

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

MAY 2013 NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Perhaps you have heard about the Visioning Retreat that happened this past month. On two different days, some 35 persons gathered together to look at the Vision, Mission, and Goals for our church. Together we prayed and sang and brainstormed what the future might hold in store for our church family here in Strongsville. I am sure you have already read the proposed new Vision statement and the tweaked Mission statement. Together these two statements give us the direction we are to go in order to move forward faithfully in what we believe God would have us do and be in the community. I am so thankful for all the hard work everyone did to craft these two important statements. In the near future we will come together for a special meeting to review and ratify these statements.

With the statements of Vision and Mission also comes the ability to set Goals for the near future of the church. Goals are the things we hope to accomplish that will help us fulfill our mission and lead us toward God's vision. Goals are measurable and attainable. They are specific and timely. Goals also require us to work together to achieve the task set before us. Our Goals are designated to focus us on three components of church growth. The first is to reach out to new or unchurched persons in the community who are not associated with a church. Statistics indicate that 1 in every 3 people in Strongsville have no church affiliation. We will be developing an advertising strategy to help people know who we are and that they are welcome here. Secondly we are focusing on exciting and dynamic worship that holds to both a traditional style, while introducing alternative worship services to reach those seeking a more contemporary style. And thirdly we will continue to develop new programs that develop our relationships as a church family.

During the retreat many ideas came forward: making the buildings more user friendly for those with disabilities, expanding our parking lot, air conditioning Pilgrim Hall, and others. Ideas around continuing the contemporary evening services that began during Lent, as well as having outside worship services, were also expressed. There were also ideas about many new fellowship programs like a women's evening group, a men's evening group, sports outings, soup lunches and others. Some ideas came forward about service opportunities like helping people in the community with

yard work and offering ESL (English as a second language) / GED classes. It was truly inspirational to see all the new ideas coming forward. The Spirit was working.

Even though we accomplished a lot, there remains much to do. We should now begin the task of refining these goals and putting them into action. Having goals are worthless if we don't work together to achieve them. Being a family in Christ includes not only caring for those in the family but also reaching out to include others in the family. A family is a dynamic growing thing, and Christ Jesus commanded us to keep the family growing. *Go to all the world, baptize them, and teach them all I have commanded* is what Jesus told us all before he ascended to heaven. Let us work together to do His will and grow the Kingdom of God.

Pastor Becky

UPDATE ON OUR NEW PROPERTY

Our new church property just west of the church at 19192 Royalton Road was closed on, and we now own it. Two promissory notes were signed and executed. We plan to have the house up for rent by June 2013. To date we have \$45,971 in pledges for our "Strive for Five" campaign.

If you would like to make a pledge but have not yet done so, "Strive for Five" pledge cards are on the greeters' table in the Gathering Area; or call the church office, (440) 238-6697, and a pledge card will be mailed to you.

The Board of Trustees thanks all who have pledged and donated for the new property.



WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY – MAY 5, 2013 – 10:00 A.M.

New members will be received in our church family, and we will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion.

Sermon: "Made Whole"

Scriptures: John 5:1-9

Liturgist: Tom Gaumer

Acolytes: Alex Metivier and Aylah Purdum

Greeter: Linda Plain

Nursery: Sharon Heinrich

Coffee Hour: Doug Thorn

Deadline for Plant Orders

SUNDAY – MAY 12, 2013 – 10:00 A.M.

Mother's Day

Sermon: "Broken Chains"

Scriptures: Acts 16:16-34

Liturgist: Bruce Keenen

Acolytes: Michael Fischer and Elizabeth Metivier

Greeter: Roy Merkle

Nursery: Rachel Zielinski

Coffee Hour: Gina Cathcart

PENTECOST SUNDAY – MAY 19, 2013 – 10:00 A.M.

Sermon: "By the Power of the Spirit"

Scriptures: Acts 2:1-21

Liturgist: Barb Fraunfelder

Acolytes: Jenna Miller and Jordyn Miller

Greeters: Dave and Kim McKenzie

Nursery: Cathy Hawk

Coffee Hour: Marty Winch

Strengthen the Church Offering will be received.

*Strongsville United **METHODIST** Church will use our Pilgrim Hall from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for their Confirmation Breakfast.*

SUNDAY – MAY 26, 2013 – 10:00 A.M.

Sermon: "Justified by Faith"

Scriptures: Romans 5:1-11

Liturgist: Rich Tressa

Acolytes: Lauren Knotts and Lisa Pogozelski

Greeter: Sharon Heinrich

Nursery: Sarah Hawk

Coffee Hour: Rachel Zielinski

*Deadline for Graduates Information and
Deadline for Submitting Sunday School
Scholarship Applications*

From the Organ Restoration Committee

BOX LUNCH AUCTION

A Fundraiser for the Organ Restoration Fund
Sunday – May 5, 2013 – 11:30 A.M.



Box Luncheons are a fun auction event everyone can enjoy! You get to be creative making up box lunches and donating them to be auctioned off, and then bidding to win the meals others have made is just as fun! If you're donating a box lunch, you bring it in that Sunday morning. After church, the box lunch treasures are displayed for everyone to see and choose their favorites. Once the auction starts, the auctioneer reads the description of the box lunch (that you have written and attached to your box lunch) which tells just what's in the delicious meal you've created, and your name. As the bidding increases, so does the fun and fellowship, and all funds raised will go to the Organ Restoration Fund. Once you win a box luncheon during the auction, you can eat it there, or take it home for later if you prefer. Some box lunch ideas that we've all enjoyed in the past include:

- A simple kids' meal of a sandwich, fruit, a juice box, and maybe a small toy or two
- Sub sandwich and chips, homemade tuna salad, ham salad
- Dinners of your favorite homemade dish, and maybe side dishes for a heat-and-eat meal at home
- Fun movie night meals with pop, movie tickets and some popcorn
- Baskets with goodies, sweets, or fruits, bottle of wine
- Homemade soup
- Cakes and pies always keep the auction lively!
- New and creative box lunch ideas are always enjoyable – be the first to create something different!

Come to enjoy the auction, win some wonderful food, and have a great time together, too!

Hope you get "Laury's box" and not "Ado Annie's"! ☺

ORC PANCAKE BREAKFAST ON APRIL 21



The Organ Restoration Committee extends a very heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended, supported and helped with the Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, April 21. The fundraiser generated a net profit of \$1,245. Congratulations to our raffle winners—Vicky Masuga, who won the iPod Nano and to LaVerne Whitaker, who won the \$100 in ORC gift cards.

Thanks again to everyone for their support!

SPRING PLANT SALE

It's not too late to order your flowers—the **deadline is Sunday, May 5!** Maria Gardens will again be our supplier. This fundraiser is sponsored by the Official Board and the funds support many of the larger expenses of the church.



The following flats will be available – Begonias, Impatiens, Marigolds (short) and Petunias. We will also have 10" hanging baskets – Begonias, Impatiens, Fuchsias, Gerber Daisies, Pansy/Viola and Boston Ferns. This year we will also have Geraniums in hanging baskets. There will be 4" pots of Geraniums (zonal geraniums, slightly larger than our previous seeded geraniums) and 5" pots of New Guinea Impatiens and Gerber Daisies.

Flat of 20 plants – \$7.75 each
Hanging Baskets – \$13.50 each
4" Pots – individual pots, \$3.00 each
5" Pots – individual pots, \$4.50 each

The deadline to order is Sunday, May 5, 2013. Please call the church for an order form, if you do not have one, (440) 238-6697.

Please pick up your plants on Friday, May 17, between 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. at the church. The plants will be delivered to the church and need to be picked up by the person placing the order or a designated person. We do not have storage or security to keep the plants overnight, so please remember to pick up your plants or work out alternate plans.

If you have questions about your order or the pickup, please contact Barb Fraunfelder at (440) 331-3673.

THANK YOU for your support!

FLOWER PLANTING and OUTDOOR CLEANUP on our church grounds



We will plant flowers and clean up our church grounds on **Saturday, May 18, at 9:00 a.m.** at the church. A hot dog cookout luncheon will follow the planting.

For additional information, please see Rachel Zielinski (or call her cell: 440-864-3209), or see Jim Heinrich.

Please bring your work gloves, gardening tools, trowels, sunscreen, and sun hat. Please sign up on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Meeting – Women's Fellowship will meet Wednesday, May 1, at 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor. Elizabeth Yasaki will present a program on tatting, beading or spinning. After our meeting we will fill tote bags for Brookside.

Devotions will be given by Barb Fraunfelder, and the hostess will be Betty Bushea. Please bring your own lunch; dessert, coffee and tea will be furnished. All ladies are welcome!

Candy Sale – Women's Fellowship thanks everyone who supported their Candy Sale. Their profit was \$398.01. Thanks again!

CELEBRATE STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH! "INVEST IN THE VISION"

Through this special offering of the UCC, *visions and dreams* can become reality. On **Pentecost Sunday, May 19** – known as "The Birthday of the Christian Church" – the special offering called "**Strengthen the Church**" will be received. Please bring or send in the enclosed offering envelope to help celebrate this festival Sunday.

Our gifts help plant new UCC churches in the U.S., help existing congregations and pastors implement new ideas for local ministry, and enable more people to hear the good news that "God is Still Speaking!" "Stillspeaking" is the shorter form of "God is still speaking," a campaign by the United Church of Christ to simply remind us that God has a lot more to say.

The Mission and Outreach Committee suggests that we all wear something **RED on Sunday, May 19**. Red is the symbol for the tongues of fire which rested on the heads of the disciples on the first Pentecost, baptizing them with the Holy Spirit, and giving them power to begin their ministry of establishing small conclaves of people who formed the first Christian congregations in Europe and the Middle East.

"I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams...."

Acts 2:17



THE THRIFT SHOP

Spring and summer fashions and merchandise are now available in the Thrift Shop. It's not too soon to find a spring jacket or coat, sweater or slacks. Need some summer reading material? We have a nice selection of books and magazines. We also have a great selection of craft items. Need some greeting cards or note cards? Shop with us first before paying huge prices elsewhere.

Thanks to all who supported The Thrift Shop raffle, that took place on Palm Sunday. Our congratulations to Thrift Shop customer, Kim Broz Klotzsche, who won the Vera Bradley purse.

Watch the newsletter for the start of our summer hours. They will begin soon.

Stop in the shop Thursdays between 10 and 4 for great bargains and a unique shopping experience.

Please remember the Thrift Shop when cleaning your closets this spring. Tax receipts are always available.

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, Nadine Burnand, Edith Graves at Century Oak Care Center, Debbie Krause, Louetha Rieth at Sunrise Assisted Living of Dresher in PA, Erla Mae Schultz

Church Family: Shirley Brand, Lloyd Bridle, Nancy Cochran, Pam Keenen, Betty Kovach at Parkside Villa, Dianne Maringer, Elizabeth Snook at Southwest General, Ann Sullen

Extended Church Family: Betty Berk (mother of Mary Mortus), Zachary Crouse (grandson of Barbara Morgan), Audrey and Gene Curry (parents of Pam Keenen), 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), Shirley Gerecke (friend of Frank and Pat Jefferis), Timothy Green (son-in-law of Judy Carte), Janine Kaltenstein (cousin of Vicky Masuga), Phyllis Keenen (mother of Bruce), Erik Kratky (friend of Sarah Hawk), Cyrila Kribel (friend of Betty Craig), Rick Pfuhl (former custodian of Strongsville UCC), James Smith (brother of Katie Renfro), Barbara Sommers (mother of Sheri Martin), Sarah Spiegler (niece of Betty Craig), Trudie Taylor (sister of Karen Morgan), Mike Thutt (friend of Louie Gigliotti), Bob Tomko (cousin of Ed Sobek), Bob Wentz (father of Larry), Sue Zacharis (friend of Holly Manley Elkins)

Please call the church with updates, 440-238-6697.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Attention Graduating Seniors! The Sunday School has a scholarship available to Sunday School alumni who are graduating from high school this year. This is a service scholarship, not based on financial need or academic merit, but participation in the Sunday School and church activities. Please pick up an application from the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall. Deadline for submission is Sunday, May 26. Scholarships will be awarded on Sunday, June 9, when graduates within the church will be recognized.

Summer Sunday School begins June 2. Parents, Grandparents, Uncles, Aunts: Please sign up to teach one Sunday during the months of June, July, and August. The signup sheet will be posted on Pilgrim Hall's bulletin board. No experience is necessary, and all materials will be provided. See Sunday School Superintendent Irene Joyce if you have questions.

The Sunday School will have a Bake Sale at the Garage Sale on June 8. Donations are needed (and very much appreciated)! The Bake Sale is the Sunday School's main fundraiser of the year, and money raised is used to support children's education, programming, and scholarships. Please bring your bakery on Friday evening, June 7, or before 9:00 a.m. on Garage Sale Day, June 8.



Sunday School Calendar

May 12 – Mother's Day

June 2 – Summer Sunday School begins.

June 8 – Bake Sale for Sunday School at the Garage Sale. Please bring your donations of baked goods on Friday evening or on Saturday before 9:00 A.M.

June 9 – Graduates' Recognition, when Sunday School Scholarship will be awarded

June 16– Father's Day

June 23 – Outdoor Worship and Church Picnic



With Sympathy

Our love and prayers are extended in sympathy to the Hudecek family on the passing of Ken on April 3, 2013. A memorial service was held at our church on April 14.

Our condolences also to Nancy Taylor on the passing of her sister on April 6, 2013.

STEEPLE LIGHTING

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.



Week of March 31, 2013

Happy Birthday to Rob Wentz on Monday, April 1
With love, Gram

In Remembrance of My Father, Nicholas Paul's, Birthday
Gary Paul

In Loving Memory of Alfred R. Graves
Edith Graves

In Loving Memory of Our Parents—
Elsie Ruman, Albert Ruman, and Robert Heinrich
Jim and Sharon

In Appreciation of Katie Renfro
for all her work, creativity, and leadership for our banner
All of Us on the Forgiven Team

In Loving Memory of Our Father and Grandfather,
Richard Saylor
The McKenzie and Fischer Family

Week of April 14, 2013

In Loving Memory of My Buddy, Jean Sobek
Miss ya, Lola

Thank you to all who light our steeple!

STRONGSVILLE FOOD BANK

Our church continues to support the Strongsville Food Bank. Although all non-perishable items are needed, right now the bank especially needs **peanut butter, jelly, pork and beans, canned meals, pasta sauce, canned fruit, and toilet tissue.** You may place donations in (or by) the box under the coat rack by Pilgrim Hall.



**Feeding the
Community**

YOUTH GROUP – MOONROCK BOWLING

On Sunday, May 19, the Youth Group will be Moonrock Bowling at Fairview Lanes in Fairview Park. They will meet at the church at 2:00 p.m. and arrive at Fairview Lanes by 3:00 p.m. Bowling will be from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. The cost is \$6.00 for bowling and shoe rental. Youth Group members are welcome to bring friends to this event. Please contact Dale Hawk, (440) 238-1290 or Sally Herzog, (440) 572-4887 if you would like to attend.

Volunteers for drivers are needed and are much appreciated.



GARAGE SALE

Saturday – June 8, 2013 – 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Please bring your treasures to Pilgrim Hall **beginning Monday, May 20.** Please remember that we do not accept liquids or hazardous materials of any kind.



The Pricing Pizza Party will be held after the worship service on June 2. Pricing will continue every evening that week, from **about 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.**

Everyone is encouraged to give an hour or two of their time to help. This event is a major fundraiser for our church, and funds are much needed at this time of year. Come and join the fun!

THANK YOU

Special thanks to Joyce Reed, Karen Morgan, and Betty Bushea for their time and effort to prepare the Visioning Retreat booklets for April 6.

My sincere thanks to all of you who sent cards. I am still at Parkside Health Care and seem to be getting better. I really do miss my church. Your prayers have helped.
Betty Kovach

Dear friends,

I want to thank you all so much for your prayers, good wishes and cards during my recent surgery and recovery. I am getting better quickly, and should be "back at it" by the time you read this. I am very blessed to have such support. Thank you.
Pam Keenen

SERVING MEALS AT ZION UCC

On the First Saturday of the Month !

Our church continues to serve meals to the poor, but **our date has changed from the fourth Saturday of the month to the first Saturday of the month.**

Our next day to serve is Saturday, **May 4**. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area. Please arrange carpooling with others who will be serving on the same day.

Thank you so much for helping in this outreach.



COFFEE HOUR

Thanks to all who contribute to the Coffee Hour Fund! With the continual increase in the cost of supplies, your donation is greatly appreciated. All these products are available to all church groups. However, if you use the last of any of these items—paper towels, napkins, cups, coffee, tea, sugar, or drinks for the children—please write down what is needed on the sheet on the refrigerator, or inform the church office or Betty Craig, (440) 238-5389, so that replacements can be purchased.



Donations of bakery and coffee hour treats are needed for the first Sunday of each month. Please take your donation to the kitchen before the worship service. Thank you for your donations.



ACTIVITY BAGS FOR CHILDREN

Activity bags for children to use during their time in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings are now available by our name tags. Please return the bags after the church service. Thank you.

BIRTH

Our congratulations to Elisabeth and Robert Koenig on the birth of their daughter, Kierstin Elisabeth, on April 19, 2013!



OUR CONGRATULATIONS ALSO

to Elena Joyce, who received the Award of Excellence from Ohio PTA (1st Place) for the High School Literature category for her poem, which she wrote shortly after Super Storm Sandy. The theme for this year's PTA Reflections Program was "The Magic of a Moment."

The Magic of a Moment
by Elena Joyce

*The bitter gusts rail against our home.
Huddled together, we cower alone.
Like angry, vengeful furies the winds rage.
Only the humble walls our fears assuage.
Debris flies.
Our house sighs.*

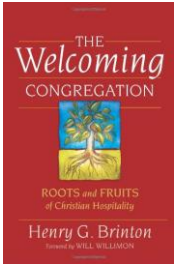
*Then the moment of utter calm.
The eerie silence is like a balm.
Quiet reigns as the storm subsides.
A flicker, a flash, then only darkness resides.
Whispers of peace.
Thunders cease.*

*An inky blanket covers the night.
Nowhere is there artificial light.
We gather in wonder, so relieved.
The vast serenity cannot be believed.
Heaven blazes.
Stillness amazes.*

*And for one fleeting moment, we are,
Surrounded by each pinprick of a star,
At the mercy of the unrelenting sky
Infinitesimal creatures of days gone by.
Lights spark.
Farewell dark.*

*The moment has all too quickly passed.
We knew it would not last.
Suspended in a blink of time.
Solace so elementally divine.
Electricity's on.
Moment's gone.*

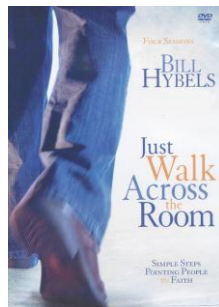
THE WELCOMING CONGREGATION BOOK



Pastor Becky has recommended that we as a church read the book, The Welcoming Congregation, by Henry Brinton. The church owns 20 copies, and the book is being shared within our congregation. After you read the book, please return it to the round table in the Gathering Area so others can read it also. We appreciate your cooperation. Thank you.

BIBLE & BREAKFAST STUDY

After a short hiatus, the Bible & Breakfast study will resume on Sunday, May 5, at 8:00 a.m., when a four-week study of Bill Hybels' book, Just Walk Across the Room will begin. The book is available in the Parlor. A donation of \$15.00 toward the cost of the book would be appreciated, but is not necessary.



Bible & Breakfast meets in the Parlor at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. The study is led by Pastor Becky.

All are welcome.

WOMEN'S LUNCHEON

Women's Luncheon will take place on Wednesday, May 8, 2013, at Ehrnfelt Senior Center for a Mother's Day Lunch. Doors open at 11:00 a.m. Reservations and payment in advance are required. No tickets will be sold at the door. Member price is \$5.00; nonmember, \$6.00.

The menu is Grilled Chicken, Rice Pilaf, Vegetables, Salad with Pineapple, and Cheesecake with fruit topping. In addition, there will be musical entertainment.

Please make your reservation with Lola and give her your payment. Ladies will meet at the Center. All are welcome.

