



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)

July 2021

***jacoba's jottings...*** Happy Fourth of July! Many of us are looking forward to celebrating our freedom. We have gotten our shots or are at peace with the decisions we have made. We sometimes feel a greater peace when we know what we believe and want to do. As Christians we are called to be aware of and faithful to the ways of Jesus Christ.

While celebrating our freedom we also need to remember that our collective and individual circumstances have been filled with trauma and grief. Last week, I participated in a webinar on Mental Health and Spiritual Care. Whereas in the past it was thought one person in four was struggling with a mental illness, available data suggests now one in two are suffering. The losses and grief we have experienced are leading to depression and anxiety. It was noted there is a collective grief as well as individual grief. Our nation grieves – the world grieves. Many are grieving what was, is now and what will be. We need to be kind to each other, knowing many are carrying hurt, anger, sadness, and grief. Our losses and our feelings need to be taken seriously. Grief unexpressed or not taken seriously increases over time rather than diminishing. Grief is expressed through anger, denial, bargaining, depression, moving toward acceptance of the losses we have experienced.

Responses to grief are unique to each of us. In obituaries today we find the variety in ways families and friends acknowledge death and remember the deceased. How we grieve affects our relationship with one another; if one person is openly grieving and the other is quiet about their grief, hard feelings may ensue – thinking one or the other is not grieving appropriately. When one person is hopeful while another is consumed with anger about a loss, relationships can be shaken if not ended. Collective grief is also manifest in a variety of ways – the violence of January 6 was a way of venting grief. Concerning the pandemic some were angry that others did not take seriously the risks, while others were angry about losing autonomy. Political differences are often based on fear of loss and grief.

According to Kubler-Ross acceptance of the loss is the last stage of grief. Her co-writer David Kessler now suggests a sixth stage – “finding meaning in our losses and griefs.” To come to a peace about the losses we experience he suggests we name: the meaning of our losses; the directions our losses take us; how we move forward in our lives. An example given was the response to 9-11 – what meaning did we draw from that experience and how have we moved forward taking into consideration what happened? When there is a death or a job loss – how will we resume living life and what do we take away from our loss and our grief?

Another important aspect of grief is acceptance of our own feelings and experience as well as accepting the feelings and experience of others. Do not judge your or another's feelings or experience of loss.

What have you lost, how are you grieving; and what meaning do you find in your loss? Have there been gains as well as sadness and disappointment; can you see growth in faith and new opportunities? As we celebrate our freedom and independence, I invite us to take seriously all our feelings and the feelings of others. We have lived through a trauma to our heart, body and soul as individuals and a nation.

In these days let us offer to ourselves and to others the Fruits of the Spirit. They are:

*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*

**Pastor Jacoba's 2<sup>nd</sup> Page**  
**Reception of New Members**



We introduce to you the new members of UCC. Rick Buchsteiner, Leslie Hemp Buchholz and Jim Mankowski.

**Rick** is retired, having moved back to Neillsville after years away. He is married to Kay; I often see them walking toward the Arboretum. Rick is retired and likes to golf and hunt. He and Kay have two adult children. He has become our can man – taking the aluminum cans to the recycler – bringing back the cash to the church. It is a dirty job- we thank him for doing it.

**Leslie** is married to Steve (whose church membership was reinstated.) She is a receptionist at the Emergency Room Desk at Marshfield Clinic – Neillsville. If I must go to the Emergency room, I will appreciate Leslie's patience, calming presence and compassion. She also has two adult children.

**Jim** is the Police Chief in Neillsville. You will find in him a compassionate heart and a desire to be fair to all. Members of the community appreciate how he listens to their needs and complaints. Jim has been active in a church wherever he has lived. He is the father of two boys. You will often see him at church with his friend, Linda.

**Welcome friends – we are glad you have chosen to become official members – we look forward supporting you and invite you to support us on our faith journeys.**

**Sprucing Up the Church Property**

We want to thank all who worked on two Mondays to put in the new landscaping on the east and west sides of the church. Dave and Carol Harnisch and Karleen Wallace again took the lead. There are some pictures with Dave's article. Have you noticed how the plants in front of the church are growing?

The planter boxes under the bells are particularly beautiful right now. Carla Marty and Barb Miller enjoyed a day of visiting and buying plants at our local



greenhouses. I caught them planting. Thank you, Carla and Barb. If you are worshipping virtually, make sure to drive by and see how pretty the church is looking.



**Jim Filitz** died on June 12 at the House of the Dove. Jim had been a Deacon—recommending that women be allowed to serve as Deaconesses.

He was also very active in the community working especially with youth. Jim was the Confirmation Mentor to Lane and Tye Kranz who respected and loved him. Jim was a very kind man. His funeral was on June 17 in the sanctuary with Pastor Koppert officiating.

**Ruth Van Gorden** died on June 16 at Clark County Rehabilitation and Living Center. She was an active member of UCC sharing her gift of music and her delicious baked goods. Ruth was also very involved in the life in the community. Her funeral was on June 22 also in the sanctuary with Pastor Koppert officiating.

**We express our sympathy to both families and their friends.**

### **Facts and Figures of May-June 2021**

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

May 30	Sunday	30
June 6	Sunday	40
June 13	Sunday	31
June 20	Sunday	30

#### **Offerings for May 24 – June 14, 2021**

##### **June 2nd, 2021**

General Offering	\$3,276.40
Mission Outreach	60.00
Strengthen the Church	10.00

##### **June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

General Offering	\$13,681.59
OGHS	200.00
Christmas Fund	200.00
Neighbors in Need	100.00

##### **April VANCO**

General Offering	\$ 1,065.32
------------------	-------------

**Thank you for your generosity!**



#### **ALUMINUM CAN RECYCLING**

Thank you to Rick Buchsteiner for taking the cans in for recycling. Please do not include any trash in with the aluminum cans.

#### **June Radio Sponsors**



On Sunday, June 6, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Glenna Rhoades in memory of her husband, Herb.

On Sunday, June 13, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Sue and Jim Popple in loving memory of her parents, Norbert and Phyllis Embke.

On Sunday, June 20, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Dolores Johnson in loving memory of her daughter, June Feely.

On Sunday, June 27, the radio broadcast was sponsored Bob and Ruth Schmidt, in loving memory of daughter, Tammy Backaus.

#### **New Office Administrator Hours**

**Janice Miller will be in the church office on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 9 AM – 1 PM. Please reach out to her if you need assistance.**

#### **Welcome to Carol Struensee**

Carol is working as our new custodian. She has been busy working here since June 1. She has been washing window and looking at what else needs to be done.

You may know her from her previous job at Care & Rehab – Neillsville where she was the Recreation Director.

#### **Thank You from Jim Vradenburg**

I want to thank the Trustees, Church Council and Church family for the support and trust that was given to me for the eleven years I was Caretaker of this church. thank you for honoring me and for the generous gift certificate that you gave me. I appreciated it all.

Sincerely,  
Jim Vradenburg

## Vacation Bible School



We had MOOVin into Faith Vacation Bible School on Saturday June 5th with 14 kids in attendance. The kids had fun learning about our faith by painting rocks, decorating bags with animals, Bible stories, and by activities such as, protecting their "flock", watering the animals, growing plants, 3-legged races, and trusting one another thru directions. The kids also decorated the outside entrance with chalk for those attending church on the following day.

I would like to thank the parents, helpers (Linda Stalsberg, Pastor Jacoba, Jenna and Reese Ziegler, Ashley Vine, and Lacey and Haylee Erickson), and anyone else who helped to make VBS a success. It was a hot day, but we all had a great time.



## UCC CHURCH CAMPS

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.





## **UCC 's 2021 East-West Landscape Project**

At the beginning of the year, the church Trustees announced their interest in adding more landscaping at the church. In addition, the possibility of obtaining grant money provided incentive to proceed with the planning.

Church members Dave and Carol Harnisch, along with Karlene Wallace, were approached by the Trustees to write up a proposal for the *UCC's 2021 East-West Landscaping Project*.

In late April, Dave and Carol provided an initial outline of the project beds to fellow team member Karlene Wallace, meeting with her at the church site on several occasions to get her perspective on appropriate shrubs and their availability.

The church Trustees received the formal written proposal from the planning team at its May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, where its membership approved the implementation of the project and purchases. On June 14<sup>th</sup>, a volunteer crew met in the morning to remove the sod and install the beds' edging blocks. A week later on June 21<sup>st</sup>, the shrubs were planted with care, and the mulch delivered by Paul Vine topped off the project.

The labor crew members for both workdays were Byrl Buddenhagen, Hap Eddy, Carol Harnisch, Dave Harnisch, Mike Perkl, Bob Petkovsek, Craig and Wendy Sigurdson, their grandson Owen, and Paul Vine.

The shrubs planted were "Blue Chip" Blue Star Juniper, "Green Velvet" Boxwood, "Amethyst Mist" Heuchera, some gifted Hosta, a "Violet Uprising" Lilac, and "Pretty in Pink" Pulmonaria.  
Report by Dave Harnisch



*Report of June's Dairy Give-Away*



This month we gave meat sticks, sliced cheese, cheese curds, butter and milk vouchers. The butter was donated by Grassland Butter. The bags that held the items was donated by Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin. We prepared 75 bags and all were gone by 10:00.

Plans for our next give-away are underway. Members of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Neillsville will be instrumental in the preparation of the next meal. It will be a meal in a jar, cheese and homemade bread. The date is July 18th, 9:45-10:15 am.

If anyone would like to help in the preparation,

please contact anyone on our the Mission and Outreach Committee. Money donations are welcome to continue this mission of our church.

Mission and Outreach Committee

Deb Perkl

Bonnie Weyer

Carole Romens

Kathy Mathis

Carol Harnisch

## UCC Constitution and bylaw Review Committee Update

June 30, 2021

In May 2021 an ad hoc committee, composed of Doris Bakker, Dave Harnisch, Barb Petkovsek, Paul Vine and Pastor, started to review and update the constitution and bylaws. The purpose is to ensure both documents reflect changing church demographics, committee, and leadership structure, recently incorporated financial audits and other language.

The committee has met three times and will continue in July and August. Once a preliminary draft is completed it will be shared with various committee chairpersons and members, who will provide input and suggestions.

In October the review committee will present a draft of the updated bylaws to membership at the October quarterly meeting. Final approval of the constitution and bylaws is scheduled for the January 2022 annual meeting. Stay tuned for more updates.



## **July Birthdays**

1-Jerry Ambelang  
Ben Fields  
Tyler Williams  
Brennan Wilson  
2-Pam Stitt  
3-Arianna Rochester  
Mathew Roenz  
5-Donna Erickson  
9-Sophie Heck  
Sandra Schmidt  
JoAnn Voss  
11-Berdella Carl  
Emile Miller  
13-James Mohr  
16-Neil Czarnecki  
Kathy Turner  
17- Guy Jodarski  
18-Patricia Garbisch  
19-Roger Carl  
Gayle Schermitzler  
24-Karsen Czarnecki  
25-Kathy Carl  
Carol Opelt  
25-Bonnie Shaw  
26-Mitchell Erickson  
Reese Ziegler  
28-Dan Patey  
29-Kelley Burch  
Barb Shoemaker  
Eileen Zank  
30-Erik Sigurdson  
31-Kole Miller

*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 miss your Anniversary?*

### **Announcements**

Saturday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> 4:00 PM – All are welcome to the Celebration of Life for Tom Wallace held at W6291 Hwy 95, Neillsville. There will be a brief service, led by family members, some of Karlene's delicious food and fireworks if the weather and conditions permit.



2021

# United Church Of Christ

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Starting at 4PM Celebration of Life for Tom Wallace at residence-Neillsville W9291 Hwy 95
4 <u>Sixth Sunday After Pentecost</u> <i>Fourth of July</i> 9:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio	5	6	7 2:00 – Service at Neillsville Retirement Community	8 9am Constitution Committee 1:30pm Circle of Friends- on Zoom	9	10
11 <u>Seventh Sunday After Pentecost</u> 9:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio	12	13	14 5pm Stewardship Mtg on Zoom 6:30pm Deacons at the church	15	16	17
18 <u>Eighth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 9:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 <u>Ninth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 9:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio	26	27	28	29	30	31