



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)  
February, 2022

While saying goodbye does mean accepting that a part of our life is now over,  
it also provides us with a chance to realize just how blessed our lives have been.

***Jacob's jottings***... I have said good-bye many times. Church goodbyes have always been hard for me – already when I was 15 years old. The pastors and people of the congregations I attended and served have touched my life deeply. Each time I left a congregation, I experienced grief. And yet, even in the leaving, I knew God remained with my friends and God also moved with me to a new place. When we no longer saw each other, God's presence in our lives would continue to connect us. My faith that God will hold you and offer to you the support you need helps me to let go of people who are dear to me and ministries that are important to me.

Letting go means saying good-bye. True enough, we would rather say so long – until we see each other again. Yet, I have learned when friends move away at the very least the relationship changes; and sometimes as we move on the relationship ends. That doesn't mean the relationship wasn't important as it was enjoyed. In my case, I cared for you and about you. As I write this, I think of you, the people with whom I have laughed and cried:

You who attend worship – every Sunday or occasionally.

Confirmation classes - the youth, teaching assistants and my partners on Wednesday evenings.

The children - Sunday School, VBS, Children's Time – talking and hugging as we meet

Sitting around tables in meetings and eating in Fellowship Hall or in our homes or restaurants

You who visited in my office

Presiding at church funerals has become harder because I have loved and supported the deceased and their families. I also remember being with you in the hospitals and taking communion with you at home and at NRC Services. Members who were most vulnerable have always had a special place in my heart. I appreciate the many opportunities to be with you – not only when you are sick, dying or struggling, but also when we celebrate your family's life stages, at the Fair and school events, and doing the work of the church with you.

Still, there comes a time to let go and move on. For me, this month, letting go will mean letting go of my ministry among you and letting go of the relationships we have formed. In order, for your interim to fully be your pastor, I must step back from our relationships. I will remove all church members as my friends on Facebook; I will no longer be on church Facebook pages. I will not be able to take your phone calls or respond to your texts. My email account will be cleared so the pastors who follow me can use the address nuccpastor at gmail.com if they choose to do so. However, if in a few years, you want to connect again – do reach out. I love seeing pictures and hearing how things are going for you. Youth I confirmed 25 years ago are Facebook Friends – and I love it.

Good-byes are more challenging in this time of COVID. Some of you have told me you are not ready for group events. I understand and so have asked the Leadership Council to not host a dinner. I also know the importance of saying good-bye. I learned as a child, never to leave a gathering without saying good-bye (with

a firm handshake and eye contact) to everyone present. So, to leave without saying good-bye to you is hard for me. Yet, I understand the reluctance of some members – and I admit- catching something on my last Sunday is not fair to the movers, my family and the new congregation as we work closely together for several days. I have begun to meet with individuals and families in places where they are comfortable as we say good-bye. If you want to set up a time, let me know.

Know that I have enjoyed many relationships in Neillsville. I will miss you. I will miss you. You will call new pastors who will also love and care for you and help you to be faithful on your journey. But most importantly, God's love never ends and it God's love that will connect us today and in eternity. God bless you all! – And thank you for calling me to be your pastor nearly nine years ago.

### **February Worship Services**

**On February 6th** – we will receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

**On February 13** –the Sacrament of Holy Baptism will be celebrated.

**On February 20** – we will celebrate the Rite of Confirmation as three young people confess their faith in God and state their desire to be followers of Jesus Christ. They will also share their Statements of Faith. With them, we will receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion

**On February 27** – This will be my last Sunday as your pastor. We will exchange blessings and forgiveness as we move our separate ways. I do not know all that is planned for this day however God will be worshiped – and I think our text will be Psalm 139.

### **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING FEBRUARY 13, 2022, AFTER WORSHIP**

### **Afghan Refugee Donations**

Lots of clothes and items were collected for the Afghan Refugees at Fort McCoy – Kirk and Nancy Rodman and Carol and Dave Harnisch sorted through the clothes. If the items did not seem fitting for the Afghans, they were passed on to those who could use them. Nancy and Kirk made several trips to Sparta to deliver the donations. Thank you all for your donations and to Nancy and Kirk and Dave and Carol.

**The programs we supported with our donations are no longer accepting donations – so no further donations will be accepted at UCC.**

### **Church Break In**

Our church was broken into sometime between Saturday night and early Sunday morning, January 29-30. Because the police needed to secure the building and do their investigation, we had to cancel Sunday School and church. Damage and theft were minimal. Knowing someone invaded our holy space with ill will has angered and saddened us. We are also grateful that no one was hurt and that that which is particularly dear to us and valuable was not taken or vandalized. The Neillsville City Police are working hard to find the individual responsible.

### **Confirmation**

Several church members stated on Facebook how much the movie "The Shack" had touched their lives. Their comments reminded me of the power of the book and movie. I assigned watching it to our confirmands. After we watched it, we talked about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, sin, forgiveness, life and death, heaven, and forgiveness were among the subjects of our conversation.

The Confirmands are working hard as we complete their studies with me, write their Statements of Faith, and begin to read the Gospel of Luke. We know that not all the requirements will be completed on February 20 when they are confirmed. They will continue to work with their parents and mentors to finish what they have agreed to do. I am confident they will!



## **SAVE THE DATE - February 27<sup>th</sup>** **Pastor Jacoba's Farewell**



### **Sunday School News** from Stephanie Heck

We will continue to meet on Sundays at 9:15 am for all kids ages 3K thru 6th

grade in person and via Zoom for both groups. Please let us know if joining on Zoom, so we make sure to watch and let you into the meeting.

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

Would you like to sponsor a 2022 radio broadcast? Please check the listing below 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.

The cost remains the same: \$75.00 full broadcast; \$37.50 half broadcast; and \$25.00 for a third broadcast.

#### **2022 Dates still open**

Mar 27	Aug 14	Nov 20
Apr 3	<del>Aug 21</del>	Nov 27
<del>Apr 17</del>	Sept 11	Dec 4
Apr 24	Sept 18	Dec 18
Jul 3	Oct 23	Dec 25
Jul 10	Oct 30	
Jul 17		
Jul 30		

### **Facts and Figures of January 2022**

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

January 2	*online 12	Sunday	28
January 9	*online 13	Sunday	31
January 16	*online 15	Sunday	39
January 23	*online 10	Sunday	30
January 30	worship service canceled due to break-in		
	<i>*online watching at time of service</i>		

### **Offerings for January 2022**

#### **January 10, 2022**

General Offering	\$1,500.00
Back Pack	100.00

#### **January 24, 2022**

General Offering	\$3,149.00
Mission Outreach	276.00
Refugee Outreach	75.00



Sunday, January 2, the radio broadcast was sponsored by a faithful listener.

Sunday, January 9, the radio broadcast was sponsored by JoAnn Voss in celebration of husband, Wayne Voss's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Sunday, January 16, the radio broadcast was sponsored by a faithful listener.

Sunday, January 23, the radio broadcast was sponsored by a faithful listener.

Sunday, January 30, the radio broadcast was sponsored by a faithful listener.



## **COFFEE HOUR** **HOSTS WANTED**

We again want to offer an opportunity for Fellowship. We are serving doughnuts, coffee, and water. We are asking the hosts to stop at the IGA on their way to the worship service, pick up the already ordered doughnuts (cost covered by the church), make the coffee in the church lounge (clear directions are available to make coffee) and roll the cart out to the narthex near the end of worship.

We ask that the host straighten up the area, return the cart to the lounge and rinse out the coffee pot.



## **REMINDER**

Souper Bowl Challenge  
with Neillsville area  
churches participating  
now thru  
Super Bowl Sunday,  
February 13<sup>th</sup>.  
**BRING YOUR SOUP  
CANS IN NOW to the  
Narthex.**

Stewardship Scripture Quotes  
**GENEROSITY**

*"Each of you should give what you have  
decided in your heart to give,  
Not reluctantly or under compulsion,  
For God loves a cheerful giver.  
2 CORINTHIANS 9 : 7*



NONE – isn't that surprising?

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



- 1- Patricia Acheson  
Toni Carl
- 2- Sarah Fields  
Sue Vornholt
- 3- Lylah Wilson
- 5- Kyson Erickson
- 6- Krista Hamm  
Paul Vine
- 7- Lorraine Shaw
- 8- Kinsley McDonald  
Darwin Zwiag
- 12- Bailey Schumacher  
Riley Voigt
- 15- Joseph Holman
- 18- Frances Ormond  
DeWayne Seelow
- 19- Gary Corey
- 20- Darrin Loberg
- 22- Jacoba Koppert  
Marilyn Marty
- 25- Janet Harrington  
Jason Raine
- 28- Olivia Friemoth

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



The following list was omitted in the January Newsletter but would like to share it with you now.

- JoAnn Wren – in honor of all Veterans past and present
- JoAnn Wren – In memory of Olivia Reigel (Wren), granddaughter
- Gayle Schermitzler – in memory of husband, John Schermitzler
- Doris Bakker
- Edie Petersen – Honoring the friendship of Howie & Kathy Mathis
- Kevin & Jenny Erickson – In honor of our children
- Kevin & Jenny Erickson – in honor of our parents
- Howard & Kathy Mathis – In honor of our family present and past
- Gramma Kathy & Grampa Howie – in honor or Millie Kay Mathis' baptism
- Rev. Jacoba Koppert – In honor or her mother, Johanna Koppert
- Pastor Jim & Karen Mohr – in honor of our parents
- Mike & Debbie Perkl – In honor of Marge Goetsch
- Mike & Debbie Perkl – in honor or Max, Brooklyn, & Jordie Boon and Kendall Nett
- Byrl & Sharon Buddenhagen – In memory of Bob Carpentier
- Byrl & Sharon Buddenhagen – in memory of Mary White



*One of Pastor Jacoba's favorite prayers for meditation*

### Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, Come,  
 Replace the tension within me  
 with a holy relaxation,  
 Replace the turbulence within me  
 with a sacred calm,  
 Replace the anxiety within me  
 with a quiet confidence,  
 Replace the fear within me,  
 with a strong faith.  
 Replace the bitterness within me  
 with the sweetness of grace,  
 Replace the darkness within me  
 with a gentle light,  
 Replace the coldness within me  
 with a loving warmth,  
 Replace the night within me with your day,  
 Replace the winter within me  
 with your spring.

Straighten my crookedness,  
 Fill my emptiness,  
 Dull the edge of my pride,  
 Sharpen the edge of my humility,  
 Light the fires of my love,  
 Quench the flames of my lust.

Let me see myself as you see me,  
 That I may see You as You have promised,  
 And be fortunate according to your word,  
 "Blessed are the pure of heart,  
 for they shall see God." Amen.



CHRISTMAS ANGEL PROJECT 2021  
Neillsville/Grantton/Chili/Humbird  
100% volunteer organization

In our seventeenth year, this project served 250 children of 100 families!  
We were able to provide winter clothing, boots, food, and other needed items because of your gracious contribution.

Volunteers begin shopping in January to find the best bargains allowing us to provide warm winter clothing for children the following Christmas. Volunteers knit, crochet, quilt, and make stuffed bears (often, using items donated by local businesses and individuals) throughout the entire year in anticipation of providing homemade items to needy children.

THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS.

We contact donors in the fall with requests for contributions. Local merchants are contacted for prices for large quantities of items.

THANK YOU DONORS AND LOCAL MERCHANTS.

Families are referred from Social Services, local schools, food pantries and churches.

THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHOM REFER FAMILIES IN NEED.

Tags, each representing a child, are placed on Christmas trees in the community. Community members choose names from the trees and purchase gift items for each child. Employee groups of local businesses also contact us to obtain tags for children and they purchase gifts. Volunteers transport the gifts to the United Church of Christ. The gifts are sorted into boxes designated for each family. Due to the pandemic, gifts were not wrapped. This year, each family received wrapping paper and tape. Each family received several bags of groceries, including non-perishable items plus milk, ham, cheese, and bread. Families who were able picked up their gift packages this year. Volunteers, armed with masks and hand cleaner, delivered the rest.

THANK YOU TO THE COMMUNITY AND ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS.

This is a wonderful project that benefits needy children and families in our local communities. We often accept late applications (some as late as December 23!) and strive to meet the needs of any family in need. The delivery people are rewarded with big smiles from children who are excited about something as simple as cheese or their favorite cereal! We thank the United Church of Christ for generously allowing us to utilize their space for nearly a month.

Thank you for your part in making this a successful project!

Stacy Schilling  
Coordinator

*Thanks for everything!  
Stacy*



## United Church Of Christ

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Each Sunday 9:15 Sunday School 10:00 Church Service 11:00 Radio		1	2 6:15 pm Confirmation	3	4	5
6 <u>Fifth Sunday after Epiphany</u> Communion	7 9:00 Card Making Group meeting	8 10:00 Neillsville Clergy Meeting  5:00 Deacons Mtg	9 6:15 pm Confirmation	10 1:30 Circle of Friends Mtg	11 9:00 Constitution Mtg	12
13 <u>Sixth Sunday after Epiphany</u> Sacrament of Holy Baptism Annual Meeting after worship Confirmation Class	14	15 5:00 Trustees Mtg 6:30 Leadership Council Mtg	16 6:15 pm Confirmation	17	18	19
27 <u>Transfiguration</u> Pastor's Farewell	28					