack Stephenson (on accordion), Pastor Becky (on message) and Erik, Evan and Elena Joyce. We also had communion. We wrapped things up after lunch (no ham loaf) and departed around 2 p.m. A good time was had by all!

We'd like to give extra thanks to our special Retreat contributors and helpers: Irene Jannsohn, Irene Joyce, Ingrid Dickson, Greg Dickson, Dale Hawk, Cathy Hawk, Pastor Becky, Jack Stephenson, Rachel Zielinski, Karen Morgan and Sally Herzog.

The Annual All-Family Winter Retreat takes place the same weekend every year—President's Day weekend. If you've ever considered attending, we encourage you to join us next year for a fun-filled, relaxing weekend. All ages welcome.



ALTAR FLOWERS



You may provide flowers on any Sunday you wish because multiple vases are accepted on Sunday mornings. As of this printing, the following are dates when vases are still needed in order to have two vases on the altar for Sunday worship:

- April 3 – 1 vase
- April 10 – 1 vase
- April 17- 1 vase
- May 1 – 1 vase
- June 5 – 2 vases
- June 12 – 1 vase
- July 3 – 1 vase
- July 10 – 2 vases
- July 17 – 1 vase
- July 24 – 1 vase
- August 7 – 1 vase
- August 28 – 2 vases
- September 4 – 2 vases
- September 11 – 1 vase
- September 18 – 2 vases
- September 25 – 1 vase
- October 2 – 2 vases
- October 23 – 2 vases
- October 30 – 2 vases
- November 6 – 1 vase
- November 20 – 2 vases
- November 27 – 2 vases
- December 4 – 1 vase
- December 11 – 2 vases

The signup chart for altar flowers is on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Below the chart are forms and envelopes for submitting your bulletin information and payment to the church office.

Please note: If you only attend the 9:45 a.m. service, you are welcome to take your flowers after that service. The 11:15 Blended Service is casual, and it is okay if flowers are not on the altar.

WEDNESDAY FREE LUNCH PROGRAM



The program continues in operation every Wednesday at our church! All are welcome to attend this free lunch. Volunteers who prepare meals are asked to be at the church no later than 9:00 a.m.

Servers can arrive at 10:00 a.m. Doors open at 11:30 a.m., and lunch is served from 11:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Volunteers are always appreciated. Please talk with Pastor Becky if you would like to help.

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. Please inform the church of updates to this list.

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: Betty Craig, Eileen Pincombe, Denzil Richards, Sharon Ritchie, Barb Stayrook, Keith Sullen, Leah Tressa Forget

Extended Church Family: Elizabeth Arendt (granddaughter of Bev Wehr), 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), Phillis Kurz (mother of Karen Morgan), Lily (student of Lora Rung), Jessica Lane (granddaughter of Len and Bev), Maggie (friend of the Bickleys), Dana Moran (sister of Ginny Dangelo), Sue Mason, Pat Masuga (mother of Dan), Dolores Mihlack (mother of Allen) at Southern Hills, Debbie Morey (sister of Steve Herzog), Dana Moran (sister of Ginny Dangelo), Carrol Riley (father of Marjorie Morrison), Ralph Sitko (friend of Dorothy Ritchie), Keith Stewart (cousin of Carol Woodward), Trudie Taylor (sister of Karen Morgan), Bob Tomko (cousin of Ed Sobek), Kathleen Wickline (mother of Darla)



COUPLES RETREAT

This September, couples of the congregation are invited to participate in an overnight Couples Retreat at Pilgrim Hills Camp. The weekend is still to be determined, but it will be only one night and will include a couple meals!

We look forward to growing together as couples, learning from one another, and enjoying fellowship with other couples. ALL couples are invited. Stay tuned for details from Cathy Hawk and Kelly Bickley, retreat organizers!



STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

Dear Church Family,

This year's campaign wrapped up on February 6. Unfortunately, the committee did not meet its goal of 125 pledges. However, we did receive 89 (as of the last count), which exceeds last year, which was 64. The committee thanks all those who pledged, those who helped put this year's campaign together, as well as those who stopped by and asked questions.

If you have not pledged, the committee still invites you to think about your giving for 2016. If you have any questions about Stewardship or ways to give, please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you.

The Stewardship Committee

200TH ANNIVERSARY COOKBOOK

As part of our church's 200th anniversary in 2017, Strongsville UCC will be printing a new, one-of-a-kind . . . cookbook! We would like to include old recipes passed down through generations from your families and friends. Also we want any new recipes you are currently loving!



Please submit all recipes in an envelope with your name and phone number to Marty Winch, Dianne Maringer, or place under the church office door. Thank you.

TICKETS TO PLAYHOUSE SQUARE



I have tickets available for *Phantom of The Opera* at Playhouse Square on Sunday, July 10, for the 1:00 p.m. Matinee. I sell the tickets for Rotary and receive no compensation,

because I like to encourage art in its many forms. The tickets are for seats on the Main Floor in Dress Circle for \$100.50 each or in the Mezzanine at \$87.50. Indoor parking is \$12 extra per car. You have to provide your own transportation.

Linda Plain

COFFEE HOUR

Volunteers are needed for Coffee Hour on Sunday mornings. If serving at Coffee Hour is new for you, the Diaconate will train you for the task! The signup sheet is on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Your help will be greatly appreciated!



STEEPLE LIGHTING

Week of February 14, 2016

*Happy Birthday to Pam Craig on February 22
With love, Mom*

*Thank You to All—
especially Cathy Hawk and Steve Herzog—
who worked and made the
Swiss Steak Dinner a Success
Betty Craig*

Week of February 28, 2016

*Happy Birthday “15th” Birthday to Larry Wentz on
February 29 and
Happy Birthday to Mikey Craig on March 2
With love, Mom and Grammy*

*Thank you to all for the cards and prayers.
I hope to be back soon.
Betty Craig*

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.



THANK YOU

*I would like to thank all those who helped bake as well as support me with my bake sale on February 6. I exceeded my goal so I will be able to begin my project later this Spring. Thank you again for all the support.
Gina Gigliotti*

We want to express our sincere gratitude for the lovely funeral service from Pastor Becky for our Dad, Jack Wood. Her words and prayers were a comfort at a most difficult time, and the memories and stories shared by friends and family were uplifting.

*And a huge thank you to the ladies for the wonderful lunch. It was such a comfort to know we all had a place to come and share food and more memories of Dad—so kind of you and so appreciated.
Ken Wood, Jack Wood, Kathy Smith*



SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY SOUP DRIVE and FOOD BANK TOUR

Thank you from the Kids for Christ Club for your generous soup donations this month!!! We were able to deliver **190** cans of soup to the Food Bank on Ash Wednesday and feed many families in our community.

That evening, Kelly Kling (Food Bank manager) gave some of the kids of our congregation a tour and explained to them what happens with Penny Sunday money, as well as the food we donate. It was a great experience for the kids, one we hope to repeat in the upcoming months. So if you missed it, don't worry!

Our next drive for the Food Bank will be a Peanut Butter and Jelly drive, as Kelly says that is what they most often are in need of this time of year. Get ready to donate some PB&J! Stay tuned for details.

