

**New Year's Day**  
**First Sunday after Christmas Day**  
**January 1, 2023**  
United Church of Christ, Neillsville  
Pastor James Mohr

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**PRELUDE** *Christmas Medley*  
Karen Mohr

**RINGING OF THE CARILLION**  
**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*"Welcome!  
No Matter Who You are,  
or Where You are on  
Life's Journey,  
You are Welcome Here!!"*

**CHRISTMAS CAROL SING**

(You will be invited to call out your favorite  
Christmas carol and we will sing the first verse.  
If you like, grab a red UCC hymnal on your way  
into the sanctuary.)

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Let all of creation praise the name of the  
Holy One!

**Many: The rhythms of life praise the  
Everlasting God through the markings of  
time.**

One: Let all of creation praise the name of the  
Holy One!

**Many: The flowers, land, and trees praise the  
Divine Gardener through rest and renewal.**

One: Let all of creation praise the name of the  
Holy One!

**Many: Living creatures praise the Spirit of  
God through our breathing, living and being.  
Praise God!**

**HYMN**

*"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"*  
#91 NCH Red UCC J Montgomery  
Henry T. Smart

**1 Angels from the realms of glory,  
wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
ye who sang creation's story  
now proclaim Messiah's birth:**

**Refrain:**

**Come and worship, come and worship,  
worship Christ, the newborn king.**

**2 Shepherds, in the field abiding,  
watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing;  
yonder shines the infant light: [Refrain]**

**3 Sages, leave your contemplations,  
brighter visions beam afar;  
seek the great Desire of nations;  
ye have seen his natal star: [Refrain]**

**INVOCATION (ALL)**

**Holy Love, you make us a community. You  
gather us as your offspring and knit us  
together with grace and mercy. In your  
presence, there is fullness of love, joy, hope,  
and peace. Thank you for being among us this  
day and with us in every moment of our  
being. Receive our praise, dwell in our midst,  
and create in us a heart that yearns for you  
and your kindom. In the name of Emmanuel,  
we pray. Amen.**

## **PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE**

**(All)**

**Eternal God, the dawn of a new year prompts us to reflect on our past and hope for our future. Help us live every day seeking your way and moving on your path. Help us commit to love and resolve to extend the grace and mercy we need from you and our neighbor. Make us new. Amen.**

### **WORDS OF GRACE (Pastor)**

The God who counts our days knows us intimately, loves us abundantly, and abides with us relentlessly. Receive the brand-new mercies of this day. Hold the love of God closely, firmly, and freely. Transformation, grace, and new life is assured this day.

### **PRAISE RESPONSE (sung twice)**

**Gloria, gloria, in excelsis Deo.**

**Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia.**

### **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

#### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Isaiah 9                      He lifted them up**

The Righteous Reign of the Coming King

9 But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. <sup>2</sup> The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. <sup>4</sup> For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup> For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup> For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold

it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Judgement on Arrogance and Oppression

<sup>8</sup> The Lord sent a word against Jacob, and it fell on Israel; <sup>9</sup> and all the people knew it— Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria — but in pride and arrogance of heart they said: <sup>10</sup> ‘The bricks have fallen, but we will build with dressed stones; the sycamores have been cut down, but we will put cedars in their place.’

<sup>11</sup> So the Lord raised adversaries against them, and stirred up their enemies, <sup>12</sup> the Arameans in the east and the Philistines in the west, and they devoured Israel with open mouth. For all this, his anger has not turned away; his hand is stretched out still.

<sup>13</sup> The people did not turn to him who struck them, or seek the Lord of hosts. <sup>14</sup> So the Lord cut off from Israel head and tail, palm branch and reed in one day— <sup>15</sup> elders and dignitaries are the head, and prophets who teach lies are the tail; <sup>16</sup> for those who led this people led them astray, and those who were led by them were left in confusion. <sup>17</sup> That is why the Lord did not have pity on their young people, or compassion on their orphans and widows; for everyone was godless and an evildoer, and every mouth spoke folly. For all this, his anger has not turned away; his hand is stretched out still.

<sup>18</sup> For wickedness burned like a fire, consuming briars and thorns; it kindled the thickets of the forest, and they swirled upwards in a column of smoke.

<sup>19</sup> Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts the land was burned, and the people became like fuel for the fire; no one spared another.

<sup>20</sup> They gorged on the right, but still were hungry, and they devoured on the left, but were not satisfied; they devoured the flesh of their own kindred; <sup>21</sup> Manasseh devoured Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh, and together they were against Judah. For all this, his anger has not turned away; his hand is stretched out still. Manasseh devoured Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh, and together they were against Judah. For all this, his anger has not turned away; his hand is stretched out still.

## **Hebrews 2:10-18            He himself was tested**

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying,

‘I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.’ And again, ‘I will put my trust in him.’ And again, ‘Here am I and the children whom God has given me.’

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

## **Matthew 2:13-23        Weeping for her children**

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.’ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I have called my son.’

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

‘A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.’

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and

said, ‘Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.’ Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, ‘He will be called a Nazorean.’

**SERMON**    *“Holy Innocents”*            Pastor Mohr

**HYMN**        *“I Wonder as I Wander”*

#119 red UCC        John Jacob Niles

**1 I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,  
how Jesus the Savior did come for to die  
for poor ordinary people like you and like I;  
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.**

**2 When Mary birthed Jesus, 'twas in a cow's stall  
with wise men and farmers and shepherd and all.  
but high from God's heaven a star's light did fall,  
and the promise of ages it did then recall.**

**3 If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,  
a star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,  
or all of God's angels in heaven for to sing,  
he surely could have it, 'cause he was the King.**

**4 I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,  
how Jesus the Savior did come for to die  
for poor ordinary people like you and like I;  
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.**

**INVITATION TO GENEROSITY** (Pastor)

Let us put our trust in the Living God, who is faithful. Let us praise God for the abundance of creation in the sharing of our gifts of time, talent, and treasure.

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

(All)

Generous Love, bless these offerings. Stir up the gifts within for your glory, show your provision through the sharing of our resources, and empower us to steward our days as precious and holy. Amen.

### **COMMUNION HYMN** *"Let All Mortal Flesh"*

#83 Red UCC Tr. Gerard Moultrie

**1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence  
and with fear and trembling stand;  
ponder nothing earthly-minded,  
for with blessing in his hand  
Christ, our God, to earth descending,  
comes our homage to command.**

**2 King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
as of old on earth he stood,  
Lord of lords in human likeness,  
in the body and the blood  
he will give to all the faithful  
his own self for heav'nly food.**

**3 Rank on rank the host of heaven  
spreads its vanguard on the way  
as the Light from Light, descending  
from the realms of endless day,  
comes the pow'rs of hell to vanquish  
as the darkness clears away.**

## THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Communion Prayer

Words of Institution

Consecration of the Elements

Lord's Prayer

Sharing of the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

(All)

Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ's body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

### HYMN *"O Thou Joyful"*

#113 red UCC Tr. H Katterjohn

**1 O thou joyful, O thou wonderful  
Grace revealing Christmastide!  
Jesus came to win us  
From all sin within us:  
Glorify the holy Child!**

**2 O thou joyful, O thou wonderful  
Love revealing Christmastide!  
Loud hosannas singing  
And all praises bringing:  
Glorify the holy Child!**

**3 O thou joyful, O thou wonderful  
Peace revealing Christmastide!  
Darkness disappearing,  
God's own light now nearing:  
Glorify the holy Child!**

## BENEDICTION

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

## POSTLUDE

Karen Mohr

## **WELCOME**

We welcome you to our service of worship!

We are glad that you have joined us in-person, 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.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **RADIO BROADCAST**

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

Youtube for January 1, 2023

<https://youtu.be/LUt6Rep2FcE>

This week's radio broadcast  
is sponsored by "Circle of Friends"  
in honor of our church family.  
Blessings in the New Year.

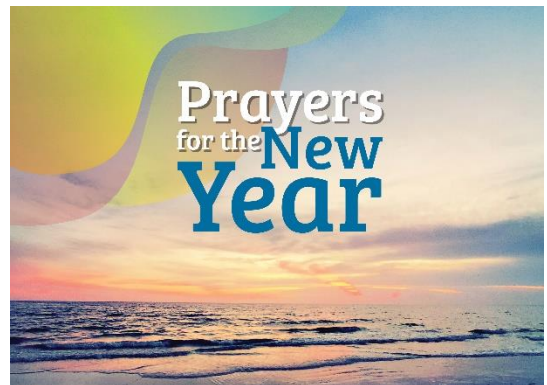
## **TODAY**

A Special Congregational meeting will be held immediately following the Sunday, January 1, 2023 worship service. The purpose is to review and vote on church bylaws and constitution updates.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Monday, January 2nd** –  
9 AM - Card Making

**Tuesday, January 3rd** –  
1PM – Bible Study – 510 W 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
\*every week at Marge Goetsch's home



**JANUARY NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**  
should be into the office by  
Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>.