



**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)

**September 2021**

***jacoba's jottings...*** When I turned on the news last night, I wondered what the lead news item would be: – Hurricane Ida, the pullout from Afghanistan, rising number of people sick with Covid, wildfires or?? We have two church members who asked we pray for their family in the New Orleans area. Many of us know someone sick with COVID. While, Afghanistan is worlds away, we can likely name a family member or friend who served or died there in the last twenty years. We have experienced the haze of the fires here in Neillsville. Each of these news items could use our prayers. Yet even how we pray can become divisive. Even natural disasters can become polarizing. Still, praying for others and for ourselves is how we remain in relationship with God, one another and with all of God's creation. And so, we pray...

Gracious God, many in our world are struggling. We are filled with anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, angry, hurt, scared, and grieving for ourselves and for others. Lord, we pray for all who lost their lives in Afghanistan; for their families who grieve; we ask you to bring healing to those who are affected by war, body, mind and soul; encourage their caregivers. God of all people, lead Americans, our allies and their families still hoping to find their way to a safe refuge. We pray for ourselves as we receive strangers who cause us anxiety; help us put in places ways to express care for those who may become our neighbors and security for our families. Help us to remember immigrants are also anxious and fearful as they come into a new world.

Lord, we pray for all affected by the wind, rain, fire, earthquake, and flood. So many have lost their lives, families, homes, pets, a favorite toy or memento – and their livelihoods through the destructive power of nature. Send your comfort and the helpers who can support the individuals affected to rebuild their lives amid their grief and loss. Encourage us to be generous with our resources. As help arrives, grant Lord a fair distribution and an awareness that there are still people who care. God may the light of your steadfast love and faithfulness shine through us.

God, the numbers of people ill with COVID and the numbers of people dying from COVID keep rising. In your mercy, help us to find a way through – both through the pandemic and through the hard feelings many have for one another. We pray for those returning to the classrooms and to workplaces – feeling the emotional tension that is in the air. We pray for health care providers and for those who are dependent upon them. God help us respect one another, care for one another, understand the needs of one another. God grant us the clarity we need to make wise decisions. God, again, show us the way, the truth and the life. Help to follow Jesus and his ways as we experience the hard news in the world today.

Joy, peace, and community are your gifts and are among us even when we fail to notice. Encourage us to share them through the power of Jesus' love. Amen.

## ***Jacoba's 2<sup>nd</sup> page***

It was good to be at the Fair again this year. I saw a few people, however there were fewer exhibitors and my other church work caused me to miss seeing most of our youth show their animals. I did get to see Luke and he did well. Iris' poster got a blue ribbon. We again



worshiped with Calvary at the Fair this year. It was good to see both our members and Calvary's. A bonus this year was our food give away. Pasta salad, refrigerator pickles, cheese and home baked bread were given away at the church, fair and delivered to some of our friends.

Fresh Church Made Bread and the Church Refrigerator filled with our food to share.



### **Blessings of School Children, Staff and Backpacks**

On Sunday, the 12<sup>th</sup> we will pray for our children, the school staff, and our Sunday School. Children are invited to bring their backpacks.

### **Outdoor Service – Lunch to Go September 19, 2021**

#### **Lower Parking Lot**

We are planning an outdoor service; if the weather is inclement, we will worship inside as usual. We had also planned to have a picnic after the service. With the rising numbers of people ill with COVID in the Neillsville area we are putting the picnic on hold for now. We thank the Mission and Outreach Committee for their oversight in the preparation of this month's give-a-way lunch.

#### **Confirmation**

We have three students beginning their Confirmation Classes. Our class will meet twice a month on Wednesday evenings and once a month on a Sunday (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday) for a longer session.

### **Supporting Haiti and Those Affected by the Storms**

When disasters strike, our denomination responds. I send my \$\$ through the UCC because the overhead costs are covered by other funds and almost all of my \$\$ go to the disaster I want to assist.

Here is the address to send your \$\$  
**United Church of Christ PO BOX 71957  
Cleveland, OH 44194.**

Please be sure to note "2021 Severe Storms" or Haiti or wherever you want your \$\$ directed. The website you can make your donations through is **ucc.org**. I then search for the disaster I want to support – today for instance – Haiti, or 2021 Storms. You will then be directed to the place for making donations for particular disasters.

## **Facts and Figures of Jul-Aug 2021**

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

August 1	Sunday	36
August 8	Sunday	28
August 15	Fair Sunday	55
August 22	*online 3 Sunday	26
August 29	*online 3 Sunday	37

*\*online watching at time of service*

### **Offerings for Aug 9-23, 2021**

#### **August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

General Offering	\$2,593.00
House of Mercy	50.00

#### **August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021**

General Offering	\$ 2,168.00
Mission Outreach	76.00
Haiti	1,000.00
Christmas/Family Help	492.28

July VANCO General Offering    \$  
1,131.96

*THANK YOU*



### **August Radio Sponsors**

On Sunday, August 1, the radio broadcast was sponsored anonymously in praise and thanksgiving of God our Father.

On Sunday, August 8, the radio broadcast was sponsored by a faithful listener.

On Sunday, August 15, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Lorraine Shaw in memory of her husband, Bob.

On Sunday, August 22, the radio broadcast was sponsored by a faithful listener.

On Sunday, August 29, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Rosie & Jim Repinski in celebration of Jim's 84<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **2022 Radio Broadcast Sponsors Needed**

Would you like to sponsor a 2022 radio broadcast? Please call the church office to see what dates are available. You may choose to dedicate or honor someone for a particular service date. We believe our radio broadcast is a valued service 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 2021. The cost remains the same: \$75.00 full broadcast; \$37.50 half broadcast; and \$25.00 for a third broadcast.

**REMINDER** - Please remember to lock doors. If you are using a key to unlock any one of the church doors, please be sure to check that the doors are locked upon your leaving. We no longer have someone checking the doors.



from Stephanie Heck

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** will begin on September 12<sup>th</sup>  
with in-person or Zoom.

There will be two groups:

3K thru 4<sup>th</sup> grade

5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade

Parents, please let me know if you are attending  
via Zoom, so I can email the activity sheets to you  
beforehand. Masks are recommended/required  
during Sunday School.

Please use **ONLY** the front entrance of church for  
pickup and drop off, as the doors downstairs will  
be locked. Also, on September 12<sup>th</sup> there will be a  
blessing of backpacks during church service for the  
kids to join in.



6-Bruce & Margie Rakestraw

8-Micky & Carla Marty

12-Travis & Ashley Vine

13-Guy & Sue Jodarski

16-Craig & Wendy Sigurdson

Ken & Barb Shoemaker

20-Scott & Jill Williams

22-Dale & Betty Opelt

23-Crispin & Lisa Hediger

Mitchell & Cassie Erickson



**SEPTEMBER  
BIRTHDAYS**

1-Rosemary Opelt

Jerry Quicker

Logan Erickson

2-Fritz Hediger

3-M.E. Sjolín

5-Donita Follen

Joel Raine

Cheryl Steinbach

Hannah Erickson

6-Charlotte Gress

Audrey Vradenburg

Crispin Hediger

7- Annette Felser

10-Karlene Wallace

11-Mike Perkl

12-John Vornholt

14-JoAnn Wren

16-Iris Vine

17-Mary Finney

18-Anna Raine

19-Wendy Sigurdson

22-Linette Kuhn

Leah Wilson

23-Carole Romens

William Ziegler

24-Michelle Kranz

25-Rosanne Repinski

26-Mackenzie Hediger

28-Oliver Raine

Ruth Zwieg

***Happy Birthday to all who have a September birthday! Did we miss your birthday or have the wrong date? Let us know if we did.***

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

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

By: Dave Harnisch

The Stewardship Committee met in-person on August 4, 2021.

Stewardship Committee members considered the current Committee member requirement found in our church bylaws and are asking those interested in being placed on the committee to contact the church office or Pastor Jacoba. Currently, the committee has four members.

For any person(s) interested in joining the Committee, the members thought it important that information be presented here as to what our church bylaws state in regard to committee membership and responsibilities:

### Section 5.11 Stewardship Committee

5.11.1 Membership: Five members. Annually a chairperson shall be elected. A quorum consists of three people.

5.11.2 Meetings will be held quarterly or as needed.

5.11.3 Responsibilities:

5.11.3.1 Provide the principles of stewardship in the congregation by every

5.11.3.2 Challenge all members of the Congregation in their liberal giving of time, talent, and treasure to Christ through the Church.

Also at the August meeting, Committee members also discussed using the theme adopted by the general synod for our local UCC Stewardship Campaign, "Rooted in Love." According to Reverend Andrew Warner, this theme "Draws inspiration from Psalm 1: *They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season.*" Members are reviewing the related resources made available by the general synod.

As members of the congregation are aware, the *Volunteer of the Year Award* was not presented by the Committee last year, so members are discussing presenting an award to two separate individuals--for both 2020 and 2021.

The plan at this time is to distinguish two outstanding volunteers at a Stewardship Committee sponsored lunch to be held on

October 24. In addition to the *Volunteer of the Year Awards*, the lunch is also being held to express appreciation to ALL members of the congregation who have given of their time, talent, and treasures.

Members of the Stewardship Committee and Pastor Jacoba will continue to review upcoming webinars, seminars, and workshops for opportunities to glean more information on ways to encourage generosity.

Current Stewardship Committee members are: Acting chairperson M.E. Sjolín, Marge Goetsch, Jo Ann Voss, and Dave Harnisch. The next Stewardship Committee meeting is scheduled for September 8, 2021.



#### Donate to Neighbors in Need Collection

Have you ever thought that we are God's hands as we help our neighbors? On Sunday, October 3rd our church will be doing a special offering for Neighbors in Need (NIN). It is a special mission offering that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry. Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities and a Covid-19 relief fund. Please consider giving to the NIN collection on October 3rd. Giving folders will be in church pews and the vestibule during September.

The Stewardship Committee



# FRIENDS on a MISSION

## Help with PowerPoint during Worship

We would like to create a team of people to help with our worship services. To help with the PowerPoint is fairly easy – pay attention to what is going on during the service and hit an arrow button on the computer. There is a list of dates and helpers can sign up for the dates that work for them.

A second team of helpers is being formed to run the audio-visual part of the service – working the camera and sound system. This takes a little more skill. Allen is ready to teach anyone interested. There are also directions with pictures.

The following volunteers are people who represent area churches and volunteer organizations. Mary Dick, Judy Morrow, Karol Debevec, Diane Perko, Linda Osegard, Marie Jorgenson, Dorothy Counsell, Amber Zank, Sandy Egstad, Carol Tomasello, Lorraine Spencer, Bonnie Langreck, Margy Hagen, Judy Willhite, Mary Sladich, Lyn Schoengarth, Peggy Buchda, Diane Renne, Janis Smith, Vicki Steffen have helped us with our meals.

Our church has been instrumental in making our give-away meals. The following members have helped us. Barb Petkovsek, Kathy Mathis, Ruth Zweig, Emile Miller, JoAnn Voss. Deb Perkl, Susy Karl, Carol Harnisch, Bonnie Weyer, Carole Romens, Doris Bakker, Mike Perkl and Ray Weyer.

In the next month's members of PEO, and Living Hope have committed to help make our meals.

After each workday we have asked people who helped if they were willing to come again and help. All have said they were willing to come back and help again. This mission is planned to continue as long as we have funding and willing participants to make the meals.

Please continue to return the jars and lids. We could also use any brown grocery bags that you have. If you have any extra produce from your gardens, please call the church to see if we could use it for our meal preparation. If we missed your name on this list, please forgive us. When you help the next time, we will do a better job of listing the helpers. If you are interested in joining us in preparation of our meals, please call the office and leave your name. We work on the Thursday and Friday before the third Sunday of the month.

### Mission and Outreach

Kathy Mathis  
Carole Romens  
Carol Harnisch

Bonnie Weyer  
Deb Perkl

## **Update Constitution and Bylaws**

### **August 28, 2021**

In April 2021, UCC members were invited to join an ad hoc committee to examine the current church constitution and by laws. The UCC constitution and by laws were last reviewed by a similar committee in 2012.

The constitution is the overarching document used by UCC churches, to provide a framework for the church as a whole, the membership, the pastor as well as the council, and the committees. The by laws define the structure, role and purpose for the board and committees.

Barb Petkosevk, Dave Harnisch, Doris Bakker and Paul Vine, volunteered to be part of the ad hoc committee. In May these members along with Pastor Jacoba began the review of other UCC constitutions. The committee also identified issues with the existing constitution and by laws. Below are some of the key concerns.

1. **There is a lack of consistent members at the monthly council meetings.**
  - a. Some committees only have one representative on the council while others have two representatives. In addition, committees may send a different representative each month.
  - b. This lack of consistency requires the group to go back and update new members.
  - c. The current model reduces the council's ability to plan and focus for the future.
2. **The current committee structure is not sustainable with declining membership:**
  - a. The current constitution, and/or bylaws, outline the number of members on each committee. In turn the nominating committee is required to "fill" slots. This sometimes results in members being placed on a committee where they may or may not have any interest or skills.
  - b. *"There are more people listed on committees than are regularly in pews".*
  - c. *"New members come in front door, get placed on a committees, burn out and leave out the back door"*
3. **Congregational meeting structure outdated/problematic**
  - a. The constitution requires an annual meeting and quarterly meetings. In reviewing other UCC constitutions, none held quarterly meetings.
  - b. The annual church budget is approved by membership at the annual meeting held in January/Feb. The budget starts on January 1.
4. **The current constitution and bylaw language is redundant and does not accurately reflect duties of volunteers and church staff**
  - a. The by laws have confusing language for treasurer, secretary etc..
5. **Officers currently have no role or vote or can be part of the required quorum.**
  - a. The current constitution does not allow the moderator, vice moderator, treasurer or recording secretary a vote.

The ad hoc committee is continuing to meet and discuss options. The ad hoc committee has discussed possible revisions, **however at this time the current constitution and by laws remain in place.**

The committee wants to present draft recommendations to the council and congregation in October or November, 2021. The intent is that revisions will be presented at the 2022 annual meeting.

## **RESTORING RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH MOTHER EARTH**

*A Four-Day Immersion Experience*

**October 7-10, 2021**

**PILGRIM CENTER - UCCI • GREEN LAKE, WI**

Join us on Ho Chunk land at Green Lake as we immerse ourselves in a four-day experience to explore how local churches will faithfully respond to calls for justice from Wisconsin's Native American communities, care for creation, and work together for racial equity. The four-day program, "Restoring Right Relationship with Mother Earth" will engage participants in open dialog about fundamental understandings about the nature of place, notions of ownership and stewardship, and our relationship to a shared history.

Program activities include various presentations on the Doctrine of Discovery, participation in the Blanket Exercise and in Talking Circles. Participants will learn how to make their own personal Talking Circle Stick, which they will be able to take home. The program highlight will be a virtual keynote talk by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, botanist, and author of *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants*. Robin will speak on "What the Earth Asks of Us?"

Ho Chunk and Ojibwe elders will talk about the rights of nature and the sacredness of water and the Women's Water Walk Ceremony. Participants will also learn about the environmental challenges facing Wisconsin tribal communities, including the identification and protection of Native mounds and burial sites at Green Lake. We finish the four-day program with Sunday Service, a brief informal ceremony on the renaming of the Pilgrim Center, and a Ho Chunk drum send off.

You will be assigned to one of several lodges containing bedrooms for two or up to four people. If you wish to be housed with a traveling mate, please indicate this on the registration form. Every attempt will be made to honor your request. Children ages 12 and older are welcome to attend with adult supervision. Programming is inappropriate for children younger than 12 years. We ask that you take into consideration the health and safety of all who will be participating in the four-day event by following the COVID-19 recommendations of Pilgrim Center camp management.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone who feels the Spirit's call to work for reconciliation and reparations be allowed to attend regardless of cost. Please check with your local congregation to see if scholarship monies are available to help defray costs. United Church Camps, Inc. will also offer scholarships to anyone who applies (see the confirmation email).

We look forward to seeing you October 7 – 10th at Pilgrim Center!

Registration is at [UCCI.org](https://UCCI.org) \$300 – as it says above there may be scholarships available.

### **"Braiding Sweetgrass" Book Sale**

This option allows you to purchase a copy of our Guest speaker's, Robin Wall Kimmerer, book "Braiding Sweet Grass". This book will be read through out the weekend and will be a part of large group book read along. If you chose this option you will receive your copy at registration. This book is an optional buy. (\$25.00)



## Hymnals, Contemporary Songs

The Music Committee made the decision to purchase several copies of the New Century Hymnal. If you prefer to see the notes as well as the words (projected on the screen), please pick up a hymnal on your way into the sanctuary. The page numbers of the hymns will be projected during the announcements. When copyrights of music we use from other sources allow us to make the music available, we will do so.

When the projector and screen were purchased, the plan was to move to language less archaic and to use more contemporary music. With that in mind, the Music Committee is also purchasing the right to use copyrighted music from a group of composers which includes Bryan Sirchio.

We will also sing some traditional hymns from time to time – and music will be made available when we have the copyright to the music.

Being fair to composers we have been careful to copy only music for which have copyright. For many songs, we can copy the words but not the tune because of how copyrights work. When we began streaming, our services, we added a license for streaming. YouTube and Facebook have removed the music from other churches when they haven't documented their copyright licenses. The Music Committee is trying their best to guide our church to stay within the laws governing music.

**Thank you** to the Sam and Marian Ray Family Opportunity Fund and the Investment Committee for funding our Grandma & Me Camp at Pilgrim Center, Green Lake, WI (August 8-11). What a wonderful experience to bring my Grandson, Benjamin to. This is his 2nd time going and loves every minute of it. We spent the morning learning about Jonah and the Whale, Esther and how she helped her people to safety, and what a Covenant was. The kids made their own boats and floated them down the stream. They reviewed the story about Esther by performing a skit. The kids' Covenant was to try new things, make new friends, be kind to others, help each other--the counselors said they all did a wonderful job with this. The days went by fast as the kids and Grandparents/parents were able to kayak (first time for everything), tie-dye t-shirts, go on nature walks, swim (Benjamin signed us up to do the Polar Swim at 6:45 am....brrr), water relays, making and eating s'mores, learning new songs and before meal prayers, quiet time (much needed) and enjoying our meals each day (they know how to spoil the campers). It was such a fun experience for both Benjamin and I. We truly thank the church for this kind and generous opportunity to attend our UCC Summer Camps.

Love, Grandma Wendy Sigurdson and Benjamin Mathis



## *Holiday Fair News*

**There will be a meeting of all women of the church on Monday, September 13, at 6:30pm to discuss this year's Holiday Fair. We will meet in the basement for Social Distancing. Beginning Wednesday Sept. 8 at 6:30 Crafts for the Holiday Fair will be made in the workroom upstairs (every Wednesday)**

We are going to try to hold our annual Holiday Fair at the church for 2021, unless the church is closed due to COVID or any other obstacle. Mark your calendar for Saturday, November 13, 2021!

Remember this church event while you are cleaning out your home for the fall. We are looking for the following items to create new items for sale:

- Old pails
- Pallets
- Old and/or new pine or barn boards
- Shutters
- Old wooden framed screen doors
- Old wooden kitchen chairs
- Old milk cans
- Old wooden sleds
- Old license plates
- Any metal containers

If you have or know where we can obtain any of the above items to be donated, please contact Carla Marty at 715-937-0077 or Emile Miller at 715-937-4626.

We will begin our Wednesday work nights at the Carla Marty residence shortly, watch the UCC Church Facebook page for the exact starting date! If you are interested in a night out and helping the church, please contact either Carla or myself; Carla can find a job for you to do no matter what your talent is!

If you have ideas that you would like us to try to incorporate with the Holiday Fair, please let us know. Thank you for your support, both in the past and for the future of our church.

Em and Carla



# 2021

# United Church Of Christ

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
<b>5 Fifteenth Sunday</b> <b>After Pentecost</b> 9:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio	<b>6</b> 9:00 Card Making Group meeting	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Crafts 6:30 pm	<b>9</b> 1:30 Circle of Friends Meeting on Zoom	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12 Sixteenth Sunday</b> <b>After Pentecost</b> 10:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio	<b>13</b> 6:30 Women's Meeting to discuss 2021 Holiday Fair - church basement	<b>14</b> 4:30pm Deacons Meeting at church	<b>15</b> 6:30 Confirmation  Crafts 6:30 pm	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19 Seventeenth</b> <b>Sunday After</b> <b>Pentecost</b> 10:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio/ Confirmation	<b>20</b> 9:00 Card Making Group meeting	<b>21</b> 5:30pm Trustees 7:30pm Council Meeting at church	<b>22</b>  Crafts 6:30 pm	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26 Eighteenth</b> <b>Sunday After</b> <b>Pentecost</b> 10:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 10:00 visitation 11:00 funeral service/Snick Quicker 6:30 Confirmation Crafts 6:30 pm	<b>30</b>		