

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Neillsville, Wisconsin**  
**Church 715-743-2147**  
**Pastor James Mohr**  
**Pastor Sue Vornholt**  
**Pastor's Office 715-743-2117**  
[www.neillsvilleucc.org](http://www.neillsvilleucc.org)

## **APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER**

PASTOR'S MESSAGE FOR APRIL @ NUCC  
RANDOM REFLECTIONS IN LATE MARCH

Various thoughts enter my mind as I write this message during the last weeks of Lent. Just this morning I learned from Sue that one of the saints of our congregation, Betty Opelt, died. In another part of this newsletter, you can read details about her funeral to take place in the church on April 13. Betty was indeed a beloved member of this church and a dear friend to all of us. Last week while Karen and I were visiting relatives in Washington, Sue paid a visit to Betty and gave her communion. I will be meeting with Betty's family this morning and Sue will conduct the funeral while Karen and I are once again absent visiting our daughter in Baltimore. This reminded me of the twenty years I spent in "team ministry" at Our Saviour's UCC in Ripon with Harley Tretow and Eric Burnard. We shared in all aspects of ministry and members could usually count on one of us being present to minister to/with them. It was a good experience then and now it is also a pleasure to be in a team ministry with Sue Vornholt, knowing that we can share duties and privileges working in God's vineyard called Neillsville - United Church of Christ. Of course, it is an advantage that we trust and like one another, and we are glad to have the support of the Church Council as each of us retired folks also seeks to help our own congregation while pursuing other duties and pleasures. In the meantime, we wish the search committee a speedy, successful search for a new "settled" pastor!

When we visit other locations Karen and I often enjoy worshiping with a local congregation. Last week we discovered the North Point Church just a few minutes away from our relatives in Poulsbo, Washington. Usually, I'm turned off by churches that try to come up with a cool, noncommittal name, but I checked out this church's website and discovered they are a relatively new church plant by the Presbyterian Church USA. Apparently, the Presbyterians are trying to appeal to a broad range of people and therefore have decided not to overtly advertise their denomination. Anyway, we along with our sister-in-law Jeanette decided to attend the 9:30 a.m. worship service and were greeted by friendly folks at the door, given name tags and invited to take a seat. Worship was what you might call "blended" with only guitar and piano. While we would have preferred that the "blend" lean a bit more to actual hymns we appreciated the lively choir and attention-grabbing sermon on Jesus and the woman caught in adultery, which taught us to "lead from grace." We left the service glad that we had made the effort to attend.

The other church we had considered attending was historic (by west coast standards) First Lutheran Church in the middle of this town which advertises itself as "Little Norway." On my Monday morning walk I stopped by the church and was greeted by the friendly office administrator, who had grown up in Platteville. This church also seemed welcoming, and if we had been more ambitious, we might have attended their 11:00 service 😊

Now we are home for a while and grateful for our own church's cooperative ministry with Calvary Lutheran Church and ready to enter the last weeks of Lent as we prepare for Palm Sunday and Easter. On Wednesdays it has been, dare I say, fun to gain wisdom from the various "witnesses" to the crucifixion in the form of items like a nail, a robe, and a thorn. Now we'll see what else we can learn as we make our way to the garden and encounter the Risen Savior.

In God's grace,  
Pastor Jim

## Search Committee Update

The Search Committee will be meeting on March 29<sup>th</sup> as we have a few profiles that our Association Pastor, Michael Jones had the conference send us for review. We will be assessing the Ministerial Profiles to our church Profile. We continue to pray and wait for the ministerial profile whose gifts match those identified in the UCC-Neillsville Profile. Another aspect that we are looking for in this journey is to call a pastor that can lead a healthy relationship between the pastor and the congregation.



**To the entire family of Betty Opelt,** (including members of our church - husband Dale, daughters, Linda & John Stalsberg, Carla & Mickey Marty, Roberta & Bob Gaier, Lisa Opelt) we extend our heartfelt sympathy on the loss of a dedicated and cherished member

of our church. Betty was often found in our kitchen taking on the lead role. She was an active member serving on our Christian Education Committee including confirmation mentor, Deacons, Pastoral Search Committee, Holiday Fair, Quilting Guild and Choir and most anywhere her church needed her. Betty passed away on March 23, 2023 at her home. **A "Celebration of Life" will be held here at UCC on Thursday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. Visitation from 1-2 PM, with the service at 2 PM.**

**Per Betty's request an "ice cream social" will be held following the service in the fellowship hall.**



- † Continuing the following in our thoughts and prayers.
- |                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Darlene Mueller    | Glenna Rhoades   |
| Dolores Johnson    | Graeme Williams  |
| Lisa Schermitzler  | Janet Harrington |
| Gayle Schermitzler | Dave Beck        |
- Please let us know if others not listed (with their permission of course) would like prayer requests.

### **2023 Radio Broadcast Sponsors Needed**

**Many dates are open - would you like to sponsor a 2023 radio broadcast?** Please reserve your date with the church office. You may choose to honor or dedicate a particular service to someone. We believe our radio broadcast is a valued service and want to keep it on the air. The cost remains the same: \$75 for a full broadcast; \$37.50 for half broadcast.

**Did you know that we have a following of individuals who regularly watch our Sunday service on YouTube?** In addition, there is on average over 25 viewers each week who watch the service sometime during the following week. The radio broadcast which is an important outreach of our church and the audio in the sanctuary are also part of this process. Presently, we rely on only one person and a backup sub to manage the system each Sunday to make oin the 1960's, only two people, cousins Wayne Grap and Allan Hoesly have been responsible for this ministry. It would be nice to increase the pool of people who can do this, as we have done with the power-point presentation. If you are into playing video games, you might be interested in learning how to perform this service for our church. Please let Allan Hoesly or Emile Miller know. They would like very much to train additional people to fill this vital position.

## UCC Caregivers Group Update

Members and friends of UCC have initiated a Caregivers Group focused on helping other members and friends who are homebound, hospitalized or in a care facility. The group has met twice to get organized, ensuring visits are planned and caregivers have the tools to make each visit a positive experience.

The volunteers met on March 7th and again on March 23rd.. At the initial meeting Pastor Jim and Pastor Sue facilitated the discussion on how to get started. The group also reviewed the national UCC document titled *“Called To Care: Guidance for Caregivers”*.

The group agreed to use a common set of guidelines ensuring visits are planned and consistent. People in need of a visit will be “assigned” to one of the caregivers. The caregiver will contact the person in advance. Each caregiver will wear a UCC name tag. Caregivers each received the “The Pocket Handbook for Caregivers”, which includes guidelines as well as appropriate scripture and prayers.

When possible caregivers will visit in pairs, and leave a UCC business card. They will keep hospital care facility visits to 15-20 minutes and home visits to no more than 45 minutes. Caregivers will document their visits and Janice Miller, will keep a running list of visits.

In the coming weeks the group plans to visit twenty-two (22) friends and members of UCC. If you know of someone who would welcome a visit please contact Janice Miller, Administrative Assistant at 715-743-2147 or email at [neillsvilleuccoffice@gmail.com](mailto:neillsvilleuccoffice@gmail.com).

Thank you to the following Caregivers volunteers: Doris Bakker, Byrl Buddenhagen, Kelley Burch, Howie Mathis, Janice Miller, Pastor James Mohr, Karen Mohr, Barb Petkovsek, Kirk Rodman, Nancy Rodman, Paul Vine, JoAnn Voss, and Pastor Susan Vornholt.

The caregivers groups plan to meet every couple of months to review progress, add people in need, as well as welcome new volunteers. The next meeting of the caregivers group is 4:00PM Thursday, May 4, at UCC. All are welcome to attend, learn more about the group and join.



**APRIL 16, 2023**  
**11:00-11:15 AM**

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST-NEILLSVILLE**  
**515 WEST SECOND STREET**

# Church School News

from Stephanie Heck

We will meet on Sunday's at 9 AM, except we will not be meeting on Easter Sunday, April 9th. Please take this day to spend with family.



- The kids will be singing in church on Sunday, April 2nd.
- Our last day of Sunday School will be on Sunday, May 14th.
- Vacation Bible School will be held on Saturday, June 3rd from 9 AM - 2 PM. More details and registration information

Please reach out to Stephanie at 920-948-7783 with any questions.

## OFFERINGS FOR MARCH 2023

### March 6, 2023

|                           |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| General Offering          | \$4,005.00   |
| Circle of Friends         | 59.50        |
| Ukraine Family Fund       | 100.00       |
| Meal Give Away            | 25.00        |
| Kitchen Fund              | 70.00        |
| Christmas Fund            | 5.00         |
| One Great Hour of Sharing | <u>30.00</u> |
|                           | \$4,294.50   |

### March 20, 2023

|                     |              |
|---------------------|--------------|
| General Offering    | \$3,237.00   |
| Circle of Friends   | 52.00        |
| Ukraine Family Fund | 200.00       |
| Meal Give Away      | 276.00       |
| Kitchen Fund        | 90.00        |
| Lenten Offering     | <u>30.00</u> |
|                     | \$3,885.00   |

(Online Automatic Giving)  
**VANCO – General Offering \$792.02**

## Facts and Figures of March 2023

### Attendance for In-Person Worship

|          |            |           |
|----------|------------|-----------|
| March 5  | *online 6  | Sunday 56 |
| March 12 | *online 14 | Sunday 37 |
| March 19 | *online 8  | Sunday 58 |
| March 26 | *online 8  | Sunday 57 |



### Each Sunday in the month of March,

the radio broadcast was sponsored by  
 “a faithful listener”

This anonymous dedicated supporter of our radio ministry often fills in when no one has sponsored a service. We greatly appreciate this continued funding.

### Stewardship Scripture Quotes

Proverbs 3:27

**Give with a spirit of compassion and love.**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 30<sup>th</sup>**  
**Clark County Choraliers are planning to sing here during worship service.**



- 4- Carla Marty
- 5- Tye Kranz
- 6- Bonnie Weyer
- 9- Ray Weyer
- 10- Marlys Riedel
- 11- Kevin Erickson
- 15- Janice Miller
- 17- Scott Vradenburg
- 21- Darlene Celar-Mueller
- 23- Stephanie Heck
- 24- Jennifer Romens-Erickson
- 25- Bryce Erickson  
    Leslie Hemp-Buchholz
- 27- Susie Karl
- 28- Ben Mathis
- 30- Scott Williams

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



- 2- Jenna & Josh Ziegler
- 6- Neil & Corinne Armitage
- 14- Chad & Lacey Erickson
- 21- Nancy & Harold Boon  
    Keith & Tammy Loberg
- 26- Lynne & Tom Abel
- 27- Russ & Susie Karl
- 28- Joel & Marla Raine

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



### MAY 1 -9

We are adding first days of May's birthdays and anniversaries so as not to miss any if the Newsletter is late.

#### May 1-9 Birthdays

- 1- Don Quicker
- 3- Emily Voigt  
    Erin Voigt
- 6- Sharon Buddenhagen  
    Ashley Vine
- 7- Jocelyn Vine
- 9- Haylee Erickson

#### May 1-9 Anniversaries

- 2- Roberta & Bob Gaier
- 6- Ruth & Bob Schmidt
- 9- Ben & Kelly Mathis



**Marge Goetsch will be hosting  
a Bible Study Class at her home, every  
Tuesday at 1 PM  
510 W Fourteenth Street, Neillsville**

## **WE NEED YOUR HELP IN FILLING THESE DATES FOR HOSTING AFTER SERVICE FELLOWSHIP - Signup**

When Covid 19 arrived in 2020, UCC like most churches, eliminated in person services as well as other in person activities. Traditionally Neillsville UCC members volunteer to assist in hosting after service fellowship. We are seeking your help to continue hosting fellowship.

Hosts need to pick up donut holes at IGA, ensure the coffee is on, have some cheese slices, water and/or lemonade, cups, plates and napkins as well as cleaning up. If you would be willing to help please review the possible dates listed below and either sign up on the bulletin board or call Janice at the church office.

For details, please contact Karlene Wallace or Doris Bakker. If you cannot serve the day you signed up to serve, please find someone to trade with or replace you for that week.

2023

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Apr 2 Carole Romens                              | June 25               |
| April 9 EASTER – No Fellowship following service | July 2 Susie Karl     |
| April 16   | July 9 Barb Petkovsek |
| April 23 Nancy & Kirk Rodman                     | July 16               |
| April 30 Susie Karl                              | July 23               |
| May 7 Nancy & Kirk Rodman                        | July 30               |
| May 14 Christian Ed                              | Aug 6                 |
| May 21   | Aug 13                |
| May 28   | Aug 20                |
| June 4   | Aug 27                |
| June 11  | Sept 3                |
| June 18  | Sept 24               |

## **Update on Funeral Luncheon Teams**

Can you give your time to help with the funeral luncheons that are held at our church? Below is a list of teams that we use for each funeral and their duties. We are also in need of a Team Leader for the Clean Up Team. As the team leader, you would be responsible for calling members on your team when there is a funeral to set up the appropriate number of workers; **YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE AT EVERY FUNERAL**. If you would like to volunteer for this position or to be on any of the other teams, please give let me know. We can always use the help, so the same people aren't always being asked.

Calling Tree Team: Members of this team will be calling church members asking for a donation of bars, cakes, and/or Jell-O salads. If you would like to be on the call list of church members donating these items, please call the church administrative assistant to be added to the list.

Setting Tables Team: Members of this team will be setting the tables with placemats, napkins, silverware, salt and pepper shakers, creamers, coffee cups, and water cups.

Preparing Food Team: Members of this team will be arranging the bars and/or cakes on platters and/or individual plates, getting water pitchers filled, and serving on the buffet table(s).

Waitress/Waiter Team: Members of this team will be serving coffee, lemonade, and/or milk, clearing off the tables, and/or serving on the buffet table(s).

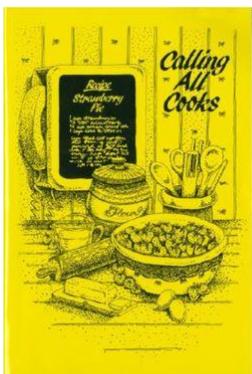
Clean Up Team: Members of this team will be washing (using the dishwasher) and drying dishes; mainly working in the kitchen.

Anywhere Needed Team: This is for those that are willing to help in any area that we would be short volunteers for.

If you could help, please give me a call. Thanks for considering to be a steward for your church.

Emile Miller  
715-937-4626

## **Baked Goods Auction Scheduled**



With COVID, we haven't been able to host our fun Baked Goods Auction since 2019 so ... calling all cooks, get ready, set, go!

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, April 30** right after church in the fellowship hall. Remember, it's just not pies, we will auction off bars, muffins, casseroles, hot dishes, or any other type of baked goods. Proceeds from this auction will go towards upgrading the church parking lot.

So now for the first step of this fundraiser, we need the help of our trusty bakers/cooks of the church. Please use the signup sheet in the narthex, if you are interested in making any items to be auction off. If you cannot make it to church to sign up for a baked good item, please call the church office and Janice will sign you up!

Bidders, if you have a favorite pie or baked goods, talk to the bakers/cooks so you get the one you want and a good donation to the church; what a deal!

Thanks for your continued support and get ready to bid!

Emile Miller & Carla Marty

**Place your order for Easter Lilies no later than April 3<sup>rd</sup>.** If you wish to dedicate your lilies, please let Janice know how you would like it listed in the bulletin. The cost of the lily is **\$17.00** and please make your check out to **UCC**. You make take your lily home after Easter worship service. Thank you for adding to the beauty of our church sanctuary on Easter Sunday.



### UCC Spring Chili Feed

On Monday, March 27 members and friends came together to host a community wide chili feed. Lunch and dinner was offered and over 80 community members joined us for chili. We raised over \$845 which will be used to help pay for repaving of the North (downstairs) parking area.

Thank you to all those who volunteered with donations of ingredients, cash donations, as well as those who helped with preparing the chili, serving and cleaning up. It was exciting to see the camaraderie of our members working and laughing together.

Below/above are some of the people who helped make this happen!! Thanks again to all for your support and help.



## Update on Hnatiuk Family from Ukraine

The Hnatiuk family has been here two months and is anxiously awaiting warmer weather. They enjoy taking part in the new experience of making maple syrup. Mykola and Olesia prefer the fresh sap to the sweeter, hot syrup fresh from the pan.

We traveled to Milwaukee last week for a short meeting with the immigration service. They now have papers authorizing them to stay in the U.S. for two years. We will begin the process of filing for a longer-term visa in case the war doesn't end and they decide to stay in the safety of the U.S. While in Milwaukee we found a European market where they purchased familiar foods. They have cooked some traditional foods for us and introduced us to homemade kefir. Olesia always has a supply on hand. They also cook borscht once per week and are looking forward to our garden with beets and all the fresh vegetables they need.

Mykola is adjusting to his work schedule and his on-the-job training. Olesia has accepted a job, but is waiting for the background check to be completed before she can start. The two boys enjoy trips to the woods to play in the snow, roast marshmallows, and ride the Kawasaki Mule.

## Mission & Outreach Committee





# 2023 United Church Of Christ

| Sunday   | Monday                           | Tuesday   | Wednesday                        | Thursday  | Friday  | Saturday  |
|--|----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|---|-----------|
| Each Sunday<br>9 AM Sunday School<br>10 AM Worship   |                                  |   |                                  |   |   | 1         |
| <b>2 Sixth Sunday in Lent</b><br>Palm Sunday   | <b>3</b><br>9:00 am Card Making  | <b>4</b> 1:00 pm Bible Study at Marge Goetsch's home/bring bible                              | <b>5</b>                         | <b>6</b><br>7 pm Maundy Thursday Service at Calvary | <b>7</b><br>7 pm Good Friday Service at Calvary | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>9</b><br><u>EASTER</u><br>  | <b>10</b>                        | <b>11</b> 1:00 pm Bible Study at Marge Goetsch's home/bring bible                             | <b>12</b><br>5:00 pm Deacons Mtg | <b>13</b>   | <b>14</b>                                       | <b>15</b> |
| <b>16 Second Sunday of Easter</b><br><br>Meal Give Away  | <b>17</b><br>9:00 am Card Making | <b>18</b> 1:00 pm Bible Study at Marge Goetsch's home/bring bible<br><br>5:00 pm Trustees Mtg | <b>19</b><br>5:00 pm Council Mtg | <b>20</b>   | <b>21</b>                                       | <b>22</b> |
| <b>23 Third Sunday of Easter</b><br><br><b>30</b><br><u>Fourth Sunday of Easter</u><br>Baked Goods Auction | <b>24</b>                        | <b>25</b> 1:00 pm Bible Study at Marge Goetsch's home/bring bible                             | <b>26</b>                        | <b>27</b>   | <b>28</b>                                       | <b>29</b> |

