

Third Sunday after Epiphany
January 25, 2026
United Church of Christ - Neillsville
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger

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PRELUDE Holly Pisors, Pianist

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 27)

The Lord is our light and our salvation!

Why should we be afraid?

The Lord is the stronghold of our life!

What have we to fear?

Let us shout with joy to God!

Let us sing and make music before our God.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

O God, our light and our salvation, shelter us in your love. O God, our stronghold, protect us from danger. We come with shouts of joy to worship you this day. We come with song and music to celebrate your love. We come with longing to seek your presence. Be with us now, O God, as we sing your praises. Amen.

HYMN *"Jesus Calls Us, O'er the Tumult"*

#172 NCH (vs. 1-4) Cecil Alexander

**1 Jesus calls us, o'er the tumult
of our life's wild, restless sea;
Day by day that voice still calls us,
saying, "Christian, follow me."**

**2 As of old, Saint Andrew heard it
by the Galilean lake,
Turned from home and toil and kindred,
leaving all for Jesus' sake.**

**3 Jesus calls us from the worship
of the treasures we adore,
From each idol that would keep us,
saying, "Christian, love me more."**

**4 In our joys and in our sorrows,
days of toil and hours of ease,
Jesus calls, in cares and pleasures,
"Christian, love me more than these."**

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

God of light, we live in the darkness of despair: worried about our lives, concerned for our health, fearful that we are lost from you. The yoke of our burdens lies heavy upon us: our unwillingness to forgive, our fears of one another, our reluctance to share what we have, our divisions and quarrels. We long to turn from the dark and live in the light. We yearn to leave what is evil and follow the paths of righteousness. Shine the light of your love upon us and transform us with your love, that your promised realm may draw near. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

PASSING OF THE PEACE

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: *"Jesus Calls Us, O'er the Tumult"*

#172 NCH (vs.5) Cecil Alexander

**5 Jesus calls us! By your mercies,
Savior, may we hear your call,
Give our hearts to your obedience,
serve and love you best of all.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

SCRIPTURE READINGS

OLD TESTAMENT Isaiah 9:1-4

¹ Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on forever. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali will be humbled, but there will be a time in the future when Galilee of the Gentiles, which

lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, will be filled with glory.

²The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine. ³You will enlarge the nation of Israel, and its people will rejoice. They will rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest and like warriors dividing the plunder. ⁴For you will break the yoke of their slavery and lift the heavy burden from their shoulders. You will break the oppressor's rod, just as you did when you destroyed the army of Midian.

Psalm 27:1, 4-9

¹The Lord is my light and my salvation— so why should I be afraid? The Lord is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble?

⁴The one thing I ask of the Lord— the thing I seek most— is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, delighting in the Lord's perfections and meditating in his Temple. ⁵For he will conceal me there when troubles come; he will hide me in his sanctuary. He will place me out of reach on a high rock. ⁶Then I will hold my head high above my enemies who surround me. At his sanctuary I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy, singing and praising the Lord with music.

⁷Hear me as I pray, O Lord. Be merciful and answer me! ⁸My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me." And my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming." ⁹Do not turn your back on me. Do not reject your servant in anger. You have always been my helper. Don't leave me now; don't abandon me, O God of my salvation!

Matthew 4:12-23

¹²When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he left Judea and returned to Galilee. ¹³He went first to Nazareth, then left there and moved to Capernaum, beside the Sea of Galilee, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴This fulfilled what God said through the prophet Isaiah:

¹⁵"In the land of Zebulun and of Naphtali, beside the sea, beyond the Jordan River, in Galilee where so many Gentiles live, ¹⁶the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. And for those who lived in the land where death casts its shadow, a light has shined."

¹⁷From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."

¹⁸One day as Jesus was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers—Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew—throwing a net into the water, for they fished for a living. ¹⁹Jesus called out to them, "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people!" ²⁰And they left their nets at once and followed him.

²¹A little farther up the shore he saw two other brothers, James and John, sitting in a boat with their father, Zebedee, repairing their nets. And he called them to come, too. ²²They immediately followed him, leaving the boat and their father behind.

²³Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness.

RESPONSE TO SCRIPTURE

SERMON "Following the Light"

HYMN "You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore"

#173 NCH Cesdreo Gabarain
Trsl. Madeleine Forrell Marshall

**1 You have come down to the lakeshore
Seeking neither the wise nor the wealthy,
But only asking for me to follow.**

Refrain:

**O Jesus, you have looked into my eyes;
Kindly smiling, you've called out my name.
On the sand I have abandoned my small boat;
Now with you, I will seek other seas.**

**2 You know full well my possessions.
Neither treasure nor weapons for conquest,
Just these my fishnets and will for working.**

Refrain

**3 You need my hands, my exhaustion,
Working love for the rest of the weary -
A love that's willing to go on loving.**

Refrain

4 You who have fished other waters;
You, the longing of souls that are yearning:
As loving Friend, you have come to call me.
Refrain

We spread your net of gospel
Across the water's face,
Our boat a common shelter
For all found by your grace.

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 "We Give You But Your Own" #785

NCH

We give you but your own,
whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is your alone,
We give it gratefully.

Prayer of Dedication

What can we offer in thanksgiving for the gift of light and life and love we have received from you and from your Beloved Community here on earth? We offer our all: our resources, our energy, our time, our very selves to answer your call and to follow without fear. Amen.

HYMN "You Walk Along Our Shoreline"

#504 NCH (vs. 1-2) Sylvia Dunstan

Tune: Aurelia ("The Church's One Foundation" #386)

1 You walk along our shoreline
When land meets unknown sea.
We hear your voice of power,
"Now come and follow me.
And if you still will follow
Through storm and wave and shoal,
Then I will make you fishers
But of the human soul."

2 You call us, Christ, to gather
The people of the earth.
We cannot fish for only
Those lives we think have worth.

BLESSING

SHARING OUR BLESSINGS AND BURDENS

As we are gathered together as children of God, we are called to share our blessings and joys and our concerns, our deepest fears, sadnesses, griefs and needs so that we may bear one another up and support each other in prayer and Christian love.

HYMN "You Walk Along Our Shoreline"

#504 NCH (vs.3) Sylvia Dunstan

Tune: Aurelia ("The Church's One Foundation" #386)

3 We cast our net, O Jesus;
We cry the kingdom's name;
We work for love and justice;
We learn to hope through pain.
You call us, Lord, to gather
God's daughters and God's sons,
To let your judgment heal us
So that all may be one.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

RADIO BROADCAST

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

This week's radio broadcast
is given anonymously with the message
"May HIS word be heard by ALL".

YouTube link for Sunday, January 25, 2026
<https://youtube.com/live/KPiQYaHFyJY>

Volunteers Needed for Sunday Worship

January - March 2026

We are looking for volunteers to assist with Sunday worship by **reading the scriptures and/or leading the children's message**. Pastor Julie will choose the scripture readings, and volunteers will prepare and lead the children's message. Pastor Julie has online resources available and is happy to discuss ideas or offer guidance.

If you feel called to help, please add your name to the schedule below. For more specifics of questions please contact Sally Sadowsa or Janice Miller.

Thank you for serving!

Sunday	Scripture	Children's message
January 18	Barb Shoemaker	Pastor Sue
January 25	Nancy Rodman	Barb Shoemaker
Feb 1	JoAnn Voss	
Feb 8	Kirk Rodman	
Feb 15	Barb Petkovsek	Barb Petkovsek
Feb. 22	Susie Karl	Barb Shoemaker
Mar. 1	Wayne Voss	Barb Shoemaker
Mar. 8		
Mar. 15		Barb Shoemaker
Mar. 22		
Mar 29 (Palm)		
April 5 (Easter)		

This schedule is found on the back bulletin board of the church.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday, January 25th

- 9:30 AM Worship

Deacon – Sally Sadowska

Greeters – Howie & Kathy Mathis

Ushers – Mike & Debbie Perkl

Power Point – Brynn Heck

AV – Stephanie Heck

FYI - (for those who are scheduled for PowerPoint or AV it is suggested that you arrive 30 minutes prior to the church service to get the laptop turned on, allow for any updates, lower screen and start running the announcements).

Following Sunday,

February 1st

Deacon – Karlene Wallace

Greeters – Larry & Kathy Marshall

Ushers – Larry Marshall & Paul Schmidt

Power Point – Janice Miller

AV – Emile Miller

Tuesday, January 27th

- 1:00 PM Bible Study

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

Jan 25 – Rodman's

Feb 1 – Buddenhagen's

Feb 8 –

Feb 15 -

We need people to sign up



January is such a long month, but here it is time to get the February Newsletter out.

**REMINDER - PLEASE HAVE YOUR
FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**

**INTO THE OFFICE BY
TUESDAY, JANUARY 27th**