

Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 18, 2025
United Church of Christ - Neillsville
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger

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PRELUDE *"Procession"* Albert Zabel Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PSALM OF PRAISE

Psalm 148

¹ Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens!

Praise him from the skies!

² Praise him, all his angels!

Praise him, all the armies of heaven!

³ Praise him, sun and moon!

Praise him, all you twinkling stars!

⁴ Praise him, skies above!

Praise him, vapors high above the clouds!

⁵ Let every created thing give praise to the Lord,
for he issued his command, and they came into
being.

⁶ He set them in place forever and ever.
His decree will never be revoked.

⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth,
you creatures of the ocean depths,

⁸ fire and hail, snow and clouds,
wind and weather that obey him,

⁹ mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars,

¹⁰ wild animals and all livestock,
small scurrying animals and birds,

¹¹ kings of the earth and all people,
rulers and judges of the earth,

¹² young men and young women,
old men and children.

¹³ Let them all praise the name of the Lord.
For his name is very great;
his glory towers over the earth and heaven!

¹⁴ He has made his people strong,
honoring his faithful ones—
the people of Israel who are close to him.
Praise the Lord!

CALL TO WORSHIP

Let praise to God resound in the heavens!

Let praise to God fill the earth!

Let all God's angels offer praise and rejoicing!

Let all God's creatures sing praise and joy!

Open your hearts and spirits today.

Let us praise the Lord today and always!

OPENING PRAYER

Living God of past and future, we praise you for this
present moment. Fill us with your joy and empower
us with your Holy Spirit, that our strength may be
renewed to sing a new song of your glory in a world
which longs for your justice and peace. All this we
ask in the name of Jesus, in whom we become your
new creation. Amen.

HYMN *"To You, O God, All Creatures Sing"*

#17 NCH (vs. 1-4) Adapt. Miriam Therese Winter

1 To you, O God, all creatures sing,

And all creation, everything

Sings your praises, alleluia!

Your burning sun with golden beam,

Your silver moon with softer gleam

Sing your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

2 Your wind that blows the tempest by,

Your clouds that sail across the sky

Sing your praises, alleluia!

Your morning rises with a song,

And lights of evening sing along,

Sing your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

3 Your flowing waters, crystal clear,

Make melodies for you to hear,

Sing your praises, alleluia!

Your fire, bountiful and bright,

Remembering your warmth and light,

Sings your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

4 To you, O God, day after day,

Your planet earth in every way,

Sings your praises, alleluia!

As savory fruit and fragrant flower

Show forth your glory and your power,

Singing praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

God of all people, our hearts are too narrow, our perspectives are too small. We build boundaries and reject those who are not like us—

**those with different political opinions,
those who look or live differently than us,
those who disagree with us.**

We forget that all are your beloved children, and neglect your call to love one another. Forgive us, O God, for the many ways we have failed to be a people known by our love. Show us how to be more caring. Teach us how to love one another, and make us faithful disciples. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

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

SCRIPTURE READINGS

NEW TESTAMENT Acts 11:1-18

¹ Soon the news reached the apostles and other believers in Judea that the Gentiles had received the word of God. ² But when Peter arrived back in Jerusalem, the Jewish believers criticized him. ³ "You entered the home of Gentiles and even ate with them!" they said.

⁴ Then Peter told them exactly what had happened. ⁵ "I was in the town of Joppa," he said, "and while I was praying, I went into a trance and saw a vision. Something like a large sheet was let down by its four corners from the sky. And it came right down to me. ⁶ When I looked inside the sheet, I saw all sorts of tame and wild animals, reptiles, and birds. ⁷ And I heard a voice say, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat them.'

⁸ "No, Lord," I replied. 'I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure or unclean.'

⁹ "But the voice from heaven spoke again: 'Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean.' ¹⁰ This happened three times before the sheet and all it contained was pulled back up to heaven.

¹¹ "Just then three men who had been sent from Caesarea arrived at the house where we were staying.

¹² The Holy Spirit told me to go with them and not to worry that they were Gentiles. These six brothers here accompanied me, and we soon entered the home of the man who had sent for us. ¹³ He told us how an angel had appeared to him in his home and had told him, 'Send messengers to Joppa, and summon a man named Simon Peter. ¹⁴ He will tell you how you and everyone in your household can be saved!'

¹⁵ "As I began to speak," Peter continued, "the Holy Spirit fell on them, just as he fell on us at the beginning. ¹⁶ Then I thought of the Lord's words when he said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷ And since God gave these Gentiles the same gift he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to stand in God's way?"

¹⁸ When the others heard this, they stopped objecting and began praising God. They said, "We can see that God has also given the Gentiles the privilege of repenting of their sins and receiving eternal life."

NEW TESTAMENT Revelation 21:1-6

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

³ I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."

⁵ And the one sitting on the throne said, "Look, I am making everything new!" And then he said to me, "Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true." ⁶ And he also said, "It is finished! I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all

who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life.

HYMN *"O For a World"* Miriam Therese Winter
#575 NCH (vs. 1,5)

1 O for a world where everyone
respects each other's ways,
Where love is lived and all is done
With justice and with praise.

5 O for a world preparing for
God's glorious reign of peace,
Where time and tears will be no more,
And all but love will cease.

NEW TESTAMENT John 13:31-35

³¹ As soon as Judas left the room, Jesus said, "The time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory, and God will be glorified because of him. ³² And since God receives glory because of the Son, he will give his own glory to the Son, and he will do so at once. ³³ Dear children, I will be with you only a little longer. And as I told the Jewish leaders, you will search for me, but you can't come where I am going. ³⁴ So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. ³⁵ Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

SERMON "Prove it!" Pastor Julie

HYMN *"They'll Know We Are Christians"*
Peter Scholtes #595 W&R

1 We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord.
We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord.
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.

Refrain:

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love.
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

2 We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand.
We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand.
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land.
Refrain

3 We will work with each other; we will work side by side.
We will work with each other; we will work side by side.

And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride.
Refrain

4 All praise to the Father, from whom all things come.
And all praise to Christ Jesus, God's only Son.
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one.
Refrain

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

HONORING OUR GRADUATES

Brody Bergemann - Max Heck - Sydney Subke

Today we honor you who are graduating, for you are on a sacred journey.

Your journey is not only the learning of your mind but the growing of your heart.

We celebrate the effort you have given to accomplish this.

And we ask God's blessing for the journey yet to come.

May God always give you gifts of curiosity and discipline.

May God give you courage to explore new things.

May the Spirit work in you that in all you do you may serve God.

May the Spirit give you grace to do justice, to love kindly, and to walk humbly with God.

May you know always that Christ goes with you.

We who have made many journeys give you our blessing.

By the grace of God, we surround you with our prayers.

Our spirits will go with you. For we too are pilgrims, always learning, always by the grace of God beginning anew. Go in peace, and serve God with joy. Amen.

THE OFFERING SERVICE

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory *"Be Thou My Vision"* Dale Wood

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

Loving God, you have given us the task to love one another. May the gifts we offer bring love and life to others. May the love we share bring hope to a world that has forgotten how to love. Amen.

HYMN "Help Us Accept Each Other"

#388 NCH (v. 1-3) Fred Kaan

1 Help us accept each other as Christ accepted us;
Teach us as sister, brother, each person to embrace.
Be present, God among us, and bring us to believe
We are ourselves accepted and meant to love and live.

2 Teach us, O God, your lessons, as in our daily life
We struggle to be human and search for hope and faith.

Teach us to care for people, for all, not just for some,
To love them as we find them, or as they may become.

3 Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved

In living situations to do the truth in love;
To practice your acceptance, until we know by heart
The table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.

BENEDICTINE BLESSING

JOYS AND CONCERNS

HYMN "Help Us Accept Each Other"

#388 NCH (v. 4)

God, for today's encounters with all who are in need,
Who hunger for acceptance, for righteousness and bread,
Bring us new eyes for seeing, new hands for holding on;
Renew us with your Spirit; God! Free us, make us one!

COMMISSIONING (All)

Be the church:

Protect the environment

Care for the poor

Forgive often

Reject racism

Fight for the powerless

Share earthly and spiritual resources

Embrace diversity

Love God

Enjoy this life!

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 anonymously
by a "faithful listener".

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 18, 2025

<https://youtube.com/live/gBW8GjW4fA4>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, May 18th

- 10 AM Worship Deacon Host – Barb Shoemaker
Greeter(s) – Rosie & Jim Repinski
Usher(s) – Roger Carl, Hap Eddy
PowerPoint – Paul Vine

Monday, May 19th

- 9:00 AM Card Making

Tuesday, May 20th

- 1 PM Bible Study

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

May 18- Graduation Sunday
May 25- Mathis'
June 1 – Vacation Bible School after worship
June 8 -

We need people to sign up

TODAY



**MEAL
GIVEAWAY**

MAY 18, 2025
10:45-11:00 AM

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST-NEILLSVILLE
515 WEST SECOND STREET



Celebrating
OUR GRADUATES
Neillsville High School

Brody Bergemann

Son of Luke & Michelle Bergemann



After graduation, Brody will be entering the workforce. Brody's biggest accomplishment in high school has been his achievements in track and field. He is a three-time conference and regional champion and is currently having another successful season. Brody has set new indoor track records in the 45m and 200 m for Neillsville.



Max Heck

Nephew of Craig & Stephanie Heck,
Grandson of Tracy & Kay Heck

Max plans to attend UW-Stout in the area of Mechanical Engineering.



Sydney Subke

Daughter of Michelle & John Subke

Sydney was an integral part of the Neillsville Girls basketball team, she received 2nd Team All Conference, 1st team All Conference twice, Cloverbelt Player of the year, WBCA All Star, WBCA All State Team.

After graduation, Sydney plans to attend University of Eau Claire and continue to play basketball with the women's Blugold team.

Her area of study is Exercise Science. Her greatest achievement has been WBCA All State Team.

Ethan Miller – Son of Kent Miller & Rachel Miller
Grandson of Emile & Dan Miller

Graduated at mid-term and is now in an apprenticeship program with Larsen Construction building bridges.

Other High School Graduates

Avalyn Friedel of Plymouth High School will be attending Winona State for Nursing,

Malcolm Mohr of Sun Prairie East High School will be attending UW-Madison for Computer Science.

Grandchildren of Jim & Karen Mohr

College Graduates

Ellie Wynn Moseid – Masters Degree in Phy. Ed. from UW La Crosse with emphasis on Adventure Outdoor Pursuits.

Daughter of Cindy & Kai Moseid

Isaac Follen – Graduating from UW Green Bay with Computer Tech degree.

Grandson of Phil & Donita Follen