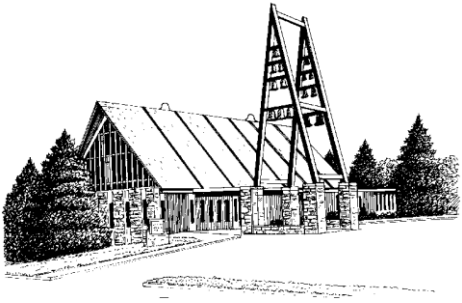




THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Neillsville, Wisconsin
Church 715-743-2147
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger
Pastor's Office 715-743-2117
Cell Phone 608-558-2397
www.neillsvilleucc.org

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

When God began to create the heavens and the earth— the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God's wind swept over the waters— God saw everything he had made: it was supremely good. (Genesis 1:1-2, 31)

Dear Friends,

As I watch the little wildlife menagerie outside my dining room window, I am continually awed by the miracle of creation and God's incredible handiwork. I see the goldfinch perched atop the hook holding the bird feeder, the stubborn woodpecker who keeps pecking at the metal clothesline pole, the cardinals chasing each other, the morning doves waddling across our driveway, the hummingbirds circling our red flowers, the groundhogs that keep going back and forth from our house to the neighbors, the squirrels who chase and play and bounce on the bottom branch of the pine tree. The sky is turning gray, which hopefully means rain is finally on its way, but the weather report doesn't support that wish. My little corner of the world holds an impressive amount of beauty when I just open my eyes to it.

As much as I love the majesty of the mountains in Colorado and Tennessee, the peace of the rolling hills of southern Wisconsin, the awesome wonder of bluffs along the Wisconsin River and Mississippi River, I am beyond grateful for the beauty that is right outside my own window. I am always amazed by the creativity and imagination and incredible detail of God's amazing creation. To me, the more I know about the details and intricacies of all plants and animals, the scientific realities, it just reinforces that there has to be an intelligent designer beyond our comprehension to put it all together, a God that is so much bigger than we can ever understand, the God of the universe who not only imagined such diverse and glorious beauty but then formed it from the chaos, bringing order and form; sun and moon and stars; sky, sea and land; plants, animals and people, a world that is both resilient and ancient while also being endangered by human greed and short-sightedness. God gave humans an important job: to be stewards of all creation, not just our friends and neighbors, but all people everywhere, all animals, all plants, all of the earth - we are commanded to care for it all.

This year, the Revised Common Lectionary has added a new day of celebration: Feast of Creation. This festival day was inspired by the Eastern Orthodox church which, since the 8th century, has celebrated a September 1 feast day marking God's creation of the world. The Orthodox church has invited the whole Christian church around the world to celebrate this festival day alongside them since 1989 in light of the ecological crisis we all face as a planetary community. And now, the RCL has officially named the first Sunday of September as the Feast of Creation. We will be joining in this feast this year, celebrating creation in all its beauty and wonder and reaffirming our role as God's stewards, while we also join together in communion. Please join me on September 6 for an inaugural Feast of Creation.

Grace and Peace, *Pastor Julie*

Special Joint Worship Service

NUCC will be joining with Calvary Lutheran for a special worship service on September 20, 2026 at 9:00 AM - Calvary Lutheran Church.

EDUCATION CELEBRATION SUNDAY service will be held at Calvary with special music provided by River's Grace Praise Band, an ELCA house band from Black River Falls. We will be commissioning JAM Christian Educators, blessing our children, and blessing backpacks.

The worship service will be followed by fellowship time and special activities, including games and Centershot demonstration. A food truck will be on site to provide a free lunch.

Our heartfelt condolences to



Dan Patey and family
on the death of his son,
James Patey, 67
who passed away on
August 7th.



Gayle Schermitzler
Lisa Schermitzler
Duane Marty
Brian Eddy
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger
Lisa Hardesty
(niece of Barb Shoemaker)

Fritz Hediger
Fran Ormond
Mike & Sherrie Holub
Nancy Boon
Brooks Sigurdson
Linette Kuhn

Please let us know if others not listed
(with their permission) would like prayer requests.



Sunday, August 2, the radio broadcast was sponsored anonymously by church members.

Sunday, August 9, the radio broadcast was sponsored anonymously by "a faithful listener".

Sunday, August 16, the radio broadcast was sponsored by John Shaw in loving memory of parents, Bob & Lorraine Shaw.

Sunday, August 23, the radio broadcast was sponsored anonymously with the message "May HIS word be heard by ALL".

Sunday, August 30, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Jim & Rosie Repinski in celebration of Jim's 89th birthday.

August 2026

Attendance for In-Person Worship

August 2	online 2	Sunday 55
August 9	online 2	Sunday 47
August 16	online 2	Sunday 63
August 23	online 2	Sunday 75
August 30	not available	

**Thanks
for Your
Help!**

Thanks to John Shaw for
taking in the aluminum cans
for recycling.

174 pounds = \$87.00

John also stops over and
tidies things up around the
lawn and parking lot.



- 1- Logan Erickson
Jerry Quicker
- 2- Fritz Hediger
- 3- M.E. Sjolín
- 5- Donita Follen
Joel Raine
- 6- Crispin Hediger
Audrey Vradenburg
- 10- Karlene Wallace
- 11- Mike Perkl
- 12- John Vornholt
- 14- JoAnn Wren
- 16- Iris Vine
- 17- Mary Finney
- 19- Wendy Sigurdson
- 22- Linette Kuhn
- 23- Carole Romens
William Ziegler
- 24- Michelle Kranz
- 25- Rosie Repinski
- 26- Mackenzie Hediger

***Happy Birthday to all who have a September birthday!
Did we miss your birthday or have the wrong date?
Let us know if we did.***



- 6- Bruce & Margaret Rakestraw
- 8- Carla & Mickey Marty
- 12- Travis & Ashley Vine
- 13- Guy & Susan Jodarski
- 15- Nancy & Kirk Rodman
- 16- Barb & Ken Shoemaker
Craig & Wendy Sigurdson
- 20- Jill & Scott Williams
- 23- Crispin & Lisa Hediger

OCTOBER



OCTOBER 1 -9

We are adding the first days of OCTOBER birthdays and anniversaries so as not to miss any if the newsletter comes out late.

Birthdays

- 3- Tim Steinbach
- 4- Jacob Keller
Mickey Marty
- 7- Brian Eddy
Corliss Fields

Anniversaries

- 2- Julie & Earnie Ruegsegger
- 4- Michelle & Luke Bergemann
Jim & Rosie Repinski
- 5- Erik & Jenna Sigurdson
- 7- Fritz & Dixie Hediger
Debbie & Joel Holman
- 9- Julie & Clinton Woods



We are trying to finish up some quilts for the Holiday Fair and are looking for plain flat sheets for the backs. If you have any that you no longer use and in good condition, please bring them into the church.



**JAM will start
on Wednesday,
September 30th
at Calvary from
5-5:45pm.**

Confirmation Update

An orientation meeting was held August 23, with parents and students. Classes will begin Wednesday September 30 and will be held every other Wednesday (same days as JAM) at Pastor Julie's home, 4:15 - 5:30 p.m. Neillsville students are welcome to come straight from school. Snacks will be provided, with time to relax until out-of-town students arrive at 4:15 pm.

For various reasons, we have decided to include 6th graders, along with 7th and 8th grade students. Any youth who is in 6th grade or older is welcome to join confirmation class, where this year we will be learning about the history of the church, from the very early church to Protestant Reformation and formation of UCC. We will also be learning about sacraments of baptism and communion this year and using the UCC Statement of Faith as our guide, we will learn more about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and hopefully help our youth develop their own understanding of the foundational ideas of the church. If you are interested in joining this class and were unable to attend the orientation meeting or have any questions, please contact Pastor Julie at 608-558-2397 or NUCCpastor@gmail.com.

TRUSTEES are meeting on August 27th for further consideration of the HVAC (cooling/heating) system. Additional information will be forthcoming.

Confirmation Class



**Meal
Giveaway**
UCC NEILLSVILLE
515 West Second Street
September 20, 2026
9:45 - 10:00 AM

Volunteers Needed for Sunday Worship

August – 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
Aug 2	Barb Shoemaker	Barb Shoemaker
Aug 9		
Aug 16	Nancy Rodman	
Aug 23	Donita Follen	
Aug 30		
Sept 6		
Sept 13		
Sept 20		
Sept 27		

SAVE THE DATE

"THANK YOU SUNDAY"
OCTOBER 25th - 9:30 AM

On "Thank You Sunday" the stewardship committee honors an individual or committee for their outstanding work for the church.

Following the service
a brunch will be available.



Neighbors In Need Offering October 4, 2026

The Parable of the Good Samaritan/Who is my Neighbor?:

²⁹ *The legal expert said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*

³⁰ *Jesus replied, "A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He encountered thieves, who stripped him naked, beat him up, and left him near death. ³¹ Now it just so happened that a priest was also going down the same road. When he saw the injured man, he crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way.*

³² *Likewise, a Levite came by that spot, saw the injured man, and crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. ³³ A Samaritan, who was on a journey, came to where the man was. But when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. ³⁴ The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day, he took two full days' worth of wages and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, 'Take care of him, and when I return, I will pay you back for any additional costs.' ³⁶ What do you think? Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?"*

³⁷ *Then the legal expert said, "The one who demonstrated mercy toward him."*

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:29-37)

Jesus defines a neighbor not by proximity or background, but by active mercy and compassion. Neighbors in Need (NIN) is one of the "Five for Five" missions of the United Church of Christ. Gifts to Neighbors in Need support the United Church of Christ's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). The other two-thirds of the offering support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, direct service projects, and grants. Neighbors in Need grants are annually awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities.

³⁵ *I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.'* ⁴⁰ *"Then the king will reply to them, 'I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.' (Matthew 25:35-36, 40)*

This offering is typically collected on World Communion Sunday, October 4, 2026. However, you may donate at any time by dropping your donation at church, through our website or VANCO on line. Thank you to our UCC church family for the continued support of our local church as well as our Five For Five Mission.

"Life's most urgent question: What are we doing for others?" Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Amazing Chili Cook-Off!
Saturday, September 19th | 12:00–4:00 p.m.
United Church of Christ - Neillsville

Join us for a fun, community-wide Chili-Cookoff

All proceeds will benefit the Food Pantry.

Contestants should arrive at the church by 11:30 a.m. with their chili fully cooked and ready to serve.

We will provide:

- *Ladles
- *Table service supplies
- *Sour cream
- *Shredded cheese
- *Crackers
- *Beverages
- *Tasting cups
- *Bars and cookies

Awards

Prizes will be awarded for:

- *1st, 2nd and 3rd Place
- *People's choice Award
- *Best Table Presentation

This event will be advertised in the local newspaper with participating organizations and individuals recognized.

Admission:

- *Adults: \$8.00
- *Children (under 10) \$4.00

Admission includes a bottomless chili tasting, dessert and People's Choice voting ticket.

Everyone is invited, whether you are entering your favorite chili recipe or simply coming to enjoy great food and fellowship. We hope you will be part of this special community event.

Currently the following groups and individuals are entered on the contest: The Lions, Optimist, Schmitt's, Breakfast Club, Hansen's IGA, Fringe Benefits, Mathis Market, The Highground, Kelley Burch, Karlene Wallace, Mike Perkl, Nick Nett, Ned Carlson.

King's Conquest to Perform at Neillsville

United Church of Christ – SUNDAY, AUGUST 30TH

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, August 30, 2026 at 3:30 PM** for an afternoon of Christian fellowship with Kings Conquest performing at the Neillsville United Church of Christ.

King's Conquest is an award-winning Christian band based in central Wisconsin, with a mission to shine the light of Jesus through a blend of pop/rock and contemporary music styles.

The band consists of three members who are siblings:



- Noah on lead vocals and keyboards
- Ella on the violin and vocals
- Ezra on the drums and vocals



Noah, Ezra and Ella come from a family with a musical background and got started in performing through their families' band known as MPK Christian Celtic band. Through years of performing with the family band, Noah wrote many of his own original songs, acquired his own studio and formed King's Conquest with his siblings. The band released their first 12 track album on February 3, 2023, and are currently working on album two!

For more information, visit their website at <https://kingsconquestmusic.com> or on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@kingsconquestmusic>

After the Kings Conquest's performance, we will host a "Baked Potato Bar", with broccoli, butter, sour cream, parsley flakes, bacon bits, cheese, etc.



Holiday Fair

It's that time of year again to start thinking about our annual Holiday Fair. We will be starting our craft work nights on **Wednesday, September 2 starting at 5:30 PM** and every Tuesday (10 AM – 2 PM) and Wednesday (5:30 – 9 PM) after that until the Holiday Fair. If you can help for an hour or two (2) please come and Carla will find something you can do! The southeast upper entrance door will be unlocked for you to come into the craft room.

Our sales departments are as follows:

- **GIFT BOUTIQUE**
 - Indoor & Outdoor Decorations
 - Quilts, Knitted, and Crocheted Items
- **GREETING CARDS**
 - All Occasions
- **KITCHEN CUPBOARD**
 - Sweets & Bakery
- **NEW TO YOU TREASURES**
 - Collectibles from Grandma's Attic

We need all crafters, sewers, bakers to think of what you can supply for this annual event. Also, if you have any good items that you no longer use but could be sold in the New to You Treasures department, please bring them to the church. NO CLOTHES PLEASE.

If you have any questions regarding the Holiday Fair or would like to help with donations or with sales the day of the fair, please contact the appropriate chairman of each department:

- Gift Boutique – Carla Marty at 715-937-0077
- Greeting Cards – Susie Karl at 715-937-3506 or Carole Romens at 651-359-5196
- Kitchen Cupboard – Susie Karl at 715-937-3506 or Carole Romens at 651-359-5196
- New to You Treasures – Debbie Perkl at 715-797-6290
- Luncheon – Emile Miller at 715-937-4626

Oh, and yes, mark your calendar for
Saturday, November 14, 2026 for our 62nd annual Holiday Fair!

Thank you for your support, both in the past and for the future of our church.

Em and Carla

Meeting Minutes

Neillsville United Church of Christ Council

The meeting was held on **Monday, July 20, 2026** at Pastor Julie's home

Moderator Vine called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.

Attendance

Council Members Present: Trustee Representative Doris Bakker, Christian Education Representative Stephanie Heck Vice Moderator Barb Petkovsek, Moderator Paul Vine, Deacons Representative Karlene Wallace, and Treasurer Bonnie Weyer (phone).

Prayer: Pastor Julie led the council in prayer.

Minutes

Motion by Stephanie Heck, seconded by Barb Petkovsek, to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2026 meeting. Voice vote taken with all "aye"; motion carried.

Financial Report

(No Report)

New Business

Memorial Committee Update: On June 5th the Memorial committee met and decided to move seven CDs totaling approximately \$132,000 into the Stiffl accounts. This will streamline management and make year end accounting easier. When the two I Bonds, totaling approximately \$22,000, mature these will be transferred to Stiffl.

Fair Service August 7: The Clark County Fair board has expressed concern about providing free access to church goers. It was decided, by unanimous consent, the service traditionally held at the fairgrounds will not be held there this year. Doris agreed to contact county board members about future options.

Old Business

Kings Conquest Concert Sunday August 30: UCC will host the musical group Kings Conquest and offer a potato bar on Sunday, August 30, 2026. JoAnn Voss is coordinating the concert and Emile Miller and Carla Marty are coordinating the "food". The concert will be in the sanctuary and the meal will be downstairs.

Paul requested Ray funds be utilized to pay the \$700 fee to Kings Conquest and another \$300 for miscellaneous costs. Motion by Stephanie Heck and seconded by Karlene Wallace to transfer \$1000 from Ray Fund to UCC general fund. Voice vote taken with all present voting "aye".

It was agreed we will place a large glass jar at the beginning of the food line to allow attendees to give a free will offering.

Chili Contest, Saturday, September 19: Kirk and Nancy Rodman continue to plan details for the Saturday September 19 Chili contest. Proceeds will go towards the local food pantry.

Pastors Report:

Service: Pastor is attempting to keep Sunday services to 45 minutes during hotter temperatures. She eliminated the middle hymn and used this time for a short “break”. All members agreed it is OK to keep the middle hymn in the service.

Calvary Invitation for September 20 Joint service: we discussed Calvary invitation to join them for joint service on Sunday September 20. By consensus all present supported the plan to have our September 20 service at Calvary. Pastor Julie will work with Calvary leaders to ensure this is a joint service. She will also publish in upcoming bulletins and newsletters.

Committee Reports & Requests for Action

Trustees: Doris Bakker shared the following:

- Kitchen Counter Tops: The countertops have been installed and Bonnie has painted the cabinets.
- Landscaping: We are still seeking a volunteer to assist with landscaping.
- Back Storage room: This room has been cleaned out.

Christian Ed: Stephanie Heck shared the following:

- VBS was held on Sunday June 7th. Eleven youth attended and fun was had by all.
- JAM 2027-28: Leadership will be meeting next week to discuss details.
- Confirmation: ○ Discussion on the benefits of youth attendance at “ retreats”.
 - Two years versus one year? It was agreed it will stay a “two year” program.
 - Pastor Julie will be mailing out letters of invitation to those families. Stephanie suggested the Pastor work with her to contact families.

Deacons: Karlene shared the following:

- The Deacons will meet next week.

/Next Agenda Items

HVAC

Sept. 20 Joint Service wi Calvary

Next Meeting: 5PM Monday, August 24 at Pastor Julie home, 1005 Emery Street.

Adjournment

Motion by Karlene Wallace, seconded by Doris Bakker to adjourn. Voice vote taken with all “aye”; motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:45PM.

Submitted by:

Paul Vine



Neillsville United Church of Christ -Coffee Mugs for Sale

If anyone would like to purchase a UCC coffee mug for \$10, please see Emile. Thank you!

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

August 30, 2026 – October 18, 2026

	Deacon/ host	Greeter(s)	Usher(s)	Power Point / AV
Sunday, Aug. 30, 2026	Janice Miller	Jenna Ziegler & family	Craig Sigurdson	Barb Petkovsek
			Wendy Sigurdson	/ Stephanie Heck
Sunday, Sept. 6, 2026	Wayne Voss	Lydia Schumacher	Phil Follen	Jenny Erickson
		Karen Northup	Donita Follen	/ Emile Miller
Sunday, Sept.13, 2026	Byrl Buddenhagen	Sandy Bieneck	Craig Heck	Brynn or Calvin Heck
		Michelle Bergemann	Bob Petkovsek	/Stephanie Heck
Sunday, Sept. 20, 2026	Barb Shoemaker	Carole Romens	Debbie Perkl	None needed
Joint Service at Calvary		Jenny Erickson	Mike Perkl	
Sunday, Sept. 27 2026	Sally Sadowska	Steve & Leslie Buchholz	Jerry Hamm	Brynn or Calvin Heck
			Ray Weyer	/ Stephanie Heck
Sunday, Oct. 4, 2026	Karlene Wallace	Audrey Vradenburg	Mickey Marty	Paul Vine
		Jim Vradenburg	Joel Raine	/ Emile Miller
Sunday, Oct. 11, 2026	Janice Miller	Pat Acheson	Neil Armitage	Janice Miller
		Herman Seebandt	Craig Sigurdson	/Bonnie Weyer
Sunday, Oct. 18, 2026	JoAnn Wren	Doris Bakker	Hap Eddy	Brynn or Calvin Heck
		Ellie Golembiewski	Kevin Christiansen	/Stephanie Heck
Please call the church office if you are unable to be here, or make arrangements with another church member. 715-743-2147				



2026 United Church of Christ

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 Noon- T&C Quilters	4	5 7 PM NA
6 <u>Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 9:30 AM Worship	7	8 1 PM Bible Study 4 PM – Deacons Mtg	9 7 PM NA	10 1:30 PM Circle of Friends Meeting	11	12 7 PM NA
13 <u>Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 9:30 Worship	14	15 1 PM Bible Study 5:30 PM – Trustees Mtg	16 1 PM Stewardship Comm. Meeting 7 PM NA	17	18	19 Noon - 4  7 PM NA
20 <u>Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 9:00 Joint Worship at Calvary	21 9 AM Card Making 9 AM- T&C Quilters	22 1 PM Bible Study 6 PM – HCE Homemakers	23 5 PM Council Meeting at Pastor Julie's home 7 PM NA	24	25	26 7 PM NA
27 <u>Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost</u> 9:30 Worship	28 31	29 1 PM Bible Study 6 PM – HCE Homemakers	30 * 5-5:45 PM JAM at Calvary *4:15 – 5:30 PM Confirmation at Pastor Julie's home 7 PM NA			

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