

## Easter Sunday

April 20, 2025

United Church of Christ - Neillsville

Pastor Julie Ruegsegger



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**4 Soar we now where Christ has led, Alleluia!**

**Following our exalted Head, Alleluia!**

**Made like Christ, like Christ we rise, Alleluia!**

**Ours the cross, the grave, the skies, Alleluia!**

### OPENING PRAYER

Holy and Living God, like a tomb's darkness that gives way to light, open us this day to newness of life; open us to your love, to your acceptance, to your forgiveness, to your peace; open us to one another, and to the possibilities you have in store for us. Give us hope for the future and a passion for life here and now. We pray in the name of the One who destroyed death, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

### SCRIPTURE READING

**Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24**

<sup>1</sup> Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever. <sup>2</sup> Let all Israel repeat:  
"His faithful love endures forever."

<sup>14</sup> The Lord is my strength and my song; he has given me victory. <sup>15</sup> Songs of joy and victory are sung in the camp of the godly. The strong right arm of the Lord has done glorious things! <sup>16</sup> The strong right arm of the Lord is raised in triumph. The strong right arm of the Lord has done glorious things! <sup>17</sup> I will not die; instead, I will live to tell what the Lord has done. <sup>18</sup> The Lord has punished me severely, but he did not let me die.

<sup>19</sup> Open for me the gates where the righteous enter, and I will go in and thank the Lord. <sup>20</sup> These gates lead to the presence of the Lord, and the godly enter there. <sup>21</sup> I thank you for answering my prayer and giving me victory!

<sup>22</sup> The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone. <sup>23</sup> This is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful to see. <sup>24</sup> This is the day the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

### CHILDREN'S TIME

PRELUDE "In Thee is Gladness" J.S. Bach

Karen Mohr

### RINGING OF THE CARILLON

CHORAL INTROIT "Christ Arose" Robert Lowry

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed!**

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Run from fear and darkness! Hope is on the move!

**Run to tell the world, Christ is risen!**

Do not be afraid. Jesus has conquered death!

**We can proclaim with great confidence that God's love rules.**

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed!**

**ALLELUIA! AMEN!**

*"Christ the Lord is Risen Today"*

**#233 NCH** Charles Wesley

**1 Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia!**

**Mortal tongues and angels say: Alleluia!**

**Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!**

**Sing, glad heavens, and earth reply: Alleluia!**

**2 Let the Victor's people sing, Alleluia!**

**Where, O death, is now your sting? Alleluia!**

**Dying once, Christ lives to save, Alleluia!**

**Where your victory, O grave? Alleluia!**

**3 Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!**

**Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!**

**Death in vain forbids Christ rise, Alleluia!**

**God has opened paradise, Alleluia!**

**CHOIR ANTHEM** *"Glory to the Risen Lamb!"*

Words by Jean Anne Shafferman Arr. By Lloyd Larson

**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**Invitation to Communion**

**Prayer of Confession**

**Words of Assurance**

In the name of the risen Christ, you are forgiven!

**In the name of the risen Christ,  
We are forgiven! Glory to God!  
Amen.**

**Passing the Peace of Christ**

As forgiven, freed, and risen people, testify to the joy of resurrection as you pass the peace of Christ.

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

All are invited to greet one another with words such as *"The peace of Christ be with you,"* and the response: *"And also with you".*

**RESPONSE:** *"Halle, Halle, Halle, Hallelujah"*

**#236 NCH** Caribbean Melody

**Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Hallelujah, hallelujah!**

**The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord is with you!

**And also with you!**

Lift up your voices to speak of this great love!

**We lift them up in joyful acclamation!**

...And so we raise our voices in praise:

**HYMN** *"This is the Day"*

**#84 (verse 1-2)** Les Garrett

**1 This is the day, this is the day  
That our God has made, that our God has made;  
We will rejoice, we will rejoice  
And be glad in it, and be glad in it.  
This is the day that our God has made,  
We will rejoice and be glad in it!  
This is the day, this is the day  
that our God has made.**

**2 This is the day, this is the day  
Jesus rose again, Jesus rose again;  
We will rejoice, we will rejoice  
And be glad in it, and be glad in it.  
This is the day Jesus rose again,  
We will rejoice and be glad in it!  
This is the day, this is the day Jesus rose again!**

...And so, on this day of resurrection, we raise our voices to proclaim this timeless truth:

**Christ has died.  
Christ is risen!  
Christ will come again!**

**Communion Prayer**

The table is set, O God,

**the bread freshly baked, the cup brim-full.**

Your people are assembled, our hunger is great.

**Look with love on us, your own, the apple of your eye.**

Remember us, as we remember you and praise you for your love:

**your mighty deeds, your faithfulness, your kindness without end.**

Remember us now, as with grateful hearts we remember Jesus, the greatest of all your gifts to us. We remember that he was laid in a grave.

**A great stone sealed his tomb.**

We remember that the women came early in the morning, the third day.

**They did not find him among the dead.**

We remember that disciples met him, a stranger on the road.

**He explained the scriptures to them:  
their hearts were ablaze.**

They said to him, "Stay with us, for it is evening."

**He went in with them and sat at their table.**

There he took bread and gave thanks for it.

He broke it and gave it to them.

**They knew him when he broke the bread.**

Now, most gracious God, send your Spirit to bless this bread and cup, signs of his body and poured-out life.

Make them for us reconciling food and drink.

**Bless us also, who share this meal so that,  
overjoyed by his presence, and nourished by his life, we may become servants of his peace until  
the New Day of justice comes, and every creature beholds it.**

All this we pray in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray:

## **PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR**

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen**

## **Breaking Bread And Pouring Wine**

### **Sharing The Elements**

*All are welcome to partake in the Feast of our Lord. The table is open to all.*

*We have gluten-free available if you need. The cup of blessing is both wine and juice, depending on your preference. The wine is red, and the juice is white.*

### **Prayer Of Thanksgiving**

**Risen Christ, we have glimpsed you here as we have shared bread and cup. So help us to see you risen, present, and at work in our world and to join you in making all things new until you come again in glory and we feast again with you for all eternity. Alleluia! Amen.**

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

### **Isaiah 65:17-25**

<sup>17</sup> “Look! I am creating new heavens and a new earth, and no one will even think about the old ones anymore. <sup>18</sup> Be glad; rejoice forever in my creation! And look! I will create Jerusalem as a place of happiness. Her people will be a source of joy.

<sup>19</sup> I will rejoice over Jerusalem and delight in my people. And the sound of weeping and crying will be heard in it no more.

<sup>20</sup> “No longer will babies die when only a few days old. No longer will adults die before they have lived a full life. No longer will people be considered old at one hundred! Only the cursed will die that young!

<sup>21</sup> In those days people will live in the houses they build and eat the fruit of their own vineyards.

<sup>22</sup> Unlike the past, invaders will not take their houses and confiscate their vineyards. For my people will live as long as trees, and my chosen ones will have time to enjoy their hard-won gains. <sup>23</sup> They will not work in vain, and their children will not be doomed to misfortune. For they are people blessed by the Lord, and their children, too, will be blessed.

<sup>24</sup> I will answer them before they even call to me.

While they are still talking about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers! <sup>25</sup> The wolf and the lamb will feed together. The lion will eat hay like a cow. But the snakes will eat dust. In those days no one will be hurt or destroyed on my holy mountain. I, the Lord, have spoken!”

### **Acts 10:34-43**

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter replied, “I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. <sup>35</sup> In every nation he accepts those who fear him and do what is right. <sup>36</sup> This is the message of Good News for the people of Israel—that there is peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee, after John began preaching his message of baptism. <sup>38</sup> And you know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

<sup>39</sup> “And we apostles are witnesses of all he did throughout Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a cross, <sup>40</sup> but God raised him to life on the third day. Then God allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to the general public, but to us whom God had chosen in advance to be his witnesses. We were those who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> And he ordered us to preach everywhere and to testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God to be the judge of all—the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in him will have their sins forgiven through his name.”

### **John 20:1-18**

<sup>1</sup> Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance.

<sup>2</sup> She ran and found Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved. She said, “They have taken the Lord’s body out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”

<sup>3</sup> Peter and the other disciple started out for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> They were both running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he didn’t go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>7</sup> while the cloth that had covered Jesus’ head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings. <sup>8</sup> Then the disciple who

had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed— <sup>9</sup> for until then they still hadn't understood the Scriptures that said Jesus must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup> Then they went home.

<sup>11</sup> Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. <sup>12</sup> She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. <sup>13</sup> "Dear woman, why are you crying?" the angels asked her.

"Because they have taken away my Lord," she replied, "and I don't know where they have put him."

<sup>14</sup> She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn't recognize him. <sup>15</sup> "Dear woman, why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who are you looking for?"

She thought he was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him."

<sup>16</sup> "Mary!" Jesus said.

She turned to him and cried out, "Rabboni!" (which is Hebrew for "Teacher").

<sup>17</sup> "Don't cling to me," Jesus said, "for I haven't yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, "I have seen the Lord!" Then she gave them his message.

**SERMON** "Hope Dawns" Pastor Julie

**HYMN** "Because He Lives"

#447 W&R Gloria Gaither and William J. Gaither

**1 God sent his son, they called him Jesus;  
He came to love, heal, and forgive;  
He lived and died to buy my pardon,  
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives.**

***Refrain:***

**Because he lives I can face tomorrow;  
Because he lives all fear is gone;  
Because I know he holds the future,  
And life is worth the living just because he lives.**

**2 How sweet to hold a newborn baby,  
And feel the pride and joy he gives;  
But greater still the calm assurance:  
This child can face uncertain days because he lives.  
*[Refrain]***

**3 And then one day I'll cross the river;  
I'll fight life's final war with pain;  
And then as death gives way to victory,  
I'll see the lights of glory and I'll know he lives.  
*[Refrain]***

## **MORNING PRAYERS**

### **THE OFFERING SERVICE**

#### **Invitation to Generosity**

#### **Offertory**

#### **Doxology**

**Let trumpets sound and voices sing!  
Let all on earth their praises bring!  
For Christ has conquered sin and death  
And given life eternal breath. Amen.**

#### **Prayer of Dedication**

**God of grace, you are the source of all we have gained, but your greatest gift is the new life we receive in Christ. We offer these gifts as signs of our commitment to claim Christ's resurrection as your gift, for you have claimed us in his life. Amen.**

#### **HYMN** "Thine is the Glory"

**#139 Red UCC** Tr. R. Birch Hoyle

**1 Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son;  
Endless is the victory thou o'er death hast won.  
Angels in bright raiment rolled the stone away,  
Kept the folded grave-clothes where thy body lay.**

***Refrain:***

**Thine is the glory, risen, conquering Son,  
Endless is the victory thou o'er death has won.**

**2 Lo! Jesus meets us, risen from the tomb;  
Lovingly he greets us, scatters fear and gloom.  
Let his church with gladness hymns of triumph sing,  
For her Lord now liveth, death hath lost its sting.**

***Refrain***

**3 No more we doubt thee, glorious Prince of life!  
Life is nought without thee: aid us in our strife.  
Make us more than conquerors, through thy deathless love:  
Bring us safe through Jordan to thy home above.**

***Refrain***

## BLESSING FOR EASTER SUNDAY

### JOYS AND CONCERNS

HYMN     *"Christ Arose" Refrain*  
Robert Lowry

Up from the grave he arose,  
With a mighty triumph o'er his foes;  
He arose a victor from the dark domain,  
And he lives forever with his saints to reign.  
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah! Christ arose!

### COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE     Karen Mohr

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
**RADIO BROADCAST**  
11 AM Sunday radio broadcast  
on WCCN 98.5FM and 1370AM

This week's radio broadcast is  
sponsored by the Circle of Friends group  
in celebration of  
"Our risen Lord on this Easter Morn. "

### WELCOME

We welcome you to our service of worship!  
We are glad that you have joined us on site,  
through the internet or on the radio.  
We pray that you will hear God's call,  
seek to follow Jesus, led by the Holy Spirit.

YouTube link for Sunday, April 20, 2025

<https://youtube.com/live/1ghN41LSwC4>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Sunday, April 20th

- **10 AM Worship** Deacon Host – Janice Miller  
Greeter(s) – Kathy & Larry Marshall  
Usher(s) – Mickey Marty, Joel Raine  
PowerPoint – Paul Vine

Confirmation will not meet, and  
No Fellowship after worship on Easter Sunday

### Monday, April 21st

- **9 AM Card Making**  
- **6 PM Council Meeting**

### Tuesday, April 22nd

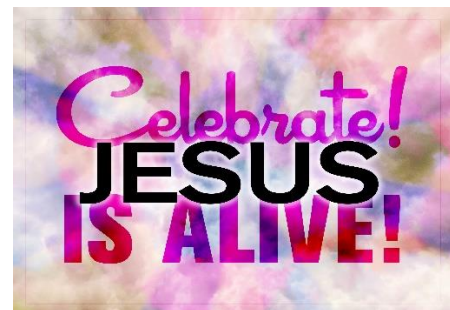
- **1 PM Bible Study**

### Wednesday, April 23rd

- **1 PM Caregivers Meeting**

Coffee fellowship after worship -  
Sign up on back bulletin board

Apr 20 – EASTER – no fellowship  
Apr 27-  
May 4 – Confirmation Sunday – Christian Ed.  
May 11 - Mother's Day – no fellowship  
We need people to sign up



**Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup> – 10 AM**