

**Ninth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**July 30, 2023**  
United Church of Christ, Neillsville  
Pastor James Mohr

All music in this service copied and streamed under  
OneLicense.net A-723900 and CCLI License #  
20913817

**PRELUDE** *“Morning”*  
Edvard Grieg Karen Mohr

**RINGING OF THE CARILLON**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name.  
**Make known his deeds among the peoples,**  
Sing to him, sing praises to him:  
**Tell of all his wonderful works.**  
Glory in his holy name.  
**Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.**

**HYMN** *“Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise!”*  
#1 NCH Walter Smith

**1 Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes.  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.**

**2 Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light,  
not wanting, not wasting, but ruling in might;  
Your justice like mountains high soaring above,  
your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**

**3 Your life is life-giving - to both great and small;  
in all life you're living, the true life of all;  
We blossom and flourish as leaves and as flowers,  
then wither and perish - but naught dims your powers.**

**4 So perfect your glory, so brilliant your light,  
your angels adore you, all veiling their sight;  
All praise we now render as your angels do:  
in awe at the splendor of light hiding you.**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Like a tiny seed that grows into a large tree,  
**let your love grow and overflow in us, O God.**  
Like a small amount of yeast that makes many loaves  
of bread,  
**let your love grow and overflow in us, O God.**  
Like a treasure hidden in a field,  
**let your love grow and overflow in us, O God.**  
Like a pearl of great value,  
**let your love grow and overflow in us, O God.**  
L – Like a net that fills to bursting with fish,  
**let our love grow and overflow in us, O God. Amen.**

**PASSING THE PEACE**

***All are invited to greet one another with such words  
as “The peace of Christ be with you, and  
the response: “And also with you.”***

**PRAISE RESPONSE** *“Halleluja”*  
#236 NCH

**Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Halle, halle, hallelujah!  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

**CHILDREN’S TIME**

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**

**Genesis 29:15-28 Two Marriages**

<sup>15</sup>Then Laban said to Jacob, “Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?” <sup>16</sup>Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. <sup>17</sup>Leah’s eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. <sup>18</sup>Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, “I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel.” <sup>19</sup>Laban said, “It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me.” <sup>20</sup>So Jacob served seven

years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her. <sup>21</sup>Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed." <sup>22</sup>So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. <sup>23</sup>But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. <sup>24</sup>(Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.) <sup>25</sup>When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?" <sup>26</sup>Laban said, "This is not done in our country—giving the younger before the firstborn. <sup>27</sup>Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years." <sup>28</sup>Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

#### **EPISTLE LESSON**

**Romans 8:26-39**

**If God is for us...**

<sup>26</sup>Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. <sup>27</sup>And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. <sup>28</sup>We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

<sup>29</sup>For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. <sup>30</sup>And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

<sup>31</sup>What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup>Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup>Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

<sup>36</sup>As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." <sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#### **GOSPEL LESSON**

**Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52**

**Five Parables**

<sup>31</sup>He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; <sup>32</sup>it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." <sup>33</sup>He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

<sup>44</sup>"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. <sup>45</sup>"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; <sup>46</sup>on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. <sup>47</sup>"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; <sup>48</sup>when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. <sup>49</sup>So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous <sup>50</sup>and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>51</sup>"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." <sup>52</sup>And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

#### **SERMON**

*"Take Five"*

Pastor Jim

**RESPONSE TO THE WORD (All)** UCC Statement of Faith  
#885 NCH - Doxological version

**We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit**

**God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God and  
to your deeds we testify;**

**You call the worlds into being,**

**create persons in your own image,  
and set before each one the ways of life and  
death**

**You seek in holy love to save all people from  
aimlessness and sin.**

**You judge people and nations by your righteous will  
declared through prophets and apostles.**

**In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified  
and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared  
our common lot conquering sin and death and  
reconciling the world to yourself.**

**You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and  
renewing the church of Jesus Christ binding in  
covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues and  
races.**

**You call us into your church to accept the cost and  
joy of discipleship to be your servants in the  
service of others to proclaim the gospel to all the  
world and resist the powers of evil, to share in  
Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him  
in his passion and victory.**

**You promise to all who trust you, forgiveness of sins  
and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for  
justice and peace, your presence in trial and  
rejoicing and eternal life in your realm which has  
no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be  
unto you. Amen**

**HYMN** *"I Love to Tell the Story"*

#522 NCH                      Katherine Hankey

**1 I love to tell the story of unseen things above,  
Of Jesus' radiant glory, of Jesus' endless love.  
I love to tell the story, because I know it's true;  
it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.**

**Refrain:**

**I love to tell the story; and when I am in glory  
I'll tell the old, old story of Jesus' endless love.**

**2 I love to tell the story; more wonderful it seems  
than all the golden visions of all our golden dreams.**

**I love to tell the story, I tell it now to you  
because I want to share it, because I know it's true.**

**[Refrain]**

**3 I love to tell the story; it's pleasant to repeat  
what seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet.**

**I love to tell the story, for some have never heard  
the message of salvation from God's own holy Word.**

**[Refrain]**

**4 I love to tell the story, for those who know it best  
seem hungering and thirsting, to hear it like the rest.**

**And when I sing in glory, I know the new, new song  
will be the old, old story that I have loved so long.**

**[Refrain]**

**MORNING PRAYERS**

**PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR** (All)

**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**

**INVITATION TO GENEROSITY** (Pastor)

Our scripture today says that the community of  
heaven is like a treasure. Jesus' parable describes it  
as hidden, and it does feel like that sometimes. But it  
can also feel like earth is "crammed" with it too. May  
we take a moment to remember the ways in which  
this church has made God's rule come alive for us. Let  
us take this time to give thanks by considering how  
we can give of our time, money, skills, and unique  
gifts to this beloved community. Amen

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING**

(Pastor)

Like the net that was thrown into the sea and brought in  
fish of every kind, we celebrate the multitude and  
diversity of gifts that have been shared here today. May  
God bless these treasures with the abundance of Christ's  
love and passion to embody justice in our world. Amen.

**HYMN** "Rejoice, You Pure in Heart"

#55 NCH E.H. Plumptre

**1 Rejoice, you pure in heart,  
lift praises to the sky,  
your festal banner wave with joy,  
the cross of Christ raise high!**

**Refrain:**

**Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, give thanks, and sing!**

**2 Bright youth and seasoned age,  
strong souls and spirits meek,  
Raise high your free, exulting song,  
God's wondrous praises speak. [Refrain]**

**3 With voice as full and strong  
As ocean's surging praise,  
Send forth the hymns the saints have loved,  
The psalms of ancient days. [Refrain]**

**4 Yes, on through life's long path,  
With chanting as you go,  
From youth to age, by night and day,  
In gladness and in woe; [Refrain]**

**5 Praise God, who rules all worlds,  
the risen Christ adore:  
Praise God the Spirit,  
Holy Fire, one God for evermore! [Refrain]**

**BENEDICTION** (Pastor)

May God's promise of Abundance and Multiplicity be with you. May it be among you. May it live and move and have its dwelling within you. And may we take the love we've found, our inseparable bond with the Creator, and bring it into fullness out in our world. Amen.

**POSTLUDE**

**JOYS AND CONCERNS**



**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 link for Sunday, July 30, 2023

<https://youtube.com/live/Jlxj7j7ala>

**This week's radio broadcast  
is sponsored anonymously  
in "praise of Jesus Christ".**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Tuesday, August 1st -**

**1 PM - Bible Study - 510 W 14<sup>th</sup> Street**

**\*every week at Marge Goetsch's home**

**Wednesday, August 2nd -**

**1 PM - Stewardship Comm. Meeting -**

**510 W 14<sup>th</sup> Street at Marge Goetsch's home**



**for AUGUST  
NEWSLETTER - Please have  
your articles into the office  
by Monday, July 31<sup>st</sup>.**