

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
July 26, 2026
United Church of Christ - Neillsville
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger

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PRELUDE "Ode to Joy" Ludwig Van Beethoven
Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Psalm 105*)

Give thanks to the Holy One. Make God's deeds
known among the peoples.

We call upon the name of the Holy One!

Give thanks to the Holy One. Tell of all God's
wonderful works!

**We sing praises and remember the wonderful works,
miracles, and judgements!**

Give thanks to the Holy One. Glory in God's holy
name!

**We seek the Holy One, and our hearts rejoice! Praise
God!**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

God of small seeds and mighty plants, you take our
meager lives and with your love cause them to
produce acts of loving kindness for you in this world.
You hear our cries and find us when we are lost and
wandering in fear. You bring us home with you so
that we may be made whole, rejoicing in your
goodness. Help us to joyfully serve you all our days,
knowing that you are always watching over us.
Prepare our hearts to receive your word and our
spirits to respond in eagerness to serve you. In Jesus'
name, we pray. Amen.

HYMN "To What Can the Kingdom of God be Compared"
Tune: William Howard Doane, 1875
(*"To God Be the Glory" 11.11.11.11 with Refrain*)
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**1 To what can the kingdom of God be compared?
A mustard seed falls where a field's been prepared,
And there, where predictable plantings should be,
There grows up a wild bush — as big as a tree!**

**God of love, here on earth, hidden things still
surprise:**

**Loving deeds ... signs of birth ... faithful, Spirit-filled
lives.**

**Your reign is amazing, your ways still astound,
Just like that new life springing forth from the
ground.**

2 A small bit of leaven will change the whole bread:

**A poor woman sees that her neighbors are fed,
A church reaches out to the youth in the town,
A man shares his faith and God's blessings abound.**

**God of love, here on earth, hidden things still
surprise:**

**Loving deeds ... signs of birth ... faithful, Spirit-filled
lives.**

**Your reign is among us, creation is blessed,
When even a few faithful lives change the rest.**

**3 While some look for treasure or one priceless pearl,
God's reign is the gift wise ones seek in this world.**

**A girl sells possessions to help those in need;
A boy chooses faithfulness rather than greed.**

**God of love, here on earth, hidden things still
surprise:**

**Loving deeds ... signs of birth ... faithful, Spirit-filled
lives.**

**Your reign is a treasure that wise ones pursue;
May we seek your kingdom in all that we do.**

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION

**Glorious God, may your face shine upon us. Teach us
your ways so that we may live in peace, justice, and
righteousness. Keep our way steady and directed
toward you. Remove the hold of oppression and evil
from among your people. Transform our hearts and
minds so that we might reflect your goodness and
love in the world. 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: "*Blessed Be the Tie that Binds*"

#393 NCH (vs. 1) John Fawsett

**1 Blessed be the tie that binds
our hearts in Christian love;
the sharing of a common life
is like to that above.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

SCRIPTURE READINGS

OLD TESTAMENT 1 Kings 3:5-12

⁵ The Lord appeared to Solomon at Gibeon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask whatever you wish, and I'll give it to you."

⁶ Solomon responded, "You showed so much kindness to your servant my father David when he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and with a heart true to you. You've kept this great loyalty and kindness for him and have now given him a son to sit on his throne. ⁷ And now, Lord my God, you have made me, your servant, king in my father David's place. But I'm young and inexperienced. I know next to nothing. ⁸ But I'm here, your servant, in the middle of the people you have chosen, a large population that can't be numbered or counted due to its vast size. ⁹ Please give your servant a discerning mind in order to govern your people and to distinguish good from evil, because no one is able to govern this important people of yours without your help."

¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had made this request. ¹¹ God said to him, "Because you have asked for this instead of requesting long life, wealth, or victory over your enemies—asking for discernment so as to acquire good judgment— ¹² I will now do just what you said. Look, I hereby give you a wise and understanding mind. There has been no one like you before now, nor will there be anyone like you afterward."

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Parable of the mustard seed

³¹ He told another parable to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and planted in his field. ³² It's the smallest of all seeds. But when it's grown, it's the largest of all vegetable plants. It becomes a tree so that the birds in the sky come and nest in its branches."

Parable of the yeast

³³ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast, which a woman took and hid in a bushel of wheat flour until the yeast had worked its way through all the dough."

Parable of the treasure

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure that somebody hid in a field, which someone else found and covered up. Full of joy, the finder sold everything and bought that field."

Parable of the merchant

⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls. ⁴⁶ When he found one very precious pearl, he went and sold all that he owned and bought it."

Parable of the net

⁴⁷ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that people threw into the lake and gathered all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸ When it was full, they pulled it to the shore, where they sat down and put the good fish together into containers. But the bad fish they threw away. ⁴⁹ That's the way it will be at the end of the present age. The angels will go out and separate the evil people from the righteous people, ⁵⁰ and will throw the evil ones into a burning furnace. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth."

Treasures new and old

⁵¹ "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked.

They said to him, "Yes."

⁵² Then he said to them, "Therefore, every legal expert who has been trained as a disciple for the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings old and new things out of their treasure chest."

SERMON "Little Things Have Great Value" Pastor Julie

HYMN "*Seek Ye First*" #349 W&R Karen Lafferty

**1 Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its
righteousness,
And all these things shall be added unto you;
Allelu, alleluia!**

**2 Ask, and it shall be given unto you,
seek and ye shall find,
Knock and the door shall be opened unto you;
Allelu, alleluia!**

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 *"Come and Fill"* Taizé'

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

Praise God, the Source of life and birth;
Praise God, the Word, who came to earth;
Praise God, the Spirit, holy flame;
All glory, honor to God's name! Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, may these gifts be sufficient to meet
the needs before. May we be good stewards of
your resources. And, may we be moved to live the
generous life more deeply and completely in every
aspect of our lives. Amen.

HYMN *"You Are Salt for the Earth, O People"*

#181 NCH vs. 1-3 Marty Haugen

1 You are salt for the earth, O people:
Salt for the reign of God!
Share the flavor of life, O people:
Life in the City of God!

Refrain:

Bring forth the reign of mercy,
Bring forth the reign of peace;
Bring forth the reign of justice,
Bring forth the City of God!

2 You are a light on the hill, O people:
Light for the City of God!
Shine so holy and bright, O people:
Shine for the City of God! *[Refrain]*

3 You are a seed of the Word, O people:
Bring forth the reign of God!
Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice,
Grow in the City of God! *[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.*

HYMN *"You Are Salt for the Earth, O People"*

#181 NCH vs. 4 Marty Haugen

4 We are a blessed and a pilgrim people:
Bound for the reign of God!
Love our journey and love our homeland:
Love is the City of God!

Refrain:

Bring forth the reign of mercy,
Bring forth the reign of peace;
Bring forth the reign of justice,
Bring forth the City of God!

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

RADIO BROADCAST

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

This week's radio broadcast is
sponsored anonymously
"In praise of Jesus Christ"

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, July 26, 2026

<https://youtube.com/live/JrtjgNaH-ds>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday, July 26th

- 9:30 AM Worship

Deacon – Karleen Wallace
Greeters – Wendy Sigurdson & grandkids
Ushers –
Power Point – Janice Miller
AV – Bonnie Weyer

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, Aug 2nd

Deacon – Barb Shoemaker
Greeters – Barb Miller, Janice Miller
Ushers – Roger Carl,
Power Point – Barb Petkovsek
AV – Emile Miller

Tuesday, July 28th

-1:00 PM – Bible Study

4:00 PM – Deacon's Meeting

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

July 26 - Doris Bakker
Aug 2 –
Aug 9 –
Aug 16 – Rodman's
Aug 23 – Follen's
We need people to sign up

Volunteers Needed for Sunday Worship

July – September 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
July 19	Barb P	Barb P
July 26	Wendy S	Wendy S
Aug 2	Barb Shoemaker	Barb Shoemaker
Aug 9		
Aug 16	Nancy Rodman	
Aug 23	Donita Follen	
Aug 30		
Sept 6		
Sept 13		

The kingdom of heaven
is like a treasure hidden.

Matthew 13:44



Please submit any articles
for the upcoming August
Newsletter by Monday,
July 27th to the office.

neillsvilleuccoffice@gmail.com