

Fourth Sunday of Easter
Confirmation/Good Shepherd Sunday
April 26, 2026
United Church of Christ - Neillsville
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger

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PRELUDE "Assurance" John Ness Beck
Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP (inspired by Psalm 23)

One: The Good Shepherd is the gate. Let us enter with
thanksgiving and praise!

**Many: The Shepherd restores our souls, satisfies our
needs, and leads us on the right path.**

One: The Good Shepherd is the gate. Let us live with
courage and conviction, not fear and timidity.

**Many: Through valleys and storms, chaos and
confusion, threats and concerns, the Shepherd
comforts us with power and strength, love and
compassion, hope and peace.**

One: The Good Shepherd is the gate. Let us worship in
the presence of the Holy One!

**Many: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all
the days of our lives. Let us dwell in God's presence
forever!**

OPENING PRAYER

God who is Shepherd, Gate, and Way, we join
together as a community in your presence and in
your protection. Shield us from apathy and isolation.
Fortify us against resignation and despair. Nudge us
toward justice and righteousness in your name. As
we gather to worship you, may we be transformed
by your love, strengthened in grace, and rooted in
faith for your glory and your kingdom come. Amen.

HYMN "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

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

**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.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The Peace of God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

HYMN RESPONSE: "Halle, Halle, Halle"

#236 NCH Caribbean melody

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

CHILDREN'S TIME

HYMN "I Come With Joy" Brian Wren

#349 NCH (verse 1)

1 I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved and free,
the life of Jesus to recall,
in love laid down for me,
in love laid down for me.



SERVICE OF CONFIRMATION

Candidates:

Lexi Bergemann

(parents Michelle & Luke Bergemann)

Kalvin Heck

(parents Stephanie & Craig Heck)

Lexi Woods

(parents Julie & Clint Woods)

Invitation

Questions of the Candidates

Affirmation of Faith: UCC Statement of Faith

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother, and to whose deeds we testify:

God calls the worlds into being, creates humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, God has come to us and shared our

common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share

in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God.

Amen.

Prayer of the Candidates

Prayer of the Congregation

ALL: Almighty God, who in baptism received these your servants into the church, forgave their sins, and promised them eternal life, increase in them the gifts of your Holy Spirit. Grant love for others, joy in serving you, peace in disagreement, patience in suffering, kindness toward all people, goodness in evil times, faithfulness in temptation, gentleness in the face of opposition, self-control in all things. Strengthen them for their ministry in the world; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Act of Confirmation

Prayer of Confirmation

Address

Question about Participation

Welcome & Greeting of Christian Love

Moderator: Let us, the members of the Neillsville United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

ALL: We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

Prayer

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Acts 2:42-47

Community of believers

⁴²The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers. ⁴³A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were united and shared everything. ⁴⁵They would sell pieces of property and possessions and distribute the proceeds to everyone who needed them. ⁴⁶Every day, they met together in the temple and ate in their homes. They shared food with gladness and simplicity. ⁴⁷They praised God and demonstrated God's goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.

John 10:1-10

¹I assure you that whoever doesn't enter into the sheep pen through the gate but climbs over the wall is a thief and an outlaw. ²The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The guard at the gate opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴Whenever he has gathered all of his sheep, he goes before them and they follow him, because they know his voice. ⁵They won't follow a stranger but will run away because they don't know the stranger's voice." ⁶Those who heard Jesus use this analogy didn't understand what he was saying.

I am the gate

⁷So Jesus spoke again, "I assure you that I am the gate of the sheep. ⁸All who came before me were thieves and outlaws, but the sheep didn't listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief enters only to steal, kill, and destroy. I came so

that they could have life—indeed, so that they could live life to the fullest.

SERMON "Protected and Provided" Pastor Julie

HYMN "I Come With Joy" Brian Wren

#349 NCH (verse 2-4)

**2 I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.**

**3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,
each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends,
and strangers now are friends.**

**4 And thus we meet,
and better know the Presence ever near,
And join our hearts and sing with joy
That Christ is risen here,
That Christ is risen here.**

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

Great Thanksgiving

God be with you.

And also with you.

Rejoice and be glad.

We praise God with joy.

Thanks be to God.

We thank God with our whole hearts.

...And so, we join all creation as we sing praise to you:

**Worthy is our God and worthy is Jesus Christ!
Power and might be yours!
Wisdom and honor be yours!
Glory and blessing be yours!
Alleluia and amen, now and forever. Amen.**

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

... And so, we offer our very selves, with glad and grateful hearts, as we proclaim this mystery:

Christ was with us from the beginning.
Christ is with us today.
Christ will be with us until the end of time.

Prayer of Blessing

Sharing The Elements

Prayer Of Thanksgiving

Holy God, in this place, at this table, we have touched, we have tasted, and we have heard the signs of your love for us. Grant that we may go from here filled with our love for you and overflowing with your love for those who are around us and who share our lives. As we have been fed, let us now go and feed your sheep. Amen

HYMN "I Come With Joy" Brian Wren

#349 NCH (verse 5)

5 Together met, together bound
In friendship we will stay,
And go with joy, to love the world
And live the way we pray,
And live the way we pray.

THE OFFERING SERVICE

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

Doxology Tune: Old 100th ("Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow")

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

Generous God, may these gifts bless our life together, fortify our ministry, and transform our community. Receive them as we give them—with gladness and thanksgiving. Amen.

HYMN "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

#347 NCH (vs. 1-2) Fred Kaan

1 Let us talents and tongues employ,
reaching out with a shout of joy:
bread is broken, the wine is poured,
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Refrain:

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again;
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again;
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

2 Christ is able to make us one,
at the table he set the tone,
teaching people to live to bless,
love in word and in deed express. [*Refrain*]

COMMISSIONING

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!

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 "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ"

#347 NCH (vs. 3) Fred Kaan

3 Jesus calls us in, sends us out
bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share:
God (Emmanuel) everywhere!

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again;
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again;
pass the Word around: loaves abound!

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Karen Mohr

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, April 26, 2026
<https://youtube.com/live/oM2wIFNEOZY>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday, April 26th

- 9:30 AM Worship

Deacon – Barb Shoemaker
Greeters – Nancy & Kirk Rodman
Ushers – Jerry Quicker, Don Quicker
Power Point – Barb Petkovsek
AV – Lydia Schumacher

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, May 3rd

Deacon – Sally Sadowska
Greeters – Lydia Schumacher, Karen Northup
Ushers – Roger Carl, Hap Eddy
Power Point – Jenny Erickson
AV – Emile Miller

Tuesday, April 28th

-1:00 PM – Bible Study

Wednesday, April 29th

**-5:00 PM – JAM at Calvary (last one this school year)
6:00 PM – Leadership Council Meeting**

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

Apr 26 – Deb Perkl (confirmation)
May 3 –
May 10 -
May 17 -
May 24 -
We need people to sign up

Volunteers Needed for Sunday Worship

April – May 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 Sadowska or Janice Miller. |

Thank you for serving!

Sunday	Scripture	Children's message
April 26	Susie Karl	
May 3	Nancy Rodman	
May 10	Ray Weyer	
May 17	Barb Shoemaker	Barb Shoemaker
May 24		
May 31		



We would like to honor those graduating this year, high school or college. For our May Newsletter -please let the office know of any students graduating this year.

BAKED GOOD AUCTION - Mark your

calendar for Sunday, May 3, 2026 right after worship in the fellowship hall. Remember, it's just not pies, we will auction off bars, muffins, casserole, hot dishes, or any other type of baked goods.

Proceeds for this auction will go into the fundraising account line for future needs.

So now for the first step of this fundraiser, we need the help of our trusty bakers/cooks of the church. Please use the signup sheet in the narthex, if you are interested in making any items to be auctioned off. If you cannot make it to church to sign up for a baked good item, please call the church office and Janice will sign you up!

To keep the auction going smoothly, we are asking for no small quantities, therefore:

- bars to be from a 9 x 13 or larger pan
- cookies to be in a package of two (2) dozens
- muffins/cupcakes to be in packages of a dozen

Bidders, if you have a favorite pie or baked goods, talk to the bakers/cooks so you get the one you want and a good donation to the church; what a deal!

Thanks for your continued support and get ready to bid!

Emile Miller & Carla Marty

