

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Neillsville, Wisconsin
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May 2021

Do Good Deeds, Abundantly

Written by The Rev. Andrew Warner

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The Apostle Paul promised, *"God makes grace abound, more than enough, so you may do every good deed abundantly"* (2 Corinthians 9:8). Last year tested this promise. The coronavirus pandemic, political partisanship, and racial justice issues strained us all.

But the United Church of Christ in Neillsville, Wisconsin, kept focus on God's abundance. Like other congregations, the people of Neillsville moved to virtual worship. Though not together in person, they remained connected to needs in their rural community. This Spring church members started a practice of preparing quarts of soup and fresh bread, to which they added fresh cheese made from local dairies (this is Wisconsin). The meal kits got distributed by church members throughout the broader community: food for a neighbor recovering from illness, a meal for an elder shut-in. The pandemic could not stop the church from sharing.

The Neillsville congregation focused on sharing through the pandemic. At the end of the year, the church treasurer reported a problem to the council. The four special mission offerings, typically received in worship, fell far below what the congregation raised in previous years. In adapting to virtual worship, the congregation missed the promotion of the special offerings that normally took place when they gathered. The treasurer pointed to unspent funds in the budget. *"We could share these,"* she proposed.

The council supported the idea. The unspent funds bolstered the special mission offerings. *"We didn't know how the year would turn out at the beginning of the pandemic,"* Pastor Jacoba Koppert explained, *"but mission and outreach, including OCWM, matters to this congregation."* The congregation gives over 10% of its local expenses towards the Five-for-Five Offerings (In 2019 the congregation gave over 8% towards Basic Support and raised another 4% for the other special mission offerings). *"Using unspent funds in our budget helped us keep to the mission projects that matter to us."*



The United Church of Christ in Neillsville could have responded to the pandemic with a mindset of scarcity, wondering if there would be *"enough"* for the church. But instead, this unusual season became one to find new ways to share God's abundance. Whether it meant sharing soup with neighbors or digging into the budget to support special mission offerings, the congregation shared. Abundantly.

Jacoba's Second Page

It was fun to wave palm branches and parade through the sanctuary with our children on Palm Sunday. We were delighted to see our younger ones. Actually, it has been good to be back together and see one another again. On Maundy Thursday, we remembered Jesus' Last Supper. It was the intent to commune together at dusk the Shaw home so we could see the Resurrection Window lit up. It did not work out as planned – it was not dark at 7:30! However John Shaw did see the beauty we were hoping to see and took a photo of it for us. Thank you, John!



On Good Friday, we invited people come in for some quiet time in the sanctuary. Jessi and I worked together to create a devotional Good Friday slide show. The pictures and words were accompanied by music Karen Mohr had recorded on the organ. Those who came appreciated the opportunity to be in the sanctuary remembering Christ's death.



On Holy Saturday, twenty lilies arrived from Falls florist which Corinne Armitage and

JoAnn Wren then beautifully arranged for Easter. Thank you JoAnn and Corinne.

On Easter we worshiped in the sanctuary, on-line and on the radio. Those who worshipped in the sanctuary gathered outside after the service to sing "Christ, The Lord Is Risen Today" on a beautiful day.

As members and friends feel safe to return to worship, we will be glad to see you. We are all still trying to figure out what is right for our church and for ourselves. Our opinions vary widely and so we try to do the best we can to worship God and serve the Lord with gladness. I thank the Deacons who are helping me think through how to worship in these days. I appreciate the guidance and wisdom of the group very much.

Speaking of serving God, the meal give away has been well received. It appears those who are working in the kitchen are enjoying themselves, those who deliver the food relish greeting friends and everyone seems to be finding the meals delicious. Thank you to all who are making this new ministry possible. – you saw in Rev. Warner's article on page 1 – we are even making the national UCC news. Way to go UCC, Neillsville.



Sundays in May

May 2 Pastor Jim Leading worship
May 9 Festival of the Christian Home
May 16 Sacrament of Holy Communion
May 23 Pentecost – we invite you to wear red – Special Music will be the Chime Choir Eileen Zank playing the piano
May 30 Memorial Day

God, Family and Me Time

I will be away for Vacation and Continuing Education the end of April and early May. Pastor Jim Mohr and Pastor Chad Anderson will be on call for pastoral needs. Jessi will be in the office Tuesday-Thursday.

Facts and Figures of April 2021

Attendance for In-Person Worship

March 28	Palm Sunday	52
April 1	Maundy Thursday	18
April 2	Good Friday	Approximately 9-10
	Independent Prayer service	
April 4	Easter Sunday	56
April 11	Sunday	38
April 18	Sunday	35
April 25	Sunday	

Offerings for March 28- April 19 2021

April 5th, 2021

General Offering	5885.00
Backpack	30.00
Lenten Offerings	110.00
Maundy Thursday	30.00
Mission Outreach	250.00
OGHS	145.00

April 19th, 2021

General Offering	1740.00
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Thank you for your generosity!

Offering Statements for 2020

We want to express our gratitude to each person who generously supported the UCC in the past year. We thank you for your generosity. The 2020 donation statements are available for pickup if you have not already collected yours. You can pick them up at the church office. You can also call the church and we will mail it to you. to make an appointment, the office administrator and Pastor Jacoba are willing to help.



April Radio Sponsors

On Easter Sunday, April 4, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Rosie and Jim Repinski in dedication to Jesus Christ our Savior.

On Sunday, April 11, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Ruth and Bob Schmidt in memory of their sister, Joyce Schmidt.

On Sunday April 18, the radio broadcast was sponsored by a faithful listener.

On Sunday, April 25, the radio broadcast was sponsored by a faithful listener.

New Office Administrator Named

Janice Miller applied, was offered the position and accepted the position to be our Office Administrator. Janice, a life-long member of UCC was most recently the person responsible for all things financial at Care & Rehab, Neillsville. She also has experience at Memorial Hospital as a receptionist/secretary. Janice will begin her employment with us on May 5. We will set her schedule as we see how her responsibilities are best scheduled.

Thank You Jessi Quicker

Jessi was hired as our temporary Office Administrator in November. Jessi and I have both learned from each other and together as we had to complete tasks neither of us had done before. Her time with us was the particularly busy time of the church year. I appreciate her willingness to keep at it until the tasks were completed. Jessi has offered to help with the transition.

UCC Custodial Job posting

The United Church of Christ of Neillsville is seeking a part time, 10-15 hours per week custodian. The position requires flexibility to adjust their schedule to suit the needs of the church. Ability to lift up to 50 pounds and pass a background check. Starting date is on or around June 1, 2021. Compensation is commensurate with experience.

Submit a letter of application and/or resume, including past experience, and references to Hap Eddy, UCC Trustee Chairperson. UCC is an equal opportunity employer.

Easter Greetings

Lorraine Shaw wrote in to say: "Happy Easter everyone!" and that she misses seeing everyone.

Thank you

I want to thank you for your kindness and loving support in the months since Tom passed away. I want our church family to know we are planning a celebration of Tom's life on July 3rd at our business now located by my home on Hwy 95.

- Karlene Wallace

Gratitude Towards Church Family

Glenna Rhoades expressed gratitude for her church family for all the wonderful cards, love, and sympathy at the time of her husbands passing.

Soup Success

Darlene Mueller says: "Thank you for delivering the delicious soup and the awesome loaf of bread. The cheese was very good too!"

Additionally, several church individuals including Don and Jessi Quicker would also like to give their compliments to the chefs involved in the meal giveaways.



The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Lennon James Erickson born on June 26, the son of Casidhe (Suda) and Mitchell Erickson was baptized on Palm Sunday, March 28 in an afternoon service. The service, filmed by Al Hoesly – thank you Al, was shared with the congregation on April 18. We rejoice with the Erickson Family.



Silent Angels

The Silent Angels of UCC are needing some bud vases which they give away from time to time to members who are homebound or living in long-term care facilities.

Janet Harrington has moved from Care and Rehab, Neillsville to Augusta. You can send cards to her at:

901 Bridge Creek Lane Room 217
Augusta, WI 54722

Sunday School Comes to a Yearly End

Our last Sunday school this year was on April 18. We had a number of families participate this year. Coordinating Sunday school was extra challenging this year due to Covid. We would like to give a special thanks to Stephanie Heck and the board of Christian education for their hard work in assuring that Sunday school could happen this year.

Quarterly meeting

On April 18th a quarterly meeting was held lead by moderator Paul Vine in the church sanctuary. Reports were given and announcements were made.



Helping Hands

Sunday, April 18th was our 3rd meal give-away. The meal consisted of scalloped potatoes, cold slaw, bread and cheese. Barb Petkovsek guided us on making the dishes.

Thursday morning we made the cold slaw and prepared the ingredients for the scalloped potatoes. Jan Smith, Kathy Mathis, Susie Karl, Barb Petkovsek and Bonnie Weyer were at the kitchen on Thursday morning. In the afternoon there were 150 pounds of potatoes to peel so we enlisted the help of four ladies from Holy Catholic Parish in Willard: Judy Morrow, Mary Dick, Carol Debevec and Diane Perko. By late afternoon the potatoes and cold slaw were put in containers. Gloria Hamm and Carol Harnish came to help with this.



On Friday morning the bread was made. Ruth Zweig, JoAnn Voss, Deb Perkl came to help. By 1:30 the bread had cooled and was put into plastic bags. The lunch was ready for Ray Weyer and Kathy Mathis to help with curbside pick-up on Sunday. Meals were delivered by Doris Bakker, Carol Romens, Nancy & Kirk Rodman, Byrl Buddehagen, and Ruth Zweig. Many meals were picked up and delivered to community members. We would like to thank those who paid the meal forward. We are also thankful to those who took the meals home to enjoy.



A big thanks goes to Marla and Joel Raine for donating ice to help cool the potatoes down. We would like to thank all those who helped prepare and deliver our meals. We also need to thank those who financially supported this endeavor.

Our committee plans to make and distribute meals the third Sunday of the month. **The next meal give-away will be May 16th.** We are planning to continue this as long as we can enlist helpers and financially can support this mission. Donations can be given through designating your offerings (write mission and outreach in memo of check) or using our online giving application.

Below is a list of needs:

- Quart Jars-Please bring them to the church. If it is locked leave by the front door.
- Grocery size paper bags
- Jar Lids and rings - Small and Large Mouth
- Volunteers - call the church office or anyone on the committee to let us know if you are willing to help. All are welcome.

Mission and Outreach Committee

Deb Perkl, Kathy Mathis, Carole Romans, Bonnie Weyer, Carol Harnisch





Strengthen the Church Offering

By: Dave Harnisch

The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC.

Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through our local contributions.

The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults.

The Stewardship Committee is considering testimonials and will be reviewing videos to show at upcoming Sunday services, so look for its membership's activities throughout May, with the offering being received on May 23rd.

This offering is one of our church's Five for Five missions.

Members of your Stewardship Committee thank you in advance for helping strengthen the church through your placing of an offering in the box at church or giving on-line using our new VANCO feature on our church's website. Click on "On-line Offering." <https://www.neillsvilleucc.org/>
By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

By: Dave Harnisch

The members of the Stewardship Committee had a very fruitful meeting on April 14th after a several month lay-off.

Newer member Kelly Burch was elected as the new chairperson of the church's Stewardship Committee, and member Dave Harnisch was re-elected as the committee's secretary.

Members are considering issuing the Volunteer of the Year Award after cancelling discussions on it in 2020. Discussions will continue on the possible recipient(s) at the next committee meeting.

New member, Jo Ann Voss, was welcomed to her first meeting, and she has kindly volunteered to view and select videos for Sunday services for each Five for Five Mission.

Members will again be considering participating in upcoming conferences and webinars on Generosity,

with information and links provided to them by Pastor Jacoba.

The *Strengthen the Church* mission (One of the Five for Five Missions) will be one of the items on the next meeting agenda, along with continued discussions on the planning and implementation of the all-important Stewardship Campaign that was cancelled for 2020.

Pastor Jacoba had shared an article by Rev. Andrew Warner titled, "Do Good Deeds, Abundantly." The article highlighted our church's generous financial fulfillment to the FIVE for FIVE missions. Due to the pandemic, the Stewardship Committee members were unable to implement their usual activities to obtain donations to these missions, so committee members were extremely thankful that funding from our church was found to fulfill our obligations to these missions.

The next Stewardship Committee meeting is schedule for a Zoom on May 12th.

VANCO – Online Giving

VANCO is the new online giving program that our church has implemented for 2021. You can support your church with your weekly/monthly offering by writing a check, using your offering envelope, or giving online with VANCO (once you have this set up you are set to go!)

Visit the Neillsville UCC website <https://www.neillsvilleucc.org/> and click on the appropriate link or download the VANCO app for your smartphone.

The new on-line giving program is not only for your weekly/monthly offering ... you can also donate to any church activity through VANCO. The two (2) newest activities on the website are:

- Free Meal Offering
 - Third Sunday of each month
- Strengthen the Church
 - Second special mission for Stewardship

If you have any questions or suggestions or you just need assistance with VANCO, please contact Emile at 715-937-4626.

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 VANCO.

Thank you!



Summer Youth Events:

Vacation Bible School is coming this summer!

On Saturday, June 5th, from 9 am-2 or 3pm, the United Church of Christ will be hosting a vacation bible school. It will be held outside at the park on the north side of the church.

If any youth is interested in attending UCC camp this summer, we do have scholarships available. THE COUNCIL IS WILLING TO FUND ANY KID WANTING TO ATTEND A UCC CAMP. The applications are in the church office or you can contact the church office and they can email an application to you

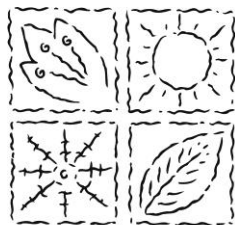
We are also looking for teachers for this fall for Sunday school for all grade levels. It could be as little as one time or on a regular schedule, whatever works for you. If anyone is interested, please let one of the board members or Pastor Jacoba know. The curriculum/lessons are all assigned/laid out for each week.





May Birthdays

1. Don Quicker
2. John Subke
3. Emily Voigt
Erin Voigt
5. Rachel Anderson
6. Ashley Vine
Sharon Buddenhagen
7. Jocelyn Vine
9. Rachel Anderson
Haylee Erickson
12. Marge Goetsch
Byrl Buddenhagen
13. James Sjolín
Lacey Erikson
Carol Harnisch
15. Sue Jodarski
16. Ann Schoengarth
17. Delores Walker
Bernard Walker
21. Santana Subke
26. Arlene Stark
27. Michelle Bergemann
Adelyn Sadowska
Cali Moseid
29. Pail Schmidt
30. Craig Sigurdson



**FOR EVERYTHING THERE
IS A SEASON, A TIME
FOR EVERY ACTIVITY
UNDER HEAVEN.**

ECCLESIASTES 3:1, NLT



1. Roberta and Bob Gaier
4. Ruth and Bob Schmidt
9. Ben and Kelly Mathis
11. Charlotte and David
Tetzlaff
18. Don Quicker and
Cindy Grota



Pastor Jacoba Koppert celebrated her 30th ordination anniversary this April.

Final Thoughts from Jessi the Secretary

I want to thank everyone who welcomed me into the United Church of Christ. Truly, the generosity and warmth from this small rural parish is not to be rivaled with but rather to admire and to be inspired by. The United Church of Christ is evidently a community church. Covid and all, the UCC in Neillsville serves.

There are many people that I would like to thank for my time here- I cannot name them all. Bonnie and Audrey taught me so much. Carol Romens kept me company many Wednesday afternoons as she helped put the bulletins together. And Pastor Jacoba, was not only my boss but a mentor to me.

I don't know what my future is or where it will lead me. I'm hoping to stay in the Clark County area for now- finding odd and end jobs to help people. Don't worry about me. God seems to have a way of making things all work out. In unexpected ways, but things do work out.

Know of my prayers.

-Jessi

May

2021 United Church of Christ

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
						1
2 <u>5th Sunday in Easter</u> 10:00 Worship service, in person and online 11:00 radio	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 <u>6th Sunday in Easter</u> Mother's Day 10:00 Worship service, in person and online 11:00 radio	10 	11	12 Stewardship Meeting	13 1:30 Circle of Friends The Ascension	14	15
16 10:00 Worship service, in person and online 11:00 radio	17	18 5:30 Trustees 7:30 Church Council	19	20	21	22
23 Pentecost Sunday 10:00 Worship service, in person and online 11:00 radio	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 10:00 Worship service, in person and online 11:00 radio	31 					