

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 27, 2023

United Church of Christ, Neillsville

Pastor James Mohr

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PRELUDE "For the Beauty of the Earth"

Gordon Young Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: God is all around us---

Many: Before us.

One: And below.

**Many: There is nowhere we can go where God is not
already---**

One: In the darkness and the daylight,

Many: from the highest mountain to the deepest sea,

One: in the morning,

Many: and in the evening,

One: God is with us! Thanks be to God!

HYMN "For the Beauty of the Earth"

#28 NCH Folliot Sandford Pierpoint

1 For the beauty of the earth,
For the splendor of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies,

Refrain:

God of all, to you we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise.

2 For the wonder of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower,
Sun and moon, and stars of light, [Refrain]

3 For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above;
For all gentle thoughts and mild, [Refrain]

4 For the good that love inspires,
For a world where none exude,
For a faith that never tires,
and for every heart renewed, [Refrain]

OPENING PRAYER (All)

**Creator God, you make us all different, giving to each
one of us special and wonderful gifts, inviting us and
challenging us to share who and what we are for the
good of community. In the beauty of our differences,
remind us that we are one. In this time of worship
help us to celebrate the Body of Christ, and the
special place each one of us has in that body, through
your grace. 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

Exodus 1:8-2:10

⁸Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. ⁹He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. ¹⁰Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." ¹¹Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. ¹²But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied

and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites, ¹⁴and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

¹⁵The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶“When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.” ¹⁷But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?” ¹⁹The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” ²⁰So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. ²²Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.”

2Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. ²The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. ³When she could hide him no longer she got a papyrus basket for him, and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. ⁴His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him. ⁵The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. ⁶When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him, “This must be one of the Hebrews’ children,” she said. ⁷Then his sister said to Pharaoh’s daughter, “Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?” ⁸Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Yes.” So the girl went and called the child’s mother. ⁹Pharaoh’s daughter said to her, “Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages.” So the woman took the child and nursed it. ¹⁰When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and she took him as her son. She named him Moses, “because,” she said, “I drew him out of the water.”

EPISTLE LESSON

Romans 12:1-8

12I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ²Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 16:13-20

¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

SERMON *“Created for Community”* 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 *"Help Us Accept Each Other"*

#388 NCH Fred Kaan

1 Help us accept each other
as Christ accepted us;
teach us as sister, brother,
each person to embrace.
Be present, God, among us,
and bring us to believe
we are ourselves accepted
and meant to love and live.

2 Teach us, O Lord, your lessons,
as in our daily life
we struggle to be human
and search for hope and faith.
Teach us to care for people,
for all, not just for some,
to love them as we find them,
or as they may become.

3 Let your acceptance change us,
so that we may be moved
in living situations
to do the truth in love;
To practice your acceptance,
until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness
and laughter's healing art.

4 God, for today's encounters
with all who are in need,
who hunger for acceptance,
for righteousness and bread,
Bring us new eyes for seeing,
new hands for holding on:
renew us with your Spirit;
God! Free us, make us one!

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)

Jesus promised, "I will give you the keys of the
kingdom of heaven." With such an unimaginable gift,
we may be assured that our generous response will
be greeted with more abundance. Let us devote the
resources of our lives to the advancement of God's
community on earth as it is in heaven.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING (All)

**Giver of every gift, we give thanks for your provision
that allows us to live a generous life. Use our offerings
of time, talent, and treasure to expand your reign.
May these gifts be magnified and meet the needs of
this community and your world.**

HYMN "In Christ There is No East or West"

394 NCH John Oxenham Laurence Hull Stookey

**1 In Christ there is no East or West,
in Christ no South or North;
But one community of love
throughout the whole wide earth.**

**2 In Christ shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find;
God's service is the golden cord
close-binding humankind.**

**3 In Christ is neither Jew nor Greek,
and neither slave nor free;
For men and women live in God,
and all are kin to me.**

**4 In Christ now meet both East and West,
in Christ meet South and North;
One joyous, true community
throughout the whole wide earth.**

BENEDICTION (Pastor)

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

This week's radio broadcast
is sponsored by
Wallace & Patricia Garbisch
in honor of their
"65th Wedding Anniversary".

YouTube link for Sunday, August 27, 2023

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tuesday, August 29th -
1 PM – Bible Study – 510 W 14th Street
*every week at Marge Goetsch's home

NEXT WEEK, SEPTEMBER 3rd– COMMUNION
SERVED AT THE FRONT OF SANCTUARY



for SEPTEMBER
NEWSLETTER - Please
have your articles into
the office by Tuesday,
August 29th.