

Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 10, 2023

United Church of Christ, Neillsville

Pastor James Mohr

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PRELUDE "Prelude and Fugue in F"

J.S. Bach

Karen Mohr

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

MISSION MOMENT

CALL TO WORSHIP (Inspired by Psalm 149)

One: Let our praise today be made new.

Many: **May we sing a new song, pray a new prayer,
dance a new dance, and speak and hear a new word.**

One: Let the faithful delight in the Holy One's marvelous
acts

Many: **From the seats in the sanctuary to the couches in
our homes.**

One: Let us glorify God with our voices, the work of our
lives, and the joy of our souls.

Many: **Glory to God! Praise the Holy One!**

HYMN "Morning Has Broken"

#29 Red UCC hymnal

Eleanor Farjeon

1 Morning has broken
Like the first morning,
Blackbird has spoken
like the first bird.
Praise for the singing!
Praise for the morning!
Praise for them, springing
fresh from the Word!

2 Sweet the rain's new fall
Sunlit from heaven,
Like the first dewfall
On the first grass.

Praise for the sweetness
Of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness
Where his feet pass.

3 Mine is the sunlight!
Mine is the morning
Born of the one light
Eden saw play!
Praise with elation,
Praise every morning,
God's recreation
of the new day!

OPENING PRAYER (All)

**God who journeys with us, we give thanks to be
gathered in your presence. May we acknowledge you
in the brightness of the day and in the stillness of the
night. Provide us a vision of your reign on earth and in
our lives. Make us your witnesses to a world in need
of hope and peace. Infuse us with your love, and may
this time gathered as your people transform us to
reflect your goodness in the world. Amen**

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE (All)

**Holy One, we confess that accountability can be
discomforting, and we avoid discomfort. We seek
the good enough, convenient, and easy over the
good, possible, and hard. Hold us accountable to
the gospel. Hold us accountable to our claim and
commitment to follow you. Hold us accountable to
your will. Help us to receive your grace and liberate
us from shame in order to embrace accountability
as a loving act of community.**

WORDS OF GRACE

Beloved, accountability from God is rooted in love,
hope, and mercy. Know that your past actions and
attitudes do not define your present nor limit your
future. Through God's grace you can grow, learn,
and thrive.

PASSING OF 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

PSALTER READING

Psalm 149

1Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the faithful.

2Let Israel be glad in its Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King.

3Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre.

4For the Lord takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with victory.

5Let the faithful exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their couches.

6Let the high praises of God be in their throats and two-edged swords in their hands,

7to execute vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples,

8to bind their kings with fetters and their nobles with chains of iron,

9to execute on them the judgment decreed. This is glory for all his faithful ones. Praise the Lord!

EPISTLE LESSON

Romans 13:8-14

8Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." 10Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

11Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers;

12the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; 13let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.

14Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 18:15-20

15"If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. 16But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. 19Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. 20For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

SERMON "A Difficult Text" 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 *"We Love Your Realm, O God"*
#312 NCH Timothy Dwight

1 We love your realm, O God,
all places where you reign.
We recognize, with hope and joy,
The world as your domain.

2 We love your church, O God,
for Christ has given life
To form communities of love
that seek to heal our strife.

3 We recognize, with pain,
That we have not achieved
The faithfulness of our resolve
When we at first believed.

4 Yet Christ, our friend and guide,
Continues to forgive,
Delivering us from our mistakes,
Inviting us to live.

5 Beyond our brokenness,
We seek to know your ways
Of deep communion, solemn vows,
And hymns of love and praise.

6 We know your truth will last,
We trust your reign is sure,
Equip us for those daily tasks
That help your world endure.

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)

Romans 13:10 tells us, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law." Sharing of our time, talent, and treasure manifests our love in the world. Let us give generously to the ministry of this church from an abundance of love of God, neighbor, and self.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING (All)

Gracious God, thank you for the gifts you give and allowing us to be gift givers as well. May our generous offerings bear fruit to nurture our community, our neighbors, and all creation.

HYMN *"Take My Life, God, Let It Be"*
448 NCH Frances Havergal

1 Take my life, God, let it be
consecrated faithfully.
Take my moments and my days,
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

2 Take my spirit, let it move
at the impulse of your love.
Take my intellect and use
all its powers as you choose.

3 Take my will; your will be done!
Make your will and mine be one.
Take my heart, and by your grace
make of it your dwelling place.

4 Take my love and help it grow;
let my loving overflow.
Take me now, and help me be
part of Christ's community.

BENEDICTION (Pastor)

May we go from this gathering
Strengthened in love,
Encouraged by hope,
Pursuing and speaking God's peace,
And being good news in the world.

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
Kirk & Nancy Rodman
in celebration of their
"61st Wedding Anniversary"**



YouTube link for Sunday, September 10, 2023

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meeting - TODAY after worship

Christian Education Update

On **Sunday, September 10**, immediately following the church service, UCC will give an update on plans to combine confirmation and church school with Calvary Lutheran for the 2023-24 school year. All parents, members and friends are welcome.

Tuesday, September 12th -

1 PM – Bible Study –

at Donita Follen's- 1209 Bruley Street

Wednesday, September 13th -

5 PM – Deacons Meeting

Free Community Picnic



September 17, 2023

11:15 am - 12:00 Noon

United Church of Christ-Neillsville

515 West 2nd Street

Fellowship Hall

Take-Outs will be available