



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Neillsville, Wisconsin
Church 715-743-2147
Pastor Jacoba Koppert
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www.neillsvilleucc.org
September 2020

Jacoba's jottings... No question about it; we are embarking on a new life. Like the Hebrews who had just been freed from slavery in Egypt, we might want to return to the familiar. As slaves, they knew what to expect- even if it was harsh; however at least there was food on the table. In this new wilderness, they were completely dependent on God. I wonder if the reason it took forty years to get to the Promised Land was so that they could get the feel of their new life. At every turn of hardship, God provided for them. When they turned away from God, lamenting their new life, things were harder for them. Trust and obey seemed God's mantra and response to their complaints. God knew the Promised Land would be very different from the Egypt they just left – and while the Promised Land wasn't perfect, it was good.

Often, it is not easy beginning new life – whether that life is after the death of a loved one, a job loss, starting in a new school. When I was in first grade my family moved in February. As soon as the car was parked, I began to cry, and had to be pulled out of the car; only to run back to it as quickly as I could. Sobbing my father carried me kicking and screaming into a new life. Soon I learned the new school, new friends, new teacher was a gift from God, though that steep sledding hill my classmates loved behind the school was never for me. The new life was not perfect, but so very much better.

In so many places we are beginning a new life. The time of sheltering safely at home forced a sabbath for some of us, a different way of living for nearly all of us. Our church is surely experiencing a new way of life. Change is never easy – especially when we receive mixed messages about the direction to take. It is daunting when we do not know what to expect when, and even if, we will reach the Promised Land.

Prayer: Lord remind us you've got the whole world in your hands. Encourage us to listen for your guidance so that we might trust and obey you and walk in your ways. Amen.

Audrey retires

For forty years, Audrey has served our congregation, sitting at her desk preparing various documents, listening with compassion to church members and strangers alike. I can vouch that she continued to learn new things in my seven years working side by side for the good of our church and ministry. But now, reaching the age of 80 she is ready to be freed from the computer. I have no doubt she will continue listening and caring about her church, finding ways to serve God and supporting the ministry of UCC with her gifts. She has truly been a gift to UCC – so many members past and present have been comforted, encouraged and guided by her. In her years, she also learned how to support seven pastors plus interims. Her knowledge of church families and our church history is invaluable.

I will miss Audrey in the office as many of you have said you would. Yet, it is time to allow her to enjoy her retirement. Until the Governor's order closed our buildings, Audrey did not know what she could possibly do if she wasn't serving her church in the office. She learned quite quickly that she could enjoy life at home.

Audrey, you are greatly loved and appreciated by many. You have are a faithful child of God, a disciple of Christ and a beloved member of our congregation. May God continue to bless you and your sons.

SAYING THANK YOU TO AUDREY

Audrey does not want a public send off or party. She is appreciating the kind words said during phone calls and as you talk with her while out and about. If you wish, send her a card expressing your gratitude. You are also welcome to come into the office – please call first though; some days she is very busy and other days she would have the time to visit. Our schedules have changed as our work has changed with new deadlines.

CHURCH NEWS Following the Council Meeting (Summarized by Pastor Jacoba with her observations)

Council It was great to see all the committees but one represented at our Council Meeting on August 19. I don't remember nearly everyone present that the Constitution names as the Council at a meeting in my seven years as Pastor here. We are doing what we need to be doing. The various committees are figuring out how to fulfill their responsibilities in this time. The Board of Christian Education is discussing how they might meet the needs of church families. The Stewardship Committee is participating in a Webinar on Cultivating Congregational Generosity. The Trustees are making decisions about hiring an Office Administrator and church property. We can be grateful for the work our committees continue to do.

Worship in the sanctuary was on the agenda for our Council Meeting. All committee members received copies of the documents which church leadership read prior to recommending that we return to worshipping on-line and through our radio broadcast and not in person in the sanctuary. By consensus and without any voices raised to request we resume in-person worship, we will continue to worship on-line and through our radio broadcasts for the foreseeable future. Our congregation is prioritizing concern for one another and safety for all. Church leadership is listening to the guidance of scientists, medical experts, the Clark County Health Department and religious leadership in Wisconsin.

Funeral/Memorial Services The Council was also clear about in-sanctuary funeral/memorial services. We are encouraging families to limit attendees to close family. We will live stream the funeral/memorial services, providing a link to those who wish to watch.

Confirmation The Rite of Confirmation will take place on September 12 by invitation only at the Tock Field Park Shelter; in case of inclement weather the service will be moved into the sanctuary. The service will be videoed for broadcast on our Website neillsvilleucc.org as soon after the service as possible (not enough internet strength to live stream). It will also be uploaded on Sunday to the other places where our services are usually found.

Use of the building If members would like to have some time for individual reflection/prayer/ meditation, please contact Audrey or me. Church committees and groups with up to ten people present may meet in the building, masked and physically distanced. Outside groups will need the approval of the Trustees.

We are putting the future of our church in God's hands. Some of the new ways of life we are living may be God's desire for our world and for us as individuals. Some members are acknowledging, while missing friends and sitting in the sanctuary, they are able to more fully worship at home. Some of us are more connected while maintaining physical distance – conversations are longer and more intense; we are more deliberate about meeting together and supporting each other as we are able. At the same time, when things are such that worshipping and all meeting together can happen safely, we will evaluate what has been helpful and worked well in these months and what we now know is so valuable that we are grateful to again be able pick up where we left off. We will celebrate our learning, continuing what has been beneficial, and we will resume what strengthened our faith and increased our love for one another over the years. We will encourage one another to "Be the Church" God has called us to be – welcoming all, encouraging each other on our faith journey, providing Christian Education, supporting our community, walking in the ways of Jesus Christ.

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

We will receive the sacrament on September 6. Please prepare for the sacrament by having nearby some bread or a cracker – what you wish- and something in a cup. Jesus is both the host and the guest. He will bless what we bring and share it with us. Our service will be streamed at 9am and on the radio at 11am. I will plan to be among the worshipers at both times.

WORSHIP TIME CHANGES

Traditionally worship begins at 10am the Sunday after Labor Day (September 13). To try to meet the needs of the congregation, while worshipping virtually, the Sunday service will be posted on our Website neillsvilleucc.org at 9am. We will worship together at 10am on our public Facebook page, Neillsville United Church of Christ and on our Youtube channel, UCC Neillsville. We will have Coffee Hour between the end of the worship service on-line and the radio broadcast at 11am.

STORY TIME

A few of our parents have mentioned that my sharing a Bible Story would be appreciated. We have not decided on the time yet; likely a bedtime story. I hope to use both Zoom so I can interact a few minutes with the children and Facebook live on our member page – “Neillsville UCC Members Closed page.” Let me know if you are not on this page – you must be invited in.

PORCH – PATIO VISITS

If you feel safe and want to visit with me, I am willing to come to your home. Outside visits with all the precautions are possible. Call me and we can set up a time to visit.

Hi Everyone,

September Newsletter! This year our fall schedule is much different than last year. First, we will not be meeting in our Sanctuary until further notice. It just is not safe for everyone. We don't like it, but we will accept what it is ...we will get back here again someday. Keep the faith! My time here as your church secretary is coming to an end.

September 30 will be my last day. I may be retiring as church secretary, but I am not retiring from my church. This COVID 19 has not been good for any of us. We miss our worship services in the church and our church families and look forward to the day when we will be able to see each other here again. Pastor Jacoba and our Church Council have had many meetings and conversations on what we should and should not do. They have kept us well informed on what is recommended by the Wisconsin Conference and our county and health officials. We *thank* them for all the time they put

forth for our own good. In the meantime, we will keep on sending our emails texting, sending letters, post cards and making phone calls to keep in touch with you. We have been using ZOOM, Facebook and You Tube for our worship services and meetings. Thank you to all that keep us so

informed. A lot of work and time is involved to keep you in touch with our church and church members. We look forward to seeing you here at church, on the street, in the store, out to eat, or talk to you on the phone. Whatever or wherever it is always nice to see or hear from you.

Hope to See you - Audrey

Facts & Figures

Offerings for August (we still have one more Sunday in August)

August 10

General Offering.....	\$2850.00
Radio Fund.....	225.000
Missions.....	25.00

August 24

General Offering.....	\$4230.00
Radio Fund.....	525.00

August Automatic Giving.....\$1210.00

Thank you everyone for continuing to contribute to the ministry of UCC. Members are sending us their church offerings by mail or driving by and putting them in our locked mailbox. There are several other ways to financially support your church including setting up for automatic giving through the church office, or through automatic bill pay through your bank and through stock gifts. Whatever works for you we appreciate your gifts. Thank you for your generosity.



Radio Broadcast Sponsors for August

Our radio sponsor for *Sunday August 2* was sponsored by a faithful radio listener.

On *Sunday, August 9* the radio broadcast portion of our service was sponsored by Lorraine Shaw in remembrance of her and Bob's 72nd Wedding Anniversary.

On *Sunday, August 16* our sponsors were Jim and Rosie Repinski in memory of daughter, Diane.

Radio Broadcast sponsors continued

On *Sunday, August 23* our sponsor was Doris Bakker in memory of her parents' Anniversary.

And on *Sunday August 30* our sponsors are Wally and Pat Garbisch in honor of their 62nd Wedding Anniversary.

Thank you to all that sponsored our radio broadcasts for the month of August.

**Our worship service is broadcast
on WCCN 98.5 FM and AM 1370
each Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m.**

2021 Radio Broadcast Sponsor

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 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.

We have many Sundays in 2021 that still need to be filled. Would you like to sponsor one?

January 17, 24, 31

February 28

March 14, 21

April 18, 25

May 23, 30

June 6, 13, 20

July 11, 18

August 1, 8, 22, 29

September 5, 12, 26

October 24, 31

November 14, 21, 28

December 5, 19, 26

Celebration of Life – Trink Jenkins

The family made the difficult decision to cancel the celebration of life service for Trink which had been scheduled in September. Please hold the family in prayer as they inter Trink's ashes in Illinois this month.



September Birthdays

1- Logan Erickson
Jerry Quicker
Rosemary Opelt

2- Fritz Hediger
3-M.E. Sjolín
4- Gene Opelt
5-Donita Follen
Joel Raine
Cheryl Steinbach
Hannah Erickson
6-Charlotte Gress
Audrey Vradenburg
Crispin Hediger
10-Karlene Wallace
11-Mike Perkl
12-John Vornholt
14-JoAnn Wren
16-Iris Vine
17-Mary Finney
18-Mollie Stetzer
Anna Raine
19-Wendy Sigurdson
20-Kris Anderson
22-Linette Kuhn
Leah Wilson
23-Carole Romens
William Ziegler
24-Michelle Kranz
25-Roasne Repinski
26-Mackenzie Hediger
28-Ruth Zwieg
Oliver Raine

Happy Birthday to all of you with a September Birthday! Did we miss your Birthday or have the wrong date?



September Wedding Anniversaries

6-Bruce & Margie Rakestraw
8-Mickey & Carla Marty
12-Travis & Ashley Vine
13-Guy & Sue Jodarski
14-Deon & Jim Spangler
16-Barb & Ken Shoemaker
16-Craig & Wendy Sigurdson
20-Scott & Jill Williams
22-Dale & Betty Opelt
23-Crispin & Lisa Hediger
23-Mitchell & Cassie Erickson
24-Kim & Terry Stetzer
29- Mathew & Jennifer Roenz

Happy Anniversary! Did we miss your Anniversary or have the wrong date? Let us know if we did.

September 2020						
◀ Aug 2020						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6 pm Pastor/Parish	2 5:30 pm Stewardshop ZOOM meeting - Cultivating Congregational Generosity	3	4	5
6 9 am Worship Service On Facebook & YouTube Communion Following the Worship Service ZOOM Coffee Hour 11 am Radio Broadcast	7 LABOR DAY (Office Closed)	8	9	10 1:30 pm Circle of Friends on Zoom		12 5 pm Confirmation Outdoor Service unless There is bad weather
13 10 am Worship Service On Facebook & YouTube Following the Worship Service ZOOM Coffee Hour 11 am Radio Broadcast	14	15 5:00 pm Trustees 6:30 pm Deacons/Deaconesses 7:30 pm Church Council	16	17	18	19
20 10 am Worship Service On Facebook & YouTube Following the Worship Service ZOOM Coffee Hour 11 am Radio Broadcast	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 10 am Worship Service On Facebook & YouTube Following the Worship Service ZOOM Coffee Hour 11 am Radio Broadcast	28	29	30			