



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

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

PASTOR'S MESSAGE FOR DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

"Christmas Time is Here"

One of my Friday evening rituals used to be sitting in an easy chair and listening to Michael Hanson's jazz broadcasts on Wisconsin Public Radio. Each year on the Friday before Christmas his show featured jazz renditions of Christmas music, both secular and sacred, ranging from Louie Prima's raucous rendition of "What Will Santa Claus Say (When He Finds Everybody Swingin')" to Charlie Byrd's gentle guitar interpretations of carols like "Silent Night". My favorite was Rosemary Clooney singing "Christmas Time is Here" in a wistful, melancholy manner:

Christmastime is here
Happiness and cheer
Fun for all that children call
Their favorite time of year
Snowflakes in the air
Carols everywhere
Olden times for ancient rhymes
Of love and dreams to share
Sleigh bells in the air
Beauty everywhere
Yuletide by the fireside
And joyful memories there
Christmastime is here
We'll be drawing near
Oh, that we could always see
Such spirit through the year



Ah, don't we all wish to retain "such spirit through the year." This month we will be preparing for our celebration of Christ's birth during what the church calls Advent, which means coming. We will be decorating, baking, and sharing in various ways as we gradually (I hope) make our way to the manger on Christmas Eve. The temptation is to rush the season so that by the time Christmas Day finally arrives we are sick of all the canned carols and fake garlands and just want to move on....to whatever.

Of course, as Duke Ellington noted, "Things Ain't What They Used to Be". My mother talked about not seeing the family Christmas tree until the doors were opened to the living room on Christmas Eve. Back in "the good old days" people waited. These days we're not so good at waiting. But we're still wistful for catching and preserving "such spirit through the year."

My prayer for us this December is to relax and even enjoy the anticipation of Advent leading to Christmas. Yes, we can't escape the turmoil of our times, but we can take time to focus on our faith and trust in the one who comes to bring peace.

In God's grace,

Pastor Jim

2024 Budget and Committee Election Congregational meeting, Sunday, Dec 10

On Sunday, December 10, 2023, Neillsville UCC will hold a Congregational meeting immediately following the service. At this meeting we will review the proposed 2024 budget, as well as vote on committee members. All members and friends are welcome to attend.

Search Committee Update

The Search Committee has interviewed a potential candidate to fill our settled pastor position, however, after prayer and consideration of how the individual would meet the desire of the congregation based on our church profile, we are no longer in communication.

We will be meeting with another potential candidate in the near future. It is important to know that we are still in the confidential stage of our search for a settled pastor and as such the committee is unable to share information with you. You will know as soon as we are prepared to present a candidate to the congregation.

We continue to ask you to pray for the ministerial profile whose gifts match those identified in the UCC-Neillsville Profile. Another aspect we are looking for in this journey is to call a pastor that can foster and grow a healthy relationship between the pastor, the congregation, and the community.

***"Stewardship and Audit committees
need your help!"***

Stewardship promotes the benefits of giving.

Audit annually reviews church finances.

*If you are interested in helping
please contact Paul Vine.*

Christian Education Update

J. A.M. Club and confirmation at 5 PM



December 10 – Full practice
and dress rehearsal after 10
AM worship here at UCC

December 13 – 5 PM
Christmas Rehearsal & 6 PM
Christmas Program at Calvary

December 17 –Christmas
Rehearsal (time to be determined) & 10 AM Christmas
Program at UCC

December 20 – J.A.M. and confirmation at Calvary
from 5-5:45 PM



Continuing the following in our thoughts and prayers.

Janet Harrington

Dave Beck

Lisa Schermitzler

Gayle Schermitzler

Wallace Garbisch

Please let us know if others not listed
(with their permission) would like prayer requests.



† to Russ & Susie
Karl and family on the
passing of Russ's
brother, Bradley Karl.

† to Jim & Rosie Repinski on the passing of
Jim's sister, Althea Gollon.

† to John & Linda Stalsberg on the death of
John's brother, Gus Lindvig.

Please know that our thoughts and prayers are
with you. Wishing you peace to bring you
comfort, courage to face the days ahead and
loving memories to forever hold in your heart.



Sunday, November 5, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Phil & Donita Follen in honor of their wedding anniversary.

Sunday, November 10, the radio broadcast was given in honor of Gordon & Faith Vine sponsored by their children – Jane Nelson, Virginia Fennema, Paul Vine, Jeff Vine & Kris Kirschoffer.

Sunday, November 19, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Rosie & Jim Repinski in “Praise of Jesus Christ”.

Sunday, November 26, the radio broadcast was sponsored anonymously in memory of Micheal and Paul Quicker.

OFFERINGS FOR – NOVEMBER 2023

November 13, 2023

General Offering	\$3,136.00
Memorial Fund	5,010.00
Meal Give-Away	45.00
Kitchen Fund	100.00
Bell Fund (outside)	20.00
Circle of Friends	<u>10.00</u>
	\$8,321.00

November 27, 2023

General Offering	\$2,337.00
Radio Broadcast Fund	150.00
Neighbors in Need	75.00
Meal Give Away	<u>75.00</u>
	\$2,637.00

VANCO for November \$ 633.44

Facts and Figures of November 2023

Attendance for In-Person Worship

November 5	online 8	Sunday 64
November 8	online 6	Sunday 62
November 19	online 6	Sunday 43
November 26	online 5	Sunday 46

THE CHRISTMAS FUND

It is advent season, time to count our blessings and be thankful for what we have. It is also a great time of the year to pray for and care for those less fortunate.

For over 100 years the UCC Church Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees. The Christmas fund provides emergency grants, small annuities, and health insurance premiums for lower income retirees. Christmas “Thank you gifts” are awarded to retired UCC clergy/lay employees with limited income as a way of saying “thank you” for year of service. Emergency grants are awarded to retirees who face unforeseen circumstances that create financial hardship.

Retirees with limited income may receive monthly payments to bring household income up to a level so they can afford basic needs such and food, utilities and medical expenses.

Christmas fund offering is received December 17, however, donations to the Christmas fund can be placed in the offering at any time using the envelopes from the pews, on line through automatic giving, using our VANCO account or mailed to the church at 515 W. 5th Street, Neillsville .

Thank you for your continued support of the UCC Church “five for five missions” including the Christmas fund. Also thank you everyone for your generous support of our local UCC church.

God’s Blessings from the Stewardship committee.



2023 Holiday Fair

UCC 59th Holiday Fair Summary

Our 59th Holiday Fair was a success, thanks to a lot of people in the church, and not just the women! We made a profit of **\$7,737.65** with the following breakdown:

- Greeting Cards - \$68.15
- New To You Treasures - \$802
- Luncheon - \$1,103.00
 - Chicken salad on a croissant, baked potato soup (Betty Opelt's recipes), and brownie
- Kitchen Cupboard - \$624.50
- Crafts - \$3,837.00
- After Saturday Sales - \$1,303

I would like to thank the people that took the chairman lead in each of our areas, without someone taking the lead, it would not be as organized as it is:

- Greeting Cards – Susie Karl and Carole Romens
- New to You Treasures – Debbie Perkl
- Kitchen Cupboard – Susie Karl and Carole Romens
- Crafts – Carla Marty

Our door prize was a beautiful handmade wooden burnt lantern made and donated by Bob Petkovsek and decorated by Carla Marty as a porch pot with lights and a bow. The lucky winner was Jessica Clark of Neillsville, congratulations!

The following businesses donated to our Holiday Fair, so when you see them, make sure you extend a thank you on behalf of our church:

- Hansen's IGA
 - the wonderful croissants for the chicken salad sandwich
- Russell's

- 100 pounds of potatoes for the Baked Potato Soup
- A & W
 - Root Beer for the luncheon
- Neillsville Public School
 - Chocolate milk for the luncheon
- WCCN
 - FREE advertisement of our Holiday Fair
- River Country
 - advertising the Holiday Fair on their marquee
- Custom Heating (Sue and Tim Voigt)
 - advertising the Holiday Fair on the marquee
- Grand Flooring & Design
 - advertising for Holiday Fair on the marquee
- Vine Christmas Trees (Paul and Kelley)
 - Pine boughs for our Porch Pot Kits, the flower boxes under the bells, porch pots, and Christmas boxes
- Carla's Creations
 - Various crafting supplies

Various church members donated items for all the areas of our Holiday Fair, whether it was for the New to You Treasures, Baked Goods, Crafts, or luncheon ... we thank you very much. Without these donations, our profits will go down tremendously!

If anyone has any old sleds, wooden skis, antique milk cans, galvanized pails, desk drawers, or scrap wood pieces that they would like to donate to the Holiday Fair, please let us know; they are our biggest selling items.

Also, if there is a certain item that you would like to see sold at the Holiday Fair next year, please let us know and we will try our best to have it there; any ideas to make this project a success is greatly appreciated.

Next year ..., 60 years of our Holiday Fair! If you have any ideas on how to make this a very special Holiday Fair, please contact either Carla Marty or myself!

Thank you again!

- Emile Miller

Approved Minutes Neillsville United Church of Christ Council

The meeting was held on Wednesday, October 18, 2023 in the Fellowship Hall at the Neillsville United Church of Christ.

Moderator Vine called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM.

Attendance

Council Members Present: Trustee Representative Doris Bakker, Christian Education Representative Stephanie Heck, Vice Moderator Barb Petkovsek, Moderator Paul Vine, Deacons Representative Karlene Wallace, and Treasurer Bonnie Weyer.
Others in Attendance: None.

Prayer

Moderator Vine guided the committee with a prayer.

Minutes

Motion by Karlene Wallace, seconded by Bonnie Weyer to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2023 meeting. Voice vote taken with all "aye"; motion carried.

Financial Report

Motion by Stephanie Heck, seconded by Doris Bakker to approve the financial report as presented by Bonnie Weyer reading Assistant Treasurer Don Quicker's written report. Voice vote taken with all "aye"; motion carried.

New Business

Congregational Budget and Election Meeting

The Bylaws and Constitution state we are to hold a Congregational Budget and Election meeting yearly. Our Nominating Committee is comprised of a council member, deacon, trustee, and member-at-large, with Paul Vine being the council member. Paul Vine will have each committee chair checking with their members to see if anyone wants to be replaced on their committee or not. If the chair needs help in finding a replacement, they should contact a member of the Nominating Committee.

The Congregational Budget and Election meeting is set for Sunday, December 10 after worship service.

Old Business

Pastor Search Update

Nothing new on the pastoral search.

Pastor Report Nothing currently.

Committee Reports

Trustees

Doris Bakker shared the following:

- Due to decreased giving, all members of the Trustees are in favor of returning to passing the offering plate during worship service.
- The parking lot has been completed satisfactorily.
- A leaf blower has been purchased for use for blowing snow by staff, when possible.
- The roof leaks and gutters will be handled by Miller Home Improvements from Marshfield with Kevin Erickson working with the company.

- Mike Perkl is following up on the installation of a grease trap in the kitchen, along with vacuuming the compressor out to help maintain good cooling in the kitchen refrigerator.
- Looking into our church insurance to see if we have coverage for sewer backup.
- Hap Eddy is following up with Custom Heating to complete the annual evaluation of the heating system.
- The heating vents in the Pastor's Office will be sand blasted and painted.

Christian Education

Stephanie Heck shared the following:

- No meeting has been held.
- They will be meeting next week with Calvary to discuss the Christmas program, with practice starting November 8.
- More children are attending each time they meet; last time there were 78 total children, which is a good problem to have.
- The children sang last Wednesday at Calvary and will be singing this Sunday, October 22 at UCC.
- Our Christmas program will be all our children doing the whole service, including confirmation students.
- A parent confirmation meeting will be held after church school next week at UCC to cover expectations.
- From our church, we have 18 confirmation students in 7th and 8th grades.
- Wednesday, October 25 and Wednesday, November 8 UCC will be hosting J.A.M. and confirmation classes.

Committee Reports Continued

Deacons

Karlene Wallace shared the following:

- Not many volunteer letters were returned, but the Deacons will be working on a schedule with those that have responded.
 - There will be no men scheduled during hunting season.
- All Saint's Day is set for Sunday, November 5 with Barb Shoemaker filling the pulpit
 - Barb Shoemaker has volunteered to fill the pulpit whenever needed for Pastor Sue.
- Communion is set for Sunday, November 12.
- This year with Christmas being on a Sunday, instead of three (3) separate services (10 AM, 4:30 PM, and 7:30 PM), the committee is looking into just two (2) services being held ... 4:30 PM for families with young children and 7:30 PM for the candlelight service.
 - It was suggested that we offer rides for evening Christmas services, for those not able to drive at night. Anyone needing this service should contact the church office.

Other

Doris Bakker shared that the Stewardship Committee asked the Caregivers to call everyone on the membership list and personally invite them to the Sunday, October 22 service for the Ukrainian family.

Next Meeting Date and Time

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 5 PM.

Adjournment

Motion by Barb Petkovsek, seconded by Stephanie Heck to adjourn. Voice vote taken with all "aye"; motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 PM.

Submitted by: Emile J Miller, Neillsville UCC Council Secretary

ucc2024budPROJ

United Church of Christ
 Budget 2024 - Tentative
 Approved by Trustees 11-14-23
 OPERATING FUND

	Budget 2023	Last 12 Mo. Nov 1, 2022 to Oct 31, 2023	Budget 2024	Adjust Budget
A 1 Electricity	4,000	3,492	3,800	(200)
2 Heat	6,000	4,820	5,500	(500)
3 Telephone	2,400	2,279	2,400	0
4 Grounds (Lawn & Snow)	1,000	2,888	2,500	1,500
5 Water & Sewer / Trash	1,400	1,407	1,540	140
6 Building Caretaker	10,560	9,501	9,984	(576)
8 Bldg.Maint. / Supplies	4,000	2,774	3,500	(500)
9 Insurance	6,400	7,586	8,000	1,600
11 Building Cap Fund	1,800	1,800	1,800	0
12 Elevator Expense	1,000	936	1,000	0
Subtotal	38,560	37,483	40,024	1,464
B 1 Secretarial Salary	19,320	16,794	17,940	(1,380)
3 Office Supplies & Equip.	3,000	2,319	3,000	0
4 Postage & Envelopes	1,400	1,063	1,200	(200)
5 Other Supplies & Misc.	1,000	899	1,000	0
6 Fees	400	322	400	0
Subtotal	25,120	21,397	23,540	(1,580)
C 1 Pastors Salary & Soc Sec	40,010	22,616	40,010	0
2 Auto Allowance	3,000	1,348	3,000	0
3 Annuity	8,712	668	8,712	0
4 Housing Allowance	27,000	4,500	27,000	0
5 Health/Dental/Disab Ins	8,500	1,104	8,500	0
6 Continuing Educ	1,000	0	1,000	0
7 Moving & Other Exp	0	1,050	0	0
8 Search Comm Expense	1,000	83	1,000	0
Subtotal	89,222	31,369	89,222	0
D 1 Workers comp ins	1,400	1,154	1,400	0
2 Payroll Taxes	2,500	2,029	2,300	(200)
3 Conf/Assoc meetings	1,300	923	1,300	0
Subtotal	5,200	4,106	5,000	(200)
E 1 Music & Choir	1,000	285	800	(200)
2 Music Salaries	4,928	4,868	4,928	0
3 Christian Educ	4,400	1,592	3,000	(1,400)
5 Worship	2,800	2,125	2,000	(800)
6 Stewardship	300	50	300	0
7 Confirmation	1,000	0	1,000	0
Subtotal	14,428	8,920	12,028	(2,400)
Total Operating	172,530	103,275	169,814	(2,716)

United Church of Christ
Budget 2024 - Tentative

Budget 2023	Last 12 Mo. Nov 1, 2022 to Oct 31, 2023	Budget 2024	Adjust Budget
----------------	---	----------------	------------------

OUR CHURCH AREA MISSIONS

F	1 UCC College Scholarsip	250	0	250	0
	2 Outreach	450	185	450	0
	3 Benevolence	300	0	300	0
	4 Local Mission	0	0	0	0
	5 Special Mission	1,000	0	1,000	0
	6 Youth Special Mission	750	0	750	0
Subtotal		2,750	185	2,750	0

OUR CHURCH WIDER MISSIONS

G	1 Association Dues	1,106	1,040	1,106	0
	2 Our Church Wider Missions	14,000	14,000	14,000	0
Subtotal		15,106	15,040	15,106	0
Total Missions		17,856	15,225	17,856	0
Grand Total		190,386	118,500	187,670	(2,716)

		2021	2022	2023
		Actual	Actual	Estimate
Donations				
Jan-Oct		113,968	107,126	103,498
Nov-Dec		37,350	37,748	38,000
Total Actual or Estimate		151,318	144,874	141,498
Regular Fund Raising Proceeds		0	0	0
Memorial Fund Proceeds		6,000	7,000	8,000
Payroll Protection Program		10,172	0	0
Total Receipts		167,490	151,874	149,498

Neillsville United Church of Christ

2024 Committee Membership, Coordinators, Staff

Below is the list proposed committee members for 2024 - * designates chair(s)

<u>Audit (4 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Barb Petkovsek Barb Miller Michelle Kranz 	<u>Christian Ed. (5 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Stephanie Heck Lacey Erickson Linda Stalsberg Cheryl Steinbach Jenna Ziegler 	<u>Council (7 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Paul Vine -Moderator Barb Petkovsek -Vice Mod Bonnie Weyer - Treasurer Emile Miller - Secretary Doris Bakker - Trustee Karlene Wallace - Deacon Stephanie Heck - Christ. Ed.
<u>Deacons (7 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Karlene Wallace Byrl Buddenhagen Janice Miller Barb Shoemaker JoAnn Wren Wayne Voss Sally Sadowska 	<u>Invest/Memorial (5 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Allan Hosley Barb Miller Don Quicker Dave Steiger Neil Armitage 	<u>Mission/outreach (5 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Bonnie Weyer Deb Perkl Carol Harnisch Kathy Mathis Carol Romens
<u>Music (3 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Corinne Armitage Donita Follen Karen Mohr JoAnn Voss 	<u>Nominating (4 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Paul Vine - Council JoAnn Wren - Deacon Mike Perkl - Trustee 	<u>Stewardship (4 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *JoAnn Voss *M.E. Sjolín
<u>Trustees (5 Mem.)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Hap Eddy Doris Bakker Kevin Erickson Mike Perkl Bob Petkovsek 	<u>Staff</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Admin.Asst. - Janice Miller Choir Director - Corinne Armitage Organist - Karen Mohr Church Caretaker - Carol Struensee 	<u>Coordinators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money Counters - Audrey Vradenburg, Janice Miller, Rick Buchsteiner, Kathy & Larry Marshall Sunday School Coordinator - Stephanie Heck Confirmation Coordinators- Deb Perkl, Bonnie Weyer Wedding Coordinator – Janice Miller Memorial Service Coordinator – Karlene Wallace Funeral/Memorial Luncheon Coordinators – Emile Miller, Kathy Mathis, Barb Petkovsek Audio Visual Coordinators – Allan Hoesly, Bonnie Weyer

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Dec. 2023 – Jan. 2024

	Deacon/ host	Greeter(s)	Usher(s)
Sunday, December 3, 2023	Sally Sadowska	Kirk & Nancy Redman	Don Quicker
		Jenny, Jonathon & Jacob Clarkson	Jerry Quicker
Sunday, December 10, 2023	Karlene Wallace	Cris & Lisa Hediger	Russ Karl
			Paul Schmidt
Sunday, December 17, 2023	Janice Miller	Joe & Michelle Kranz	Hap Eddy
			Roger Carl
Sunday, December 24, 2023	JoAnn Wren	Jim & Rosie Repinski	Craig Heck
No morning service/ Eve Service at 5 pm			Scott Williams
Sunday, December 31, 2023	Byrl Buddenhagen	Travis & Ashley Vine	Mickey Marty
			Joel Raine
Sunday, January 7, 2024	Barb Shoemaker	Tim & Cheryl Steinbach	Ken Shoemaker
			Bob Petkovsek
Sunday, January 14, 2024	Byrl Buddenhagen	Larry & Kathy Marshall	Ray Weyer
			Mike Perkl
Sunday, January 21, 2024	Sally Sadowska	Audrey Vradenburg	Ben Mathis
		Carole Romens	Jim Vradenburg
Sunday, January 28, 2024	Karlene Wallace	Doris Bakker	Kevin Erickson
		Ellie Keller	Jenny Erickson

There's More to Christmas...

Author Unknown

There's more, much more to Christmas
Than candlelight and cheer;
It's the spirit of sweet friendship
That brightens all the year;
It's thoughtfulness and kindness,
It's hope reborn again,
For peace, for understanding,
For goodwill to men!



Have a
Blessed
Christmas

from all the staff at UCC
Pastor Jim, Pastor Sue,
Janice, Karen and Carol



2023 United Church of Christ

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Each Tuesday - 1 PM Marge Goetsch Bible Study – church lounge / bring bible			1	2
3 First Sunday of Advent 10 AM Worship	4 9 AM Card Making	5 1 PM Bible Study	6 5 PM J.A.M. Club @ Calvary	7 12 PM - T&C Quilters 5 pm Deacon's Mtg	8	9
10 Second Sunday of Advent 10 AM Worship with Congregational Mtg To follow	11 6 PM - PEO	12 1 PM Bible Study	13 5 PM Deacons Mtg 5 PM Children Practice at Calvary *Meal Prep	14 1 PM Circle of Friends Christmas Party *Meal Prep	15 *Meal Prep	16
17 Third Sunday of Advent 10 AM Worship Childrens Christmas Program *Meal Give Away	18 9 AM Card Making 9 AM - T&C Quilters	19 1 PM Bible Study 5 PM -Trustees Mtg	20 5 pm J.A.M. Club Christmas Story & party @ Calvary 5 PM – Council Mtg	21	22	23
24 Fourth Sunday of Advent 5 PM service 31 Christmas First Eve Sunday after Christmas 10 AM	25 Christmas Day 	26 1 PM Bible Study 6:30 PM - HCE	27	28	29	30