

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Neillsville, Wisconsin  
Church 715-743-2147  
Pastor Jacoba Koppert  
Pastor's Office 715-743-2117

[www.neillsvilleucc.org](http://www.neillsvilleucc.org)

April 2021

***jacoba's jottings...*** In many ways we are starting again. Last Easter, I led worship from my home and sang a solo of "Christ the Lord Is Risen," hoping you were singing with me rather than listening to me sing. This Easter, all who feel ready to return to the sanctuary are welcome to do so – and those who would rather listen on the radio or watch on YouTube to worship God, can celebrate the resurrection where you are. Many people wish we could just get back to normal; I understand – me too. Yet, I am also told, "we like the shorter service"; and we like watching on-line or listening on the radio. And I hear, we are not yet comfortable being in a group. We are not yet in a place of returning to "normal" and if what I hear is accurate, we may never return to exactly what was. I grieve (and celebrate) that. I bet you do too.

We don't know yet what will be or how all things will shake out. And while, at times like others that makes me anxious – at other times, I remember God's faithfulness. Deep down, I know it will be ok. I believe all things will come together for those who love the Lord and are called according to God's purposes, even while not knowing what will be. I have also learned to wait upon the Lord. God will make clear who we are to be, what we are to do and how we are to do what we are called to do. God will lead us if we are patient and trusting. Remember, Israel wandered 40 years in the wilderness toward an unknown future – I hope our wandering is not that long. Yet in their wandering, God was creating a new people – a faithful remnant. God was leading and guiding. I believe God is doing that again.

In the meantime – while waiting in faith and with expectation we worship God and celebrate the Resurrection. I am grateful for the guidance of the Deaconesses and Deacons as together we discussed how to worship in Holy Week this year. Here are the details:

**Palm /Passion Sunday** – we will receive palms handed out by the children. The children will "parade" with me and the virtual choir will sing. We will move quickly from Palm Sunday to the Passion of our Lord. Three members and I will read the story of Christ's passion and crucifixion.

**Maundy Thursday** – 7pm; the service will focus on "The Lord's Supper". The elements will be consecrated before all leave in silence, taking the communion elements with us. We leave the Supper Table remembering Jesus and his disciples left their table and went to the Garden of Gethsemane. Those who choose can meet across Park Street at Lorraine's home – so that we might gaze upon the Resurrection window as we consume the elements. (I do not yet know if this service will be broadcast on Youtube.)

**Good Friday** – 12-3pm; Church doors will be open for personal quiet time in the sanctuary. Come and leave as you wish. There will be music, prayers and scripture available.

**Easter Celebration Service** – 10 am; The virtual choir will sing "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" with those at home joining in. After the in-person service all who wish may assemble in the parking lot and with Karen playing the organ and the sanctuary windows open we will sing "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today" socially distanced.

*Yes, we will remember and celebrate in new ways. I imagine the ways of worship also changed after the death and resurrection of Jesus. And was never again the same. They too had to figure all things out again. May God's Spirit and the love of Jesus guide us to a new beginning.*

## **Jacoba's Second Page**

As we move toward Holy Week, I invite you to remember the suffering and death of Jesus Christ our Lord. Not only did Jesus suffer, the followers of Jesus were also filled with grief, fear, not knowing what was next. This year, let us remember the over 500,000 people who have died in our country and the over 2.74 million people who have died around the world. Let us name our own grief – acknowledging the death of family and friends and all the changes we have had to endure.

And on Easter, may we find a way to acknowledge – and maybe celebrate the new life that is now and is yet to be made known. The disciples knew that through God raising Jesus from death, their world was and the world was forever changed– they just didn't know how yet what it all meant. They were amazed and afraid. Our world is also changed. We don't know what is yet to be as we start to experience a new life. With the hope of new life, we move forward as a church and as individuals in faith.

**Quarterly Congregational Meeting  
April 18  
Following Worship  
In the Sanctuary**

### **Sunday School**

Classes have been held on Zoom each Sunday. For twelve weeks, Stephanie Heck has taught the stories of the Bible and how experiences in the Old and New Testament lead us toward compassion for others. On Palm Sunday Classes will be held in the church and on Zoom. There will be no class on Easter Sunday. The last class for Sunday School will be on April 18.

**Save the Date!  
May 21-22  
Vacation Bible School  
At the Shelter  
Tock Field**

### **CDs – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade**

We will have class on Zoom on March 24, 31 April 7 and 14. The Wisconsin Conference has gifted each congregation with a new Curriculum, "Picture the Bible." It is created by Rev. Stacy Meyers of our UCC River Falls Church.

### **God, Family and Me Time**

I will be away for Vacation and Continuing Education the end of April and early May. Pastor Jim will be on call for all pastoral needs.

### **Pastoral Care**

I (Pastor Jacoba) have been vaccinated according to CDC Standards against the COVID Virus.

I am beginning to visit members in their homes according to their wishes.

I am now allowed to visit in the hospital and long-term care facilities – and not count as a visitor – when the number of visitors are restricted.

On March 28, Eileen Zank and I will lead worship at the Neillsville Retirement Center for Holy Week. Our regular services will take place there on the first Wednesday of each month, beginning on April 7.

I am excited and grateful to resume this part of my ministry among you.



## **Facts and Figures March 2021**

### **Attendance for In-Person Worship**

Sunday March 7, -- 32  
Sunday March 14, -- 19  
Sunday March 21, -- 22

### **Offerings for March 2021**

#### **(March 3- March 22)**

##### **March 3, 2021**

General---	3870.00
Memorial Fund---	25.00

##### **March 22, 2021**

General---	4075.00
Lenten Offering---	50.00
OGHS---	210.00
Circle of Friends---	3.60
Mission/Outreach---	200.00

##### **Automatic Giving**

March Automatic Giving	505.00
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March VANCO Giving will be reported  
in the May Newsletter

***Thank you for your generosity!***

### **Office Administrator**

The Office Administrator position has been offered to an applicant by the Trustees.

### **March Radio Sponsors**

*On Sunday March 7*, the radio broadcast was sponsored by an anonymous donor in praise and thanksgiving of God our Father.

*On Sunday March 14*, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Ruth and Bob Schmidt in memory of brother, Marvin Mohr.

*On Sunday March 21*, the radio broadcast was sponsored by the Vine children: Jane Nelson, Virginia Fennema, Paul Vine, Jeff Vine, and Kristine Kirschoffer in honor of Gordon and Faith Vine.

*On Sunday March 28*, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Lorraine Shaw as she remembers family.

Radio sponsorships for 2022 are now available. Contact the office.

### **Offering Statements for 2020**

We want to express our gratitude to each person who generously supported the UCC in the past year. Thank you for your generosity.

The 2020 donation statements are available for pickup if you have not already collected yours. You can pick them at the church office. You can also call the church office and ask us to mail you or ask us that we read it over the phone.

### **COVID 19 Updates and Vaccines**

We hear more church members are getting their shots in the arm. If anyone needs help in making an appointment on a computer, Jessi and Pastor Jacoba are willing to help with navigating the internet.

## Vanco – Online Giving

Your generosity and continued support to the Neillsville UCC is greatly appreciated, whether it is by using your church envelope, a check, cash and/or using the new online giving program called VANCO.

There are two (2) ways that you can donate to the church using this new program:

- Via online at the Neillsville UCC website  
<https://www.neillsvilleucc.org/>
  - Click on **DONATE ONLINE** in the black menu bar
  - Click on the orange **ONLINE OFFERING** under the scrolling pictures
- Via your smartphone



If you would like step-by-step instructions for either version of donating, go to the Neillsville UCC website <https://www.neillsvilleucc.org/> and click on the appropriate menu bar that is listed like this or if you are receiving this newsletter via e-mail, just click on the hyperlinks below:

Directions for Online Giving with Your Computer  
Mobile App Directions for Giving Online

The church is charged a processing fee for each transaction, so you may want to donate monthly if you use this service instead of weekly, which is:

- 2.75% using a credit or debit card
- 1% using a banking account

If you would like to contribute to the processing fee, there is a toggle box to select when making your donation.

If you have any questions or would like help, please contact Emile at 715-937-4626.

If enough people are interested, Emile will set up a time and date at the church to go over these steps with individuals.

If you have any questions regarding this new program, please contact any of the committee members:

- Barb Miller
- Emile Miller
- Barb Petkovsek
- Don Quicker
- Paul Vine
- Bonnie Weyer

## CONSTITUTION AND BYLAW COMMITTEE TO BE FORMED

By: Dave Harnisch

Moderator Paul Vine will formally announce at the upcoming April 18th quarterly meeting that a group will be formed to review and update our UCC Constitution and Bylaws.

Due to the growing challenge of recruiting a fairly large number of committee and board volunteers from a lessening church membership, the UCC Council is supporting an effort to reassess the number of members that the bylaws require for committee and board appointments.

In addition to the reevaluation of the current committee structure, the newly formed group may also visit the timelines for congregational meetings and elections.

Church members interested in joining the review group, or simply wish to provide suggestions, are asked to contact Moderator Paul Vine or Pastor Jacoba.

Following the quarterly meeting on April 18, the first meeting of this newly formed review group is planned for early May. The last review and update of the United Church of Christ Neillsville's Constitution and Bylaws occurred in 2012.

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

By: Dave Harnisch

Like many of our committees and boards at UCC, the Stewardship Committee members did not meet often in 2020.

Although sharing the challenges that all church volunteers have faced, Stewardship Committee members managed to communicate and make some headway, regardless of the pandemic.

Former co-chair, M.E. Sjolín, provided the Council at its September 2020 meeting an update on activities and plans, including the effect that the pandemic had on our best intentions.

Former co-chair, Emile Miller, provided a report to those attending the February 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, where she highlighted the membership's involvement in a four-month webinar on generosity hosted by Rev. Andrew Warner.

With activities limited all around, members did not meet to select a Volunteer of the Year in 2020, but it is the hope of members to carry on with this award in 2021.

More recently, member Kelley Burch provided a service reading for the *One Great Hour of Sharing* mission, and a video was selected and shown to encourage members of the congregation to give of their treasures.

Membership in the Stewardship Committee changed dramatically, with the terms of three highly involved, long-term and experienced members expiring: Sue Voigt, M.E. Sjolín, and Emile Miller. We welcomed, beginning last year, newer member Kelley Burch, and in March new member Jo Ann Voss. M.E. Sjolín has made herself available to offer her experience and guidance since most members are new to the committee. Longtime member Marge Goetsch is continuing.

Other missed hands-on opportunities for the committee in seeking generosity from the congregation was the unfortunate shelving in 2020 of the *One Great Hour of Sharing*, *Strengthen the Church*, *Neighbors in Need*, and the *Christmas Fund* missions. Not all was lost, however, as the generosity of the Church Council came through, providing available funds so the church could meet its obligations to all missions. A huge "Thank You" goes out to the voting members and members of our financial team for fulfilling our church's Five for Five obligations in 2020.

The Stewardship Committee members are planning to meet formally for the first time since the last Zoom in September of 2020. The first meeting in 2021 is tentatively planned for mid-April.



## April Birthdays

4. Carla Marty
5. Tye Kranz
6. Bonnie Weyer
9. Ray Weyer
10. Marlys Riedel
11. Kevin Erickson
13. Kathy Seelow  
Jim Filitz  
Olive Bennett
15. Jake Ratsch  
Janice Miller
17. Scott Vrandenburg  
Alexis Averill
21. Darlene Mueller
23. Stephanie Heck
24. Jennifer Romens Erickson
25. Bryce Erickson
27. Susie Karl
28. Ben Mathis
30. Scott Williams

## April Wedding Anniversaries

2. Jenna and Josh Ziegler
6. Neil and Corinne Armitage
14. Chad and Lacey Erikson
21. Tammy and Keith Loberg
21. Nancy and Herold Boon
26. Lynne and Thomas Abel
27. Russell and Susie Karl
28. Joel and Marla Raine



*Did we forget someone or get the date wrong?  
Let us know!*

## Birth Announcement

Ben and Kelly Mathis announced the birth of their daughter Millie Kay Mathis. Millie was born on March 4<sup>th</sup> at the 30th weeks of Kelly's pregnancy. She will be in Neo-natal Intensive Care Unit until she is a bit stronger and can come home. She is doing very well according to all reports. She is the sister of Owen, Benjamin, Haddie and Emilia and the granddaughter of Kathy and Howie Mathis and Craig and Wendy Sigurdson The Mathis - Sigurdson families appreciate your prayers. May God's love surround Millie and her family. She is already blessed by God, by her family and all her health care providers. We praise God for this little one!



# Free Lenten Lunch




## March 28, 2021

Curbside Pick-up

**11:30 am - Noon**

Neillsville United Church of Christ

515 West 2nd Street

<div>  <b>April 2021 United Church of Christ</b>  </div>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Maundy Thursday 7:00 church service	2 Good Friday 12:00-3:00, sanctuary open for prayer	3 Holy Saturday
4 <u>Easter Sunday</u> 10:00 Easter Celebration, in person and online 11:00 radio	5 	6 6:00 Pastor Parish Committee	7 2:00 Worship at Neillsville Retirement Community 7:15 7 <sup>th</sup> grade CDs	8	9	10
11 <u>Second Sunday in Easter</u> 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service, in person and online 11:00 radio	12	13 6:00 Board of Christian Ed	14 7:15 7 <sup>th</sup> grade CDs	15 1:30 Circle of Friends 7:00 Deacon and Deaconesses	16	17
18 <u>Third Sunday in Easter</u> 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Service, in person and online Quarterly Meeting 10:30 11:00 radio	19	20 5:30 Trustees 7:30 Church Council	21	22 Earth Day 	23	24
25 <u>Fourth Sunday in Easter</u> 10:00 Worship Service, in person and online 11:00 radio	26	27	28	29	30	

#### Holy Week Services:

April 1<sup>st</sup>, Maundy Thursday, 7:00pm in person sanctuary

April 2<sup>nd</sup>, Good Friday, 12:00pm-3:00pm open church for independent worship in sanctuary. NO ecumenical service

April 4<sup>th</sup>, Easter Sunday, 10:00am in person church service

Online services will continue. You can find us at and after 10 am on:

Facebook, YouTube "UCC-Neillsville" and neillsvilleucc.org

