

Fourth Sunday of Easter
May 11, 2025
United Church of Christ - Neillsville
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger

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PRELUDE *"Sing to the Lord!"* Lani Smith
Deon Spangler

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come! Let us worship and praise God.

The Lord is our shepherd, our guardian and our guide.

Celebrate the many ways in which God cares for our lives.

Green pastures and silent still waters beckon us and comfort us.

Even though difficulties happen in our lives, still God is with us.

Even when it seems that the world has nothing to offer but suffering and pain, God surrounds us with God's love and bounty.

Surely God's mercy accompanies us on our journey.
And we will dwell in God's house forever. AMEN.

OPENING PRAYER

You are the Good Shepherd, Lord, we hear your call; we know your voice; we follow your paths. You lead us beside still waters. You guide us to the springs of life. You shelter us and restore our souls. In you we find life everlasting. We come humbly into your presence this day, in praise, worship, and adoration. Our hearts run over with your unfailing goodness and never-ending love. In the name of our Savior, we pray. Amen.

HYMN *"Come Away from Rush and Hurry"*
#655 W&R Marva J. Dawn

**1 Come away from rush and hurry
to the stillness of God's peace;
from our vain ambition's worry,
come to Christ and find release.**

**Come away from noise and clamor,
life's demands and frenzied pace;
come to join the people gathered
here to seek and find God's face.**

**2 In the pastures of God's goodness
we lie down to rest our soul.
From the waters of his mercy
we drink deeply, are made whole.
At the table of his presence
all his saints are richly fed.
With the oil of his anointing
into service we are led.**

**3 Come, then, children, with your burdens –
life's confusions, fears, and pain.
Leave them at the cross of Jesus;
take instead his kingdom's reign.
Bring your thirsts, for he will quench them –
he alone will satisfy.
All our longings find attainment
when to self we gladly die.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

As forgiven and reconciled children of God, let us share with one another signs of peace and love.

One: The Peace of God 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"* (twice)
#236 NCH Caribbean Melody

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

CHILDREN'S TIME

MOTHER'S DAY LITANY

All who gather here are sons or daughters.

We praise God for the women who gave us life.

For mothers brave, strong, compassionate, full of wisdom and grace,

We give God thanks and praise.

For mothers vulnerable, worried, frustrated, and hurried,

We pray for peace.

For relationships that are strained and no longer a source of joy,

We pray for healing.

For mothers who are no longer with us, but whose light shines on in our hearts and memories,

We pray for those that mourn and give God thanks for life eternal.

For mothers who grieve, who have lost children born or unborn,

We weep with those with broken hearts.

For those who are struggling to raise children, who are tired and weary,

We pray that we may be their village, offering real help in hard times.

For those who are preparing emptier nests,

We both celebrate and mourn with you, and hope their wings are as strong as their roots are deep.

For stepmothers, navigating the pitfalls and joys of creating a new family,

We pray for wisdom and patience.

For Grandmothers and guardians who are doing the hard work of raising children again,

We pray these caregivers have others who care for them.

For those who are waiting and sometimes struggling with the process to become mothers,

We wait eagerly with you, and offer you our hand to hold in the trial.

For women who do not have children, but instead teach, lead, care for, and guide the children of others,

We give God thanks and praise.

For the mothers, sisters, daughters in our midst and around the world. For the women who, created in the image of God, give not just life, but abundant life. For women fighting, struggling, and sweating for the sake of others. For women caring, compassionate, and crying with the heart of Christ.

For the caregivers, prophets, preachers, teachers, leaders, shepherds, healers. For Moms, in their wide variety and many forms,

We give God thanks and praise.

Loving and nurturing God, we thank you for the wonder of your mothering. As a mother protects her children, you watch over us day by day. We thank you for your arms which always encircle and protect us, your hands that shield and deliver us from harm. We thank you for your mothering heart and your tender love, which nurtures all who feel abandoned and lost.

Lord in your mercy, mother us all with your love.

May we all have the comfort of knowing that your mothering love is constant, your understanding is perfect and your compassion is never-ending. We thank you that you give life to all of us with delight and joy.

Lord in your mercy, mother us all with your love.

AMEN.

HYMN *"Today We Bring Our Thankful Hearts"*

Tune: O Waly Waly ("When Love is Found")

Words: © Ally Barrett / Jubilate, by Jubilate Hymns Ltd

**1 Today we bring our thankful hearts,
For all a mothering love imparts:
For those who gave us life and breath,
For love that's stronger far than death.**

**2 For kindness, patience, warmth and care,
For each embrace, each tear, each prayer,
Each word of peace, each healing touch,
These simple gifts which mean so much.**

**3 We look to you, our mothering Lord,
Who knows love's cost, and love's reward,
Your passion fiercer than the grave,
Love for the world you came to save.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

NEW TESTAMENT Acts 9:36-43

³⁶ There was a believer in Joppa named Tabitha (which in Greek is Dorcas). She was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor. ³⁷ About this time she became ill and died. Her body was washed for burial and laid in an upstairs room. ³⁸ But the believers had heard that Peter was nearby at Lydda, so they sent two men to beg him, "Please come as soon as possible!"

³⁹ So Peter returned with them; and as soon as he arrived, they took him to the upstairs room. The room was filled with widows who were weeping and

showing him the coats and other clothes Dorcas had made for them. ⁴⁰ But Peter asked them all to leave the room; then he knelt and prayed. Turning to the body he said, "Get up, Tabitha." And she opened her eyes! When she saw Peter, she sat up! ⁴¹ He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then he called in the widows and all the believers, and he presented her to them alive.

⁴² The news spread through the whole town, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³ And Peter stayed a long time in Joppa, living with Simon, a tanner of hides.

NEW TESTAMENT Revelation 7:9-17

⁹ After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ And they were shouting with a great roar,

"Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne
and from the Lamb!"

¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living beings. And they fell before the throne with their faces to the ground and worshiped God. ¹² They sang,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom
and thanksgiving and honor
and power and strength belong to our God
forever and ever! Amen."

¹³ Then one of the twenty-four elders asked me, "Who are these who are clothed in white? Where did they come from?"

¹⁴ And I said to him, "Sir, you are the one who knows."

Then he said to me, "These are the ones who died in the great tribulation. They have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white.

¹⁵ "That is why they stand in front of God's throne and serve him day and night in his Temple. And he who sits on the throne will give them shelter.

¹⁶ They will never again be hungry or thirsty; they will never be scorched by the heat of the sun.

¹⁷ For the Lamb on the throne will be their Shepherd. He will lead them to springs of life-giving water. And God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

NEW TESTAMENT John 10:22-30

²² It was now winter, and Jesus was in Jerusalem at the time of Hanukkah, the Festival of Dedication. ²³ He was in the Temple, walking through the section known as Solomon's Colonnade. ²⁴ The people surrounded him and asked, "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

²⁵ Jesus replied, "I have already told you, and you don't believe me. The proof is the work I do in my Father's name. ²⁶ But you don't believe me because you are not my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, ²⁹ for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father's hand. ³⁰ The Father and I are one."

SERMON "A Familiar Voice" Pastor Julie

HYMN "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

#252 NCH Wm. B. Bradbury Attrib. to Dorothy A. Thrupp

**1 Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
much we need your tender care;
in your pleasant pastures feed us,
for our use your folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us, yours we are;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us, yours we are.**

**2 We are yours, in love befriend us,
be the guardian of our way;
keep your flock, from sin defend us,
seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray.**

**3 Let us always seek your favor;
let us always do your will;
Jesus Christ, our only Savior,
with your love our spirits fill.**

Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us, love us still;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us, love us still.

MORNING PRAYERS

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

THE OFFERING SERVICE

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

God of love, you abide with us; you provide for all our needs and guide us in your ways. Out of gratitude for your care, we bring our gifts before you. Use them for your work of caring, that all may feast at the table of abundance, walk without fear, and drink deeply from springs of life-giving water. Amen.

HYMN *"Lead Us from Death to Life"*

#581 NCH Marty Haugen Satish Kumar

Refrain:

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
let peace fill our universe.

1 Still all the angry cries, still all the angry guns,
Still now your people die, earth's sons and daughters.

Let justice roll, let mercy pour down,
Come and teach us your way of compassion.

(Refrain)

2 So many lonely hearts, so many broken lives,
Longing for love to break into their darkness.
Come, teach us love, come, teach us peace,
Come and teach us your way of compassion.
(Refrain)

3 Let justice ever roll, let mercy fill the earth,
Let us begin to grow into your people.
We can be love, we can bring peace,
We can still be your way of compassion.

PSALM 23 BLESSING

JOYS AND CONCERNS

HYMN *"Lead Us from Death to Life"*

#581 NCH

Refrain:

Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth,
From despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
Let peace fill our universe.

COMMISSIONING & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Deon Spangler



**ANNOUNCEMENTS
RADIO BROADCAST**

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

This week's radio broadcast
is sponsored by Janice Miller
in loving memory of mom, Anita Miller
and honoring all mothers & women
on this Mother's Day.

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, May 11, 2025

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, May 11th

- **10 AM Worship** Deacon Host – Byrl Buddenhagen
Greeter(s) – Emile Miller, Lexi Woods
Usher(s) – Kelley Burch, Paul Vine
PowerPoint – Bonnie Weyer

Tuesday, May 13th

- **1 PM Bible Study**

Wednesday, May 14th

- **5 PM** Last Day of JAM at Calvary
- **6 PM** Deacons Meeting

Thursday, May 15th

- **1:30 PM** Circle of Friends Meeting
(rescheduled from May 8th)

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

May 11 - Mother's Day – no fellowship
May 18- Graduation Sunday
May 25-
June 1 – Vacation Bible School after worship
We need people to sign up

Spring Change of Seasons

Saturday May 17th

- The annual Spring Change of Seasons project co-sponsored by Saint Mary's Justice and Peace Committee and Interfaith Caregivers of Clark County will be Saturday May 17th.

Cleaning consists of gutter cleaning and window washing. Gutters will only be done if we have enough volunteers and no gutters above standard height.

The event will start at 8:30 am with breakfast at St. Mary's Parish.

Please contact Interfaith at 715-743-2885 or email judydonmorrow@hotmail.com or contact Gary Veltus at 715-937-6551.

Remember we can only accomplish this program with enough volunteers. This would be a good project for Scouts, FFA and Church groups. Consider volunteering to help those in need.



Change of Seasons

Reminder - **STARTING May 25th**
worship service will begin
at 9:30 AM going forward.