

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 3, 2026

United Church of Christ - Neillsville

Barb Shoemaker

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PRELUDE *"Contemplation"* Camille Saint-Saens
Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP (inspired by Psalm 23)

God is in our midst, forming us to be God's own
people.

Though the way may be difficult, God will be with us.

We need not fear.

**In the Lord we will take our refuge, for God is our
strength.**

Come to the Lord who will surround you with God's
own righteousness.

**Lord, open our hearts and our spirits so that we may
faithfully follow you.**

OPENING PRAYER

**We gather this day, O Lord, as people who seek your
guiding love. Open our hearts and make us ready to
stand firm in the faith that leads to loving service.**

**Create a new people in this place so that your love
may surround all who enter here. For we ask these
things in Jesus' Name. Amen.**

HYMN "To God Be the Glory" #66 W&R

**1 To God be the glory, great things he has done,
so loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.**

Refrain:

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear his voice!**

**Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice!**

**O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he has done.**

**2 O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to ev'ry believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.**

[Refrain]

**3 Great things he has taught us, great things he has
done,
and great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.**

[Refrain]

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

Lord of abiding Love and infinite Patience, be with us
this day. We have come from times of stress,
difficulties, as well as times of hope and joy. We bring
to you our concerns and our fears, and you offer your
healing mercies. We confess that we haven't thought
a whole lot about you this week. We have let events
and demands crowd you out of our thoughts and our
actions; yet when we come to this, your house, we
again kneel in contrition, seeking your forgiveness for
our blindness and apathy. Turn our lives around, Lord.
Help us look again at the many ways in which you
bless and care for us. Help us be people who will reach
out to others in loving compassion. For we ask these
things in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

WORDS OF GRACE

Even though we are a stubborn people, still God
absolutely loves and forgives us. In the name of Jesus
Christ, we are forgiven. Hallelujah!

PASSING OF THE PEACE

As forgiven and blessed 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".

HYMN RESPONSE: *"Halle, Halle, Halle"*

#236 NCH Caribbean melody

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Hallelujah, hallelujah!

CHILDREN'S TIME

Barb Petkovsek

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Barb Petkovsek

OLD TESTAMENT Psalm 103:1-11,17,18

I bless the holy name of God with all my heart. Yes, I will bless the Lord and not forget the glorious things He does for me. He forgives all my sins. He heals me. He ransoms me from hell. He surrounds me with lovingkindness and tender mercies. He fills my life with good things! My youth is renewed like the eagle's. He gives justice to all who are treated unfairly. He revealed his will and nature to Moses and the people of Israel. He is merciful and tender toward those who don't deserve it; he is slow to get angry and full of kindness and love. He never bears a grudge, nor remains angry forever. He has not punished us as we deserve for our sins. But the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, to those who reverence Him; His salvation is to children's children of those who are faithful to His covenant and remember to obey Him!

NEW TESTAMENT Ephesians 1:4-8, 13, 14

Long ago, even before He made the world, God chose us to be His very own, through what Christ would do for us; He decided then to make us holy in His eyes, without a single fault – we who stand before Him covered with His love. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family by sending Jesus

Christ to die for us. And He did this because He wanted to! Now all praise to God for His wonderful kindness to us and His favor that He has poured out upon us, because we belong to His dearly loved Son. So overflowing is His kindness towards us that He took away all our sins through the blood of His Son, by whom we are saved; and He has showered down upon us the richness of His grace – for how well he understands us and knows what is best for us at all times. And because of what Christ did, all you others too, who heard the Good News about how to be saved, and trusted Christ, were marked as belonging to Christ by the Holy Spirit, who long ago had been promised to all of us Christians. His presence within us is God's guarantee that He really will give us all that He promised; and the Spirit's seal upon us means that God as already purchased us and that He guarantees to bring us to Himself. This is just one more reason for us to praise our glorious God.

SERMON *"Just As We Are"* Barb Shoemaker

HYMN *"Just As I Am"* Charlotte Elliot

#207 NCH

**1 Just as I am, without one plea
but that your blood was shed for me,
and that you called inviting me,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

**2 Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

**3 Just as I am, you will receive,
will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because your promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

**4 Just as I am, your love unknown
has broken every barrier down;
Now to be yours, and yours alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!**

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

We are better together. When we join in music or
mission, or ministry or fellowship, we discover that
God makes us better, being built upon one another
like living stones in the house of the Lord. Let us join
together now as we receive the tithes and offerings
you have brought. We have this common faith and
common calling to be in ministry—together.

Offertory *"I Need Thee Every Hour"* John Ness Beck

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

Receive these gifts this morning, O God,
author of every good gift.

**Out of the bounty of our hearts,
we respond with faithful generosity and love.
May these gifts become blessings for others
as they have been blessing for us. Amen.**

HYMN *"O Christ, the Great Foundation"*
#387 NCH (vs. 1-3)

**1 O Christ the great foundation
On which your people stand
To preach your true salvation
In every age and land:
Pour out your Holy Spirit
To make us strong and pure,
To keep the faith unbroken
As long as worlds endure.**

**2 Baptized in one confession,
One church in all the earth,
We bear our Lord's impression,
The sign of second birth:
One holy people gathered
In love beyond our own,
By grace we were invited,
By grace we make you known.**

**3 Where tyrants' hold is tightened,
Where strong devour the weak,
Where innocents are frightened
The righteous fear to speak,
There let your church awaking
Attack the powers of sin
And, all their ramparts breaking,
With you the victory win.**

BLESSING

May the God who is community
be with us as we seek to be a community

May God bless our dreams
and may God shatter our dreams

May God help us to be real
and to find depth in weakness and brokenness

May God help us to face and grow through conflict
rather than pretend by being nice

May we look at each other through soft eyes
and truly respect each other as human beings

May God help us let go of control
and the need to fix one another

May God help us discover we are needy in our own
souls and give attention to our own hearts

May God grant us the gift of an extraordinary love
that flows from the heart of God
that covers a multitude of wrongs

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 "O Christ, the Great Foundation"

#387 NCH (vs. 4)

4 This is the moment glorious
When he who once was dead
Shall lead his church victorious,
Their champion and their head.
The Sovereign of creation
A new dominion brings
The final consummation,
The glory of all things.

BENEDICTION (based on John 14:1-4)

POSTLUDE Karen Mohr

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

This week's radio broadcast is sponsored
by Byrl and Sharon Buddenhagen
celebrating both of their birthdays.

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 3, 2026
<https://youtube.com/live/ezI87c9PHW4>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday, May 3rd

- 9:30 AM Worship

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

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 10th

Deacon – Janice Miller
Greeters – Paul Vine
Ushers – Paul Vine,
Power Point – Bonnie Weyer
AV – Crispin Hediger

Tuesday, May 5th

-1:00 PM – Bible Study

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

May 3 – Baked Good Auction – Doris B. coffee
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		

BAKED GOOD AUCTION - Mark your calendar for Sunday, May 3, 2026

right after worship in the fellowship hall