

Third Sunday in Lent

March 8, 2026

United Church of Christ - Neillsville

Pastor Julie Ruegsegger

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PRELUDE "My Faith Looks Up to Thee"

with "Ave Verum" Mozart Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARING OUR HEARTS TO HEAR THE WORD

HYMN: "Gathered Here" Phil Porter

#742 NCH (sing twice)

Gathered here in the mystery of this hour,
Gathered here in one strong body,
Gathered here in the struggle and the pow'r,
Spirit, draw near.

MEDITATION MOMENT

Water from Rock

RESPONSE: "Come and Fill Our Hearts"

#16 MV (sing twice)

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O God are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace,
A- - - men.

CALL TO WORSHIP

O come, let us sing to our God and make a joyful noise
to the rock of our salvation.

**We lift our hearts and voices in joy and thanksgiving
for being here together in the presence of our
beloved God.**

Come, let us worship this amazing God, for we belong
to God.

**We will listen for God's word and live in the hope it
inspires.**

OPENING PRAYER

Loving and caring God, we come this morning in
hope— hope that will sustain us in our trying times,
our lonely times, our doubting times. Refresh us this
morning with the living water of your presence

**and love. Open us to the possibilities of friendship—
the possibilities of encountering you in unexpected
ways, the possibilities of seeing the miraculous in
everyday life. 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

One: The Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

RESPONSE: *“Down to the River to Pray”*

Hymns of Promise #130 (verses 1-3)

Traditional Spiritual

1 As I went down to the river to pray,
studyin' about that good ole way
and who shall wear the starry crown,
good Lord, show me the way.
O brothers, let's go down,
let's go down, come on down.
O brothers, let's go down,
down to the river to pray.

2 As I went down to the river to pray,
studyin' about that good ole way
and who shall wear the starry crown,
good Lord, show me the way.
O sisters, let's go down,
let's go down, come on down.
O sisters, let's go down,
down to the river to pray.

3 As I went down to the river to pray,
studyin' about that good ole way
and who shall wear the starry crown,
good Lord, show me the way.
O children, let's go down,
let's go down, come on down.
O children, let's go down,
down to the river to pray.

CHILDREN'S TIME *“Baptized in the Water”*

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM *Harlow Jean Hagen*

Parents: Krista Hamm & Ricky Hagen

Sponsors: Jack Hediger
Reese Ziegler
Kattie Roidt

Invitation and Welcome

Questions to Parents

Questions to Sponsors

Questions to Congregation

Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament,

promise your love, support and care to the one about to be baptized, as she lives and grows in Christ?

We promise our love, support and care.

Affirmation of Faith

Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God.

Do you believe in God?

I believe in God

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

I believe in Jesus Christ

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

I believe in the Holy Spirit

Prayer of Blessing

Act of Baptism

HYMN *“Child of Blessing, Child of Promise”*
#325 NCH (vs 1, 3, 4) Ronald S. Cole-Turner

1 Child of blessing, child of promise,
baptized with the Spirit's sign,
with this water God has sealed you
unto love and grace divine.

3 Child of joy, our dearest treasure,
God's you are; from God you came.
Back to God we humbly give you;
live as one who bears Christ's name.

4 Child of God, your loving Parent,
learn to know whose child you are;
grow to laugh and sing and worship,
trust and love God more than all.

HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

OLD TESTAMENT Exodus 17:1-6

Water from the Rock

^{17:1} At the Lord's command, the whole community of Israel left the wilderness of Sin and moved from place to place. Eventually they camped at Rephidim, but there was no water there for the people to drink. ² So once more the people complained against Moses. "Give us water to drink!" they demanded.

“Quiet!” Moses replied. “Why are you complaining against me? And why are you testing the Lord?”

³ But tormented by thirst, they continued to argue with Moses. “Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Are you trying to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?”

⁴ Then Moses cried out to the Lord, “What should I do with these people? They are ready to stone me!”

⁵ The Lord said to Moses, “Walk out in front of the people. Take your staff, the one you used when you struck the water of the Nile, and call some of the elders of Israel to join you. ⁶ I will stand before you on the rock at Mount Sinai. Strike the rock, and water will come gushing out. Then the people will be able to drink.” So Moses struck the rock as he was told, and water gushed out as the elders looked on.

NEW TESTAMENT John 4:5-42

⁵ Eventually he came to the Samaritan village of Sychar, near the field that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob’s well was there; and Jesus, tired from the long walk, sat wearily beside the well about noontime. ⁷ Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Please give me a drink.” ⁸ He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

⁹ The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?”

¹⁰ Jesus replied, “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”

¹¹ “But sir, you don’t have a rope or a bucket,” she said, “and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? ¹² And besides, do you think you’re greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?”

¹³ Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. ¹⁴ But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

¹⁵ “Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water! Then I’ll never be thirsty again, and I won’t have to come here to get water.”

¹⁶ “Go and get your husband,” Jesus told her.

¹⁷ “I don’t have a husband,” the woman replied.

Jesus said, “You’re right! You don’t have a husband—¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and you aren’t even married to the man you’re living with now. You certainly spoke the truth!”

¹⁹ “Sir,” the woman said, “you must be a prophet. ²⁰ So tell me, why is it that you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place of worship, while we Samaritans claim it is here at Mount Gerizim, where our ancestors worshiped?”

²¹ Jesus replied, “Believe me, dear woman, the time is coming when it will no longer matter whether you worship the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²² You Samaritans know very little about the one you worship, while we Jews know all about him, for salvation comes through the Jews. ²³ But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. ²⁴ For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

²⁵ The woman said, “I know the Messiah is coming—the one who is called Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.”

²⁶ Then Jesus told her, “I am the Messiah!”

²⁷ Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked to find him talking to a woman, but none of them had the nerve to ask, “What do you want with her?” or “Why are you talking to her?” ²⁸ The woman left her water jar beside the well and ran back to the village, telling everyone, ²⁹ “Come and see a man who told me everything I ever did! Could he possibly be the Messiah?” ³⁰ So the people came streaming from the village to see him.

³¹ Meanwhile, the disciples were urging Jesus, “Rabbi, eat something.”

³² But Jesus replied, “I have a kind of food you know nothing about.”

³³ “Did someone bring him food while we were gone?” the disciples asked each other.

³⁴ Then Jesus explained: “My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. ³⁵ You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest. ³⁶ The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike! ³⁷ You know the saying, ‘One plants and another harvests.’ And it’s true. ³⁸ I sent you to harvest where you didn’t plant; others had already done the work, and now you will get to gather the harvest.”

³⁹ Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, “He told me everything I ever did!” ⁴⁰ When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, ⁴¹ long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. ⁴² Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.”

SERMON “*Being Seen and Known*” Pastor Julie

HYMN “*Fill My Cup, Lord*”

#271 Praise! Music & Lyrics: Richard Blanchard

1 Like the woman at the well, I was seeking
For things that could not satisfy.
And then I heard my Savior speaking—
“Draw from My well that never shall run dry.”

Refrain:

Fill my cup, Lord; I lift it up Lord;
Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.
Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more.
Fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.

2 There are millions in this world who are seeking
For pleasures earthly goods afford.
But none can match the wondrous treasure
That I find in Jesus Christ my Lord. [Refrain]

3 So my brother, if the things that this world gives you
Leave hungers that won’t pass away,
My blessed Lord will come and save you
If you kneel to Him and humbly pray—[Refrain]

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

...Lord, in Your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

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**

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

THE OFFERING SERVICE

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory “*Children of the Heavenly Father*”
Swedish folk melody Anna Laura Page

Doxology

**Praise God throughout these forty days;
Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise;
And praise the Spirit who imparts
God’s love in Christ into our hearts. Amen.**

Prayer of Dedication

Life-giving God, we offer you ourselves and our resources. Use us and our gifts, that we may be water bearers to a world thirsty for love, for meaning, for justice, and for hope. May all your people encounter fullness of life through the love of Christ, which lives within us. Amen.

HYMN “*I Love to Tell the Story*”

#522 NCH (vs. 1,2,4) Katherine Hankey
1 I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
of Jesus’ radiant glory, of Jesus’ endless love.
I love to tell the story because I know it’s true.
it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.

Refrain:

I love to tell the story! And when I am in glory
I’ll tell the old, old story of Jesus’ endless love.

2 I love to tell the story; more wonderful it seems
than all the golden visions of all our golden dreams.
I love to tell the story; I tell it now to you
Because I want to share it, because I know it’s true.
[Refrain]

4 I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.
And when I sing in glory I know the new, new song,
will be the old, old story that I have loved so long.
[Refrain]

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.

SENDING OUT TO THE WORLD

HYMN "Go, My Children, With My Blessing"
#82 NCH (vs. 1) Jaroslav J. Vajda

**1 Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone;
Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own.
In my love's baptismal river,
I have made you mine forever.
Go, my children, with my blessing, you are my own.**

COMMISSIONING & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Karen Mohr

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

This week's radio broadcast is sponsored
by Paul Vine and Kelley Burch
in loving memory of mom, Faith Vine.

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, March 8, 2026
<https://youtube.com/live/m1giN1EPdlg>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday, March 8th

- 9:30 AM Worship

Deacon – Barb Shoemaker
Greeters – Scott & Jill Williams Family
Ushers – Jerry Hamm, Ray Weyer
Power Point – Barb Petkovsek
AV – Crispin Hediger

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

Following Sunday, March 15th

Deacon – Sally Sadowska
Greeters – Sandy Bieneck & Michelle Bergemann
Ushers – Hap Eddy, Craig Heck, Calvin Heck
Power Point – Brynn Heck
AV – Stephanie Heck

Tuesday, March 10th

- 1:00 PM Bible Study

Wednesday, March 11th here at UCC

Chili Feast - 11 - 1 PM and 4 - 6 PM

\$10 (\$5 - 12 and under, FREE - 3 and under)

-6:30 PM - viewing of "The Chosen"

Thursday, March 12th

- 1:30 PM Circle of Friends Meeting

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

Mar 8 – Rodman's
Mar 15 –
Mar 22 – Weyer & Hamm
Mar 29 -
We need people to sign up

