

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

October 11, 2026

United Church of Christ - Neillsville

Pastor Julie Ruegsegger

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PRELUDE *"Blessed Be Your Name" with "In Heavenly
Love Abiding"* arr. Anna Laura Page Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP (inspired by Psalm 106)

Praise be to God, who has brought us here this day.

**Praise and thanks to God for all the blessings we
have received.**

What joy we have in God's presence!

What peace is brought to us in God's house!

This is truly the day that the Lord has made!

Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

GATHERING PRAYER

Open our hearts and our spirits to hear your healing
words of peace and love, O God. Help us be the
people of service and justice that you have called us
to be. Make us ready to heal rather than harm; to
serve rather than sever. Give us hearts of joy and
justice, for we offer this prayer in Jesus' Name.
Amen.

HYMN *"Enter, Rejoice, and Come In"* Louise Respini
#73 NCH (vs. 1-4)

**1 Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice, and come in.**

**2 Open your ears to the song.
Open your ears to the song.
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice, and come in.**

**3 Open your hearts ev'ryone.
Open your hearts ev'ryone.
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice, and come in.**

4 Don't be afraid of some change.

Don't be afraid of some change.

**Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice, and come in.**

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

Holy One, we acknowledge that you have modeled a
way of being in the world that we struggle to adopt.
You invite us to love the neighbor we do not know
and the enemy that we do. You encourage us to
prioritize the marginalized and center the oppressed
even when our own needs overwhelm us. You invite
us into your kingdom, and the cost of discipleship
sometimes seems to be more than we can afford.
Holy One, we need strength and hope for the
journey. Let your surpassing peace enable us to
pursue a worthy and pleasing life. 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".

HYMN: *"Enter, Rejoice, and Come In"* Louise Respini
#73 NCH vs. 5

**5 Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Enter, rejoice, and come in.
Today will be a joyful day;
enter, rejoice, and come in.**

CHILDREN'S TIME Barb Shoemaker

SCRIPTURE READINGS Barb Shoemaker

Old Testament: Exodus 32:1-14

The people saw that Moses was taking a long time to
come down from the mountain. They gathered around
Aaron and said to him, "Come on! Make us gods who
can lead us. As for this man Moses who brought us up
out of the land of Egypt, we don't have a clue what
has happened to him."

² Aaron said to them, “All right, take out the gold rings from the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” ³ So all the people took out the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He collected them and tied them up in a cloth. Then he made a metal image of a bull calf, and the people declared, “These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!”

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf. Then Aaron announced, “Tomorrow will be a festival to the LORD!” ⁶ They got up early the next day and offered up entirely burned offerings and brought well-being sacrifices. The people sat down to eat and drink and then got up to celebrate.

⁷ The LORD spoke to Moses: “Hurry up and go down! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, are ruining everything! ⁸ They’ve already abandoned the path that I commanded. They have made a metal bull calf for themselves. They’ve bowed down to it and offered sacrifices to it and declared, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’” ⁹ The LORD said to Moses, “I’ve been watching these people, and I’ve seen how stubborn they are. ¹⁰ Now leave me alone! Let my fury burn and devour them. Then I’ll make a great nation out of you.”

¹¹ But Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, “LORD, why does your fury burn against your own people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and amazing force? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘He had an evil plan to take the people out and kill them in the mountains and so wipe them off the earth’? Calm down your fierce anger. Change your mind about doing terrible things to your own people.

¹³ Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, whom you yourself promised, ‘I’ll make your descendants as many as the stars in the sky. And I’ve promised to give your descendants this whole land to possess for all time.’” ¹⁴ Then the LORD changed his mind about the terrible things he said he would do to his people.

Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14

¹ Jesus responded by speaking again in parables: ² “The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding party for his son. ³ He sent his servants to call those invited to the wedding party. But they didn’t want to come. ⁴ Again he sent other servants and said to them, ‘Tell those who have been invited, “Look, the meal is all prepared. I’ve butchered the oxen and the fattened cattle. Now everything’s ready. Come to the wedding party!”’” ⁵ But they paid no attention and went away—some to their fields, others to their businesses. ⁶ The rest of them grabbed his servants, abused them, and killed them.

⁷ “The king was angry. He sent his soldiers to destroy those murderers and set their city on fire. ⁸ Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding party is prepared, but those who were invited weren’t worthy. ⁹ Therefore, go to the roads on the edge of town and invite everyone you find to the wedding party.’

¹⁰ “Then those servants went to the roads and gathered everyone they found, both evil and good. The wedding party was full of guests. ¹¹ Now when the king came in and saw the guests, he spotted a man who wasn’t wearing wedding clothes. ¹² He said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?’ But he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to his servants, ‘Tie his hands and feet and throw him out into the farthest darkness. People there will be weeping and grinding their teeth.’

¹⁴ “Many people are invited, but few people are chosen.”

SERMON “What Is Your Golden Calf” Pastor Julie

HYMN “A King Planned a Party” #559 W&R

Lyrics: Copyright © 2014 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved. Tune: ASH GROVE 6.6.11.6.6.11 D (#76 NCH)

**1 A king planned a party — a feast, rich and hearty.
He sent invitations to all of his guests.
So what could be better than getting a letter
And being invited and welcomed and blessed?**

"My work needs attention," said one, "Not to mention,
My family is growing. There's so much to do."
"My farm," said another, "Is big, and — oh, brother —
I'm busy with hobbies I want to pursue."

2 "The wedding is ready! My guests are not worthy!"
The king told his servants when nobody came.
So go search the alleys, the hills and the valleys,
And bring in the poor and the blind and the lame."
That day there was singing and halls that were ringing
With laughter and joy in that wonderful place.
For those who attended knew how they depended
Upon the king's generous mercy and grace.

3 O God, you invite us! You seek to delight us.
Your table is ready for those who say "Yes!"
Do we make excuses when you want to choose us
To sit at your table, forgiven and blessed?
And, Lord, as you welcome us into your kingdom,
May we reach to welcome the world by your grace.
You love the outsider. Now may we reach wider
To welcome the world with your loving embrace.

PASTORAL 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

THE OFFERING SERVICE

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory "O' How He Loves You and Me"
Kurt Kaiser

Doxology "We Give You But Your Own"

#785 NCH Wm. W. How

We give you but your own,
What-e'er the gift may be;
All that we have is yours alone,
We give it gratefully. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

Generous God, receive our offerings as acceptance
to your invitation to the kingdom life. May they be
used to spread abundance, generate hope, and
meet needs. Bless us as we give to grow in
generosity, gratitude, and grace. We give thanks for
this opportunity to participate in your kingdom come
and your will be done in our communities and
world. Amen.

HYMN "A Place at the Table" Shirley Erena Murray

1 For everyone born, a place at the table,
for everyone born, clean water and bread,
a shelter, a space, a safe place for growing,
for everyone born, a star overhead.

Refrain:

And God will delight when we are creators
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:
yes, God will delight when we are creators
of justice, justice and joy.

2 For woman and man, a place at the table,
revising the roles, deciding the share,
with wisdom and grace dividing the power,
for woman and man, a system that's fair.

[Refrain]

3 For young and for old, a place at the table,
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,
for young and for old, the right to belong.

[Refrain]

BLESSING Philippians 4:8-9

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 "A Place at the Table" Shirley Erena Murray

5 For everyone born, a place at the table,
to live without fear, and simply to be,
to work, to speak out, to witness and worship,
for everyone born, the right to be free.

Refrain:

And God will delight when we are creators
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:

yes, God will delight when we are creators
of justice, justice and joy.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

RADIO BROADCAST

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

This week's radio broadcast is
dedicated in loving memory
of parents, Kenneth & Darlene Eddy,
and sister Sandy Henseler,
sponsored by Deb Holman,
Duane & Brian Eddy,
Sue Gurney and Lisa Rendmeister.

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, October 11, 2026
<https://youtube.com/live/sHwhqQ1ThE0>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This Sunday, October 11th

- 9:30 AM Worship

Deacon – Janice Miller
Greeters – Pat Acheson, Herman Seebandt
Ushers – Neil Armitage, Corinne Armitage
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, October 18th

Deacon – JoAnn Wren
Greeters – Doris Bakker, Ellie Golembiewski
Ushers – Hap Eddy, Kevin Christiansen
Power Point – Brynn or Calvin Heck
AV – Stephanie Heck

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

Oct 11 – Mathis' 😊
Oct 18 - Circle of Friends
Oct 25 - Stewardship Comm.
Nov 1 -
Nov 8 –

Volunteers Needed for Sunday Worship

October – November 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
Oct 4	Karen Mohr	Pastor Julie
Oct 11	Barb Shoemaker	Barb Shoemaker
Oct 18	Kelley Burch	
Oct 25		JoAnn Voss
Nov 1		
Nov 8	Barb Shoemaker	Barb Shoemaker
Nov 15		
Nov 22		
Nov 29		

