

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Neillsville, Wisconsin
Church 715-743-2147
Pastor Jacoba Koppert
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July 2020

"Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2:4-5

Jacoba's jottings.... The Trustees saw that the facade of the stone surrounding the bell tower was eroding. A plan was drawn up as to how it could be repaired. As the old concrete was removed, it was obvious that the façade was hiding deeper damage within the tower. As the guys dug a little deeper, all the stone came tumbling down. We are grateful no one was hurt. We are grateful that they now know what was invisible before poking around just a little bit. They are waiting for the insurance



adjuster and a structural engineer to come before proceeding any further.

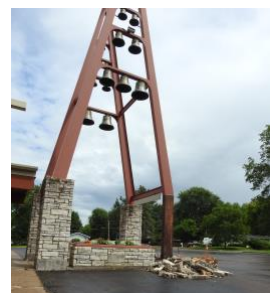


Stones, rocks are often named in the Bible. They are formed into altars; God is named as our Rock and Redeemer; the wise man built his house on the rock; Jesus is the living stone and as living stones we are to be built into a spiritual house.

We know about the strength of stone, but as you can see, sometimes even stone disintegrates and breaks apart. Though we try to be as strong as stone and build on the foundation Christ laid for us, I am guessing all of us have experienced what it is like to have our rock disintegrate at various points in our lives. We had a strong faith, yet a crisis, personal success or apathy caused us to move away from God, our Rock and Redeemer. We moved toward the slippery slope of increasing erosion, forgetting God's love for us and all people; that we are dependent on God and that God is with us in the good and hard times of life.

Others, noting that their foundation is eroding, work to make amends and do what they can to strengthen their faith and relationship to God. I did not listen closely to the ideas the trustees have to fix the columns. However I do know that to improve our relationship with God we only need to turn our hearts and lives around – so that again we are facing and trusting God, loving our neighbors and walking with Jesus.

It is a mess at the bottom of the tower right now – but the tower still stands. It seems that under the eroding stone there is a foundation that still holds up the towers and the bells. My hunch is that is true for us – if we brush away any of our erosion, God's faithfulness will be visible. We will notice God's strength. And through God's strength, we can build upon the foundation laid down for us by Jesus Christ. The bells still rang at noon and 6pm today!



Stand firm, friends. The world is surely changing.
God remains faithful. We move forward in faith

Jacoba's 2nd page...

Mike Perkl asked me to add these guidelines for use of the church in last month's newsletter. Somehow, I missed including them. These guidelines were recommended by the Executive Committee. Some have asked who is on the committee we have called the "Executive Committee". Mike invited the elected officers of the congregation to discuss with Mike and me the decisions that have had to be made. In recent meetings, the Chairs of the Trustees and Deacons/Deaconesses have also been included in our conversations.

Mike Writes:

"The following Guidelines have are being shared in recognition of the desire of some Standing Committees to have an in-person meeting option. Please respect the range of perspectives held in regard to this matter by our congregation. We all look forward to the time when we can enjoy open access to UCC facilities.

Committees:

- *Please secure an appropriately sized meeting space through Pastor or Audrey
- * Limit number of participants to ten or less
- *Offer Zoom option to any who prefer it to an in-person option.
- *Practice social spacing throughout your meeting (This includes before and after)
- *Encouraged to wear a mask (masks provide protection more to others than the wearer)
- *It is our goal to have hand sanitizer available for your use.

We pray we all stay well! Be safe. Be aware of the needs of others.

(The Executive Committee will meet again on Tuesday, June 30. We will let you know the decisions that are made, as soon as possible.)

MISSION AND OUTREACH



This card was included in the bags of dairy and meat our Mission and Outreach Committee gave to church members to enjoy or give away. I can assure you our Church is not cancelled nor closed.

We have folks

doing ministry all week long. The food give away was a huge success; appreciated by many in the church and community.

Thank you, Deb Perkl, Bonnie Weyer, Carol Romens, Carol Harnisch, Sue Gurney and Kathy Mathis for your efforts. And thank you to the Christ connectors who contacted our members to invite them to come a pick-up a bag of goodies.



WORSHIP SERVICES

We continue to tape the services and broadcast them on Sunday mornings. Bonnie has added graphics and the words of the bulletins to the videos so you can see the words on your screens. Karen is playing the organ, Pastor Jim is helping with sound and everyone is participating in the readings. We have decided to no longer sing as we tape – most of the church spread of COVID 19 has happened through singing; even small groups are discouraged from singing in the sanctuaries.

In addition to our services broadcasting on Facebook (Neillsville United Church of Christ 9am and Neillsville UCC Closed Member Group by 10am), on our website Neillsvilleucc.org Bonnie added Youtube. I googled "Youtube Neillsville UCC" and found our services. WCCN has been super in working with me to tape our radio broadcasts. I nominated them for a Sunshine Award on WEAU. We may not be gathered in the sanctuary, but every week we worship God and remind each other to follow Jesus and listen for the Holy Spirit. Join us for worship any

day of the week or time that works into your schedule.

Hi Everyone,

Again, I hope everyone is doing well and are safe. I think that a lot of us are getting used to the *new normal* as it is called these days. It is hard for a lot of us that looked forward to coming to church on Sunday morning to see, to talk and to get those hugs we got so use to getting. We miss that. I keep on telling myself to accept the things I cannot change and the courage to change the things I can. This leads me to what is going to change in my life. It is time for this girl to *retire*. I have been thinking about this decision since the beginning of the year. Times are changing here in the office. The secretarial duties are getting less and less as the new technology is taking over. What we need now are people that can work with this new technology and can absorb and learn how to work with it.

I have been here 42 years and will be 80 years old in September. It is *time* to let go of a job that has been so good to me. Time and age have caught up with me. This church has supported, loved and taken care of me for a long time. It has been a joy and a privilege to have worked with eight ministers, three interim ministers and my church family. What an experience it has been for me. I want to thank this church and my church family that have supported me all these years. I loved this job and my church family.

Now you are wanting to know when this retirement is going to happen. I have set a target date as September 30, 2020. I will help in any way to make this transition take place. I thank you again for the wonderful opportunity you have given me to be the secretary of this church for 42 years.

We are going to send you a July Newsletter. Pastor Jacoba will update you on the decisions the Executive Committee have come to on the resuming of our worship services in the church. Emails, texting, letters, post cards and phone calls have been our way in keeping in touch with you. We are also using ZOOM, Facebook and YouTube for our worship services and meetings. It is

amazing what we can do with the technology that is out there now. It has been interesting and challenging. We do look forward to coming back to our church even though it will be the *new normal*!

See you in Church Audrey



Additional words from Pastor Jacoba

Audrey has been and continues to be a gift to this congregation and to me. She is a woman of faith, a compassionate

listener and a loyal employee. She will be missed. I am grateful for our relationship and the ways we worked together to support the ministry of UCC. We/I will say more in the months to come – but for now – a heads up: her letter of resignation said no party or send-off.☺ Audrey, we will support you as you move into your retirement and we will find ways to celebrate the gift you are to this church.



LANDSCAPING Our building and grounds have been filled with activity this week. In addition, to the pillar disintegrating, new life was added to the front of our

building. In memory of Trink Jenkins and Bob Shaw new plants have been



planted. Carol and Dave Harnisch and Tom and Karlene gave guidance to the Trustees for the new landscaping. Thank you to all who removed the stones and plants and prepared the spaces (Woodstock Employees and Bryce and Kevin) to those who picked up the mulch (Paul Vine), planted the plants and spread the mulch.



Karlene and Tom also generously donated toward the project – thank you! Here is a picture of the Monday morning crew: Byrl, Al, Bob, Paul, Mike, Carol, Karlene and Doris. They did good work!

SCRUBBING Then this morning I found some members on their knees in the kitchen stripping the wax off the floor. Thanks folks. They refused to allow me to take a picture or even name names. ☺

Again, we want to THANK everyone who have been sending us your church offerings or putting them in our locked mailbox. Thank you for continuing to support your church. Remember, you do have the option of setting up for automatic giving, or you can set the church up on your automatic bill pay through your bank. Whatever works for you we appreciate your financial support to your church.



Radio Broadcast Sponsors for June

On *Sunday, June 7* the radio broadcast portion of our worship service was given by Glenna Rhoades Marg in honor of her girls and their families.

On *Sunday, June 14* the radio broadcast portion of our worship service was given by Jim and Rosie Repinski in memory of son, Ken and all fathers.

On *Sunday, June 21* our radio broadcast was sponsored by Doris Bakker in honor of family.

And on *Sunday, June 28* the radio broadcast is sponsored by Ruth and Bob Schmidt in memory of daughter, Tammy Backaus and parents Walter and Lucille Schmidt.

Thank you to all that sponsored the radio broadcast for the month of June.

The radio broadcast portion of the Sunday Worship Service can be heard on WCCN 98.5 FM and AM 1370 on Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m.

2021 Radio Broadcast Sponsors

Note: Would you like to sponsor a 2021 radio broadcast? We are looking for sponsors now. Call the church office and let us know what date you would like to sponsor and for what dedication you would like to do it for. The cost is the same: \$75.00

(Radio Broadcast 2021 Sponsors Continued) full broadcast; \$37.50 half broadcast and \$25.00 for

a third broadcast. Look for a 2021 Sunday and sign-up now. We believe our radio ministry is very important and want to keep it on the air. This is not a budgeted item in our church operations, so we would appreciate it if all monies are in by the end of this year 2020. Thank you for supporting our radio ministry.

Celebration of Life – Trink Jenkins

The date for the Celebration of Life for Trink Jenkins has been scheduled for Saturday, September 19. Visitation will be from 1:00-2:00 p.m. before the 2:00 p.m. Celebration of Life Service for Trink Jenkins.



With Deepest Sympathy

We are saddened to report to you that

Bernard "Bernie" Opelt, age 92 died on Wednesday, June 10 at his home in De Pere, WI. He and his wife Hanna of 74 years transferred their membership to the First United Church in Green Bay in 2015. Bernie had been a very active member of the United Church of Christ in Neillsville for many years serving on many committees and boards and served as an usher many times. Services were held at the Gesche Funeral Home on Saturday, June 13. We extend our deepest sympathy to Bernie's wife, Hanna, daughter Lori (Ken) Wirtz and his grandchildren and many family members and friends.

Note from Mary Lackore

Friends doing mission and outreach, so many places, I cannot do what I wish I could, but enclosed is a little offering to help. I was inspired by the combination of nutritious food and the plight of the dairy farmers. Thank you. – I still recognized most of your names and rejoice that Bonnie put it out there.

Gratefully, Mary Lackore.

(Mary was referring to our curbside pick-up of the dairy products we picked up to use or to give to our neighbors and friends in need to help out our dairy farmers.) Thank you, Mary Lackore for your contribution to our mission project.

Note from Wayne & Jo Ann Voss

Special “Thank You” to the mission and outreach committee for the wonderful dairy give away project. We will enjoy the cheese, butter and beef sticks.

Thank you, Rick Buchsteiner for again taking in all the aluminum cans that were in the cage to the recycling center. There were a lot of them. That was a big and sticky job. We received \$68.20. Thank you, Rick again and to all that bring us your cans.



July Birthdays

- 1- Jerry Ambelang
Ben Fields
Brennan Wilson
Tyler Williams
- 2-Pam Stitt
- 3-Arianna Rochester
Mathew Roenz
- 4-Tom Wallace
- 5-Donna Erickson
Anna Marie Eddy
- 9-Sandra Schmidt
Jo Ann Voss
Sophie Heck
- 10-Ruth Van Gorden
- 11-Emile Miller
Berdella Carl
- 13-James Mohr

(July Birthdays continued)

- 16-Kathy Turner
Neil Czarnecki
- 17-Guy Jodarski
- 18- Patricia Garbisch
- 19-Gayle Schermitzler
Roger Carl
- 21-Kobe Roenz
- 24-Karsen Czarnecki
- 25-Bonnie Shaw
Carol Opelt
Kathy Carl
- 26-Reese Ziegler
Mitchell Erickson
- 27-Hunter Roenz
- 28-Dan Patey
- 29-Eileen Zank
Barb Shoemaker
Kelley Burch
- 30-Erik Sigurdson

Happy Birthday to all of you with a July Birthday!

Did we miss your Birthday or have the wrong date?

July Wedding Anniversaries

- 13- Dick & Carolyn Lewis
- 14- Joe & Kris Anderson
- 17-Ray & Bonnie Weyer
- 31-Gene & Carol Opelt

Happy Anniversary! Did we have the wrong date or did we miss your Anniversary?

