



**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Neillsville, Wisconsin**  
**Church 715-743-2147**  
**Pastor Julie Ruegsegger**  
**Pastor's Office 715-743-2117**  
[www.neillsvilleucc.org](http://www.neillsvilleucc.org)

## **NOVEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER**

*"We always thank God for all of you when we mention you constantly in our prayers. This is because we remember your work that comes from faith, your effort that comes from love, and your perseverance that comes from hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father. Brothers and sisters, you are loved by God, and we know that he has chosen you." 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4*

Dear Friends,

Welcome to November! This is one of my favorite months for one main reason: Thanksgiving. This is the one holiday that comes with no expectations of gift-giving or wild parties, just an opportunity to gather with loved ones and give thanks to our Creator for the many gifts that have been poured out for us. I am overjoyed to find that we celebrate Thanksgiving all month long! We start with All Saints' Sunday, when we express our gratitude for the immense cloud of witnesses that have gone before us, then Thank You Sunday, when we get to honor specific volunteers who have helped to make this church and community a better place, all the way to Thanksgiving itself. This offers us a month of reflection on the blessings we have received, time to consider what we have been given and how we can share those blessings with others.

Since we moved to Neillsville, I have been awestruck by the incredible generosity of this church and the community as a whole. Most recently, I was impressed by the many people who gave up so much of their time to help with Interfaith Caregivers Change of Season and fall clean-up: those who prepped beforehand arrived early Saturday morning to prepare and serve breakfast, and the many who raked leaves and cleaned eaves for their neighbors. It was interesting to note that some of the volunteers have no affiliation with any church but came just because they value community.

One participant shared his touching story. He and his family had been in dire need of assistance following an accident, and in despair, he knelt by his bed and asked God for help. Shortly after uttering that prayer, the phone rang, and Judy Morrow was calling from Interfaith Caregivers to ask how they could help the family. In gratitude for answered prayer and community assistance, he is now "paying it forward" with a rake in hand.

There are so many stories of people receiving and people sharing, whether it is their time, talents, or treasures. As we go through this election season and feel the pain of divisive rhetoric and negativity, it is good to remember that this is still a community of people who truly care about one another, sharing generously, serving graciously. Thanks be to God for the many gifts showered upon us - thanks be to God for the gift of you, good and faithful servants!

Grace and Peace,

*Pastor Julie*

**2025 Budget and Committee Election  
Congregational Meeting, Sunday, Dec 8th**

On Sunday, December 8, 2024, Neillsville UCC will hold a Congregational meeting immediately following the service. At this meeting we will review the proposed 2025 budget, as well as vote on committee members. All members and friends are welcome to attend.

It is that time of year when we will begin taking orders for Poinsettias. The price this year is \$17 with options of red, white, pink or salmon. They can be ordered in honor of, or in memory of, or any other reason you may have. They can be taken home after Christmas Eve Service. Please have your orders in to the office by **December 5<sup>th</sup>**. We'd like to get them out early so we can enjoy them.



**Come  
Decorate for  
Christmas**

After worship on Sunday, November 24<sup>th</sup> to help decorate the sanctuary and narthex.

ALSO on Monday, November 25<sup>th</sup> after school – anyone wanting to decorate the tree is welcome to help.

**JAM for youth  
ages 3K to  
6th grade**



- Wednesday,  
November 6th  
5 PM at UCC

- Wednesday, November 20th  
5 PM at UCC

Christmas Program Practice #1

**No Confirmation on Sunday, Nov 10, 17, 24**



to Jerry Quicker and Don Quicker families on the death of their brother, Dennis Quicker, of Maryland. Our thoughts & prayers are with you.



Continuing the following in our thoughts and prayers.

Janet Harrington

Lisa Schermitzler

Wallace Garbisch

Duane Marty

Cheryl Steinbach

Gayle Schermitzler

Jim Repinski

Fran Ormond

Lois Lonning

Please let us know if others not listed (with their permission) would like prayer requests.



Sunday, October 6 and 20, the radio broadcast was sponsored anonymously by a “faithful listener”.

Sunday, October 13 and 27, the radio broadcast was anonymously “in praise of Jesus Christ” and with the message of “May his WORD be heard by All”.

**Facts and Figures of October 2024**  
**Attendance for In-Person Worship**

October 6	online 12	Sunday 58
October 13	online 5	Sunday 56
October 20	online 5	Sunday 52
October 27	online 7	Sunday 50

**Interfaith Caregivers Change of Season** and fall



clean-up was held on Saturday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. A wonderful breakfast was served here at UCC at 8:30 a.m. A group of 25 volunteers raked leaves and cleaned gutters of area homes who needed assistance.

*Mission and Outreach Committee*

- October 20, 2024 Meeting after church
- Kathy Mathis, Carol Harnisch, Deb Perkl, Bonnie Weyers were present. Pastor Julie also joined us.

We discussed needs that our mission could help meet. We did an overview of what we have done in the past to help Pastor Julie understand some history of our committee. We voted to send \$200 to the Loyal Food Pantry and \$200 dollars to our family from Ukraine (Mykola and Olesia Hnatiuk).

Discussion continued on how to help raise funds for future missions. Pastor Julie brought up an idea that her home church does for Advent. They bought advent devotion books and sold them for \$10.00. \$5.00 would be donated to Mission and Outreach for each book sold.

We discussed who wanted to stay members of the Mission and Outreach Committee for 2025. Those present agreed to stay on the committee. We welcome anyone who would like to join this committee to do so. Our committee is not limited to a set number, we just need to maintain a minimum of 5 members.

**Meal Giveaway**  
 UCC NEILLSVILLE  
 515 WEST SECOND STREET  
 November 17, 2024  
 10:45 -11:00 AM  
 Prepared by Neillsville Optimist Club



- 2- Debra Holman
- 4- Alexander Vine
- 10- Travis Vine
- 13- Deon Spangler
- 14- Roberta Gaier  
Kelly Mathis
- 16- Neil Armitage  
Sue Gurney
- 17- Brynn Heck
- 18- Chad Erickson
- 19- Harold Eddy  
Julie Ruegsegger
- 22- Theamore Vine
- 24- MacKenzie Keller
- 25- Joey Kranz

*Happy Birthday to all who have a November birthday!  
Did we miss your birthday or have the wrong date?  
Let us know if we did.*



- 5- Donita & Phil Follen
- 10- Bekke & Steve Barrette
- 14- Emile & Dan Miller



## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

### DECEMBER 1 -9

We are adding the first days of DECEMBER birthdays and anniversaries so as not to miss any if the newsletter comes out late.

#### December 1-9 Birthdays

- 1- Lydia Schumacher
- 3- Joel Raine
- 6- Steve Buchholz  
Marla Raine

#### December Anniversaries

- 1- Barb & Bob Petkovsek

**Reminder to set your  
clocks back one hour this  
Saturday night,  
November 2<sup>nd</sup>**



**Monday, November 11th**

## UCC Financial Update

Below is an update of UCC Financials. Included are receipts of regular offerings as well as nontraditional donations. In addition, the year-to-date total includes \$9,000 funds from investment income. Expenses include regular operating, salaries, benefits as well as 10% contributions to area and wider missions.

If anyone has more specific questions, please contact Bonnie Weyer or Don Quicker.

	August	September	Year to date
Receipts	\$6,615.00	\$13,808.00	\$105,288.27
Expenses	\$11,464.19	\$16,008.46	\$108,792.31
Grand Total	(\$4,849.19)	(\$2200.46)	(\$3504.04)

Our year to date loss for August was \$1303.58.

## 60<sup>th</sup> Holiday Fair- November 9, 2024



### Holiday Fair is Nearly Here – Please Stop by

Just a reminder to everyone ... the money in the Holiday Fair account is not raised just by the Holiday Fair ladies; it belongs to EVERYONE in our church. We have so many people who have very generously donated items to make our crafts with from wood, windows, buckets, sleds, pine boughs; not to mention all that have donated money to buy supplies. Not to mention the individuals that donate baked goods, greeting cards, and all the items to our New to Your Treasures. We could NOT make the money we do each year at our Holiday Fair, without all these people, both men and women, so we can give back to our church in whatever way is needed.

This year's Holiday Fair, which is Saturday, November 9, 2024 is fast approaching for our 60<sup>th</sup> Holiday Fair from 9 AM to 1 PM; with lunch serving from 11 AM to 1 PM. The lunch will consist of chicken salad on a croissant, baked potato soup, and dessert, (Betty Opelt's recipes). Carry-outs will be available.

If you have any questions regarding the Holiday Fair or would like to help with donations or with sales the day of the fair, please contact the appropriate chairman of each department:

- Gift Boutique – Carla Marty at 715-937-0077
- Greeting Cards – Susie Karl at 715-937-3506 or Carole Romens at 651-359-5196
- Kitchen Cupboard – Susie Karl at 715-937-3506 or Carole Romens at 651-359-5196
- New to You Treasures – Debbie Perkl at 715-797-6290
- Luncheon – Emile Miller at 715-937-4626

Thank you!

- Em Miller



**AMENDED and APPROVED Minutes**  
**At the October 22, 2024 Meeting**  
**Neillsville United Church of Christ Council**

The meeting was held on Thursday, September 19, 2024 in the Fellowship Hall at the Neillsville United Church of Christ.

Moderator Vine called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

**Attendance**

Council Members Present: Trustee Representative Doris Bakker (left at 6:27 PM), Christian Education Representative Stephanie Heck (left at 5:47 PM), Vice Moderator Barb Petkovsek, Moderator Paul Vine, Deacons Representative Karlene Wallace, and Treasurer Bonnie Weyer.

Others in Attendance: Pastor Julie and Kevin Erickson, Trustee Member (joined at 5:07 PM; left 5:32 PM).

**Prayer**

Pastor Julie guided the committee with a prayer.

**Minutes**

Motion by Barb Petkovsek, seconded by Karlene Wallace to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2024 meeting. Voice vote taken with all “aye”; motion carried.

**Financial Report**

Motion by Doris Bakker, seconded by Stephanie Heck to approve the financial report as presented by Bonnie Weyer reading Assistant Treasurer Don Quicker’s written report. Voice vote taken with all “aye”; motion carried.

***Kevin Erickson joined the meeting at this time.***

**Shed Roof Project**

Doris Bakker shared that the Trustees have received numerous comments about the entry way of the basement kitchen door, looking for some sort of coverage over the entrance, which will hopefully help with protection against the weather.

Kevin Erickson, Trustee member shared that he completed an estimate for installing a shed roof, using the existing concrete wall of \$18,654 for materials and labor. This estimate does not cover sides or railings. Kevin stated that the church’s insurance company will probably require railings to be installed but has not looked into this yet.

After much discussion, Paul Vine stated that he was not comfortable with the Council acting on this topic since it was not listed on the agenda; furthermore, with the quote price, this would need to be presented to the congregation for a vote, which could be added to the December Congregational meeting agenda. Paul suggested that the Trustees discuss this in more detail and report back.

***Kevin Erickson left the meeting at this time.***

## Committee Reports

### Christian Education

Stephanie Heck shared the following:

- No committee meetings were held during the summer months
- Jesus and Me (JAM)
  - Met with Calvary and a schedule for the year was established
  - They will meet every other week on Wednesday nights, alternating between each church location
  - First session held on Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at UCC
    - 41 students attending
    - had a slip and slide and other water activities, along with a snack and sang songs
  - Christmas Program will be performed separately at each church using the same program
  - Next sessions is Wednesday, September 25, 2024 at Calvary
  - The children singing during a church service is a work in progress
- Vacation Bible School (VBS)
  - [AMENDED MINUTES (10/22/24)] A great one-day program was held on a Friday, May 31, 2024]
  - Theme: Jesus Loves you S'More
  - Story of Creation
  - Made t-shirts, had a scavenger hunt, read a bible story, painted rocks and other crafts, had a campfire and made s'mores
  - Eleven (11) students attended between the ages of a 3-year-old to 5<sup>th</sup> grade

Pastor Julie reported the following regarding the Confirmation program:

- Meeting on Sundays from 5:30 – 6:30 PM
  - Three (3) students are in their first year of confirmation
  - Three (3) students are in their second year of confirmation
- This is a two-year program for students
  - The first year will focus on history, worship and sacraments
  - The second year will focus on biblical
- Implementing the Mentor program again
  - The first night will be in October with a scavenger hunt
  - Mentors will work with their confirmand on their Statement of Faith for next Spring

### **Next Meeting Date and Time**

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 22, 2024 at 5:30 PM.

***Stephanie Heck left the meeting at this time.***

## **Committee Reports Continued**

### Deacons

Karlene Wallace shared the following:

- Met every month during summer
- Discussed the order of worship
  - Ringing of the bells
  - Lighting of the candles
  - Prelude and time of silence to prepare mentally for service
- Time of service
  - 9 AM for summer months
  - 10 AM for fall/winter months
  - Discussion on maybe holding services at 9:30 AM all the time, since Jesus and Me (JAM) and Confirmation are no longer held on Sundays
    - This would be a topic for the Congregational meeting in December
- Pastor's installation went very well
- Discussion on the schedule for:
  - Communion
  - Greeters
  - Ushers
  - Acolytes
    - Currently, the host deacon and another member have been lighting the candles

### Trustees

Doris Bakker shared the following:

- Matt Meyer, Chief for the Neillsville Fire Department met with the Trustees regarding smoke detectors, fire alarms, etc.
- Landscaping needs some updating, and Mike Perkl will take the lead on this
- Church insurance policy has been approved, excluding terrorist coverage
- Discussion of the lighting in the parking lot

Paul Vine asked if the Trustees received the audit report and Doris stated no. Paul suggested that this topic should be added to their next month's Trustees agenda.

## **New Business**

### Review December Committee and Budget Meeting Process and Schedule

Paul Vine shared the following:

- October and November: Committees start working on their membership
  - finding replacements for any retiring members
  - filling any vacancies that occurred during the year



## **New Business Continued**

### Review December Committee and Budget Meeting Process and Schedule Continued

- December: a Congregational meeting is held to approve:
  - previous year's Congregational minutes
  - next year's committee membership
  - next year's budget

### Review/Update Camp Scholarship Guidelines

Paul Vine shared a Ray Opportunity Fund DRAFT #6 that was compiled by Dave Harnisch in December 2020 and asked the following:

- are the funds only used for camp scholarships
- how much money is in the fund
- is there a separate committee that oversees these funds

Bonnie Weyer shared the following:

- Ray funds are currently used only for camp scholarships
- she would need to follow up on the amount in the fund with Allan Hoesly, Investment Chairman
- no separate committee, the Council is to oversee this fund and provide final approval

Paul Vine asked Bonnie to compile the following for our next meeting:

- sample of the scholarship form
- cost for an individual to attend camp
- the number of church members that attended church camp this year
  - what fees were paid through the Ray fund for these members
- the number of non-church members that attended church camp this year
  - what fees were paid through the Ray fund for these members
- current balance in the Ray fund

## **Old Business**

Nothing discussed.

## **Pastor Report/Update**

Pastor Julie shared the following:

- At the Stewardship meeting, it was suggested that we find a way to support the Loyal community after the fire that destroyed three (3) buildings, specifically helping the Loyal Food Pantry

## **Pastor's Report/Update Continued**

- Bonnie Weyer will check with the coordinator of the Loyal Food Pantry to see what they need most
- Bonnie Weyer suggested that all cash collected in the offering during the month of October be designated towards the Loyal Food Pantry; all members in attendance at this time agreed

### ***Doris Bakker left the meeting at this time.***

- Made several home visits
- Made four (4) hospital visits
- Held two (2) funerals
- Held one (1) Celebration of Life
- Worship at the fair went well
- Jesus and Me (JAM) and Confirmation have started for the year
- Northwest Association has assigned Pastor Julie a mentor, along with other mentors that she has already
- Completing an on-line course, which is a step towards her ordination
- Attended a one-day Suicide Prevention Program
- Sunday, September 29, 2024 there will be guest speaker from the Clark County AODA program during the service. He will also have a small presentation after the service in the Fellowship Hall regarding their program.
  - All confirmation students are required to attend church that day and attend the program in the Fellowship Hall
  - This will be in place of the meeting on Sunday night for class

Barb Petkovsek asked Pastor if there were any concerns she had for the Council. Pastor stated she would like to be informed of any members that need a home or hospital visit from her.

### **Other**

Nothing currently.

### **Adjournment**

Motion by Barb Petkovsek, seconded by Bonnie Weyer to adjourn. Voice vote taken with all "aye"; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:44 PM.

Submitted by:

Emile J Miller

Neillsville UCC Council Secretary

## Hnatiuk Family UPDATE

Mykola and Olesia Hnatiuk continue to work very hard as they establish a stable future for themselves and their sons. Mykola works at Abby PorkPak in Curtiss and is pursuing his hobby of beekeeping with 1000 pounds of honey harvested over the summer. He also took the time to take the boys on many evening fishing excursions on the banks of a local stream. Olesia has her job at Zion Early Childhood Center in Colby and also started classes at Midstate Technical College. She received her CNA certificate and took a part time job as a weekend CNA at Clark County Rehabilitation Center in Owen working 3 out of 4 weekends a month. She is continuing classes to become an RN. They balance their time so one of them can always be with the boys. Saving many seeds from their garden last year, they started plants early and had another successful year of gardening.

Roman is 7 and proud to be in second grade. Riding the big school bus is one of his highlights. He enjoys riding his bike up and down our long driveway and climbing and running down the rows of bales. Dmytro started 4K, but only goes 2 days a week. He looks forward to first grade next year. Dmytro likes to run everywhere he goes so enjoys all the space he has here.

The family is here on Humanitarian Parole, which does not allow them a permanent status or a path to citizenship. Every year immigrants may enter the green card lottery. The United States gives up to 55,000 diversity visas to natives of countries with low immigration status. Mykola was chosen in the lottery last fall, which means the entire family is eligible for a green card if their number comes up again. They are hoping to get a green card which would allow them to travel outside this country to visit relatives and also eventually provide a path to citizenship.



**Sunday, November 10th –**  
**Stewardship “Thank You” Sunday**  
with light lunch following worship

**SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE**  
**November 3, 2024 – December 29, 2024**

	<b>Deacon/ host</b>	<b>Greeter(s)</b>	<b>Usher(s)</b>	<b>Power Point</b>
<b>Sunday, November 3, 2024</b>	Byrl Buddenhagen	Paul Vine	Hap Eddy	Barb Petkovsek
COMMUNION/ All Saints Day		Kelley Burch	Roger Carl	
<b>Sunday, November 10, 2024</b>	Sally Sadowska	Barb & Ken Shoemaker	Jenny Erickson	Emile Miller
			Kevin Erickson	
<b>Sunday, November 17, 2024</b>	Karlene Wallace	Kirk & Nancy Rodman	Craig Heck	Bonnie Weyer
			Max Heck	
<b>Sunday, November 24, 2024</b>	Janice Miller	Byrl & Sharon Buddenhagen	Kirk Rodman	Crispin Hediger
			Nancy Rodman	
<b>Sunday, December 1, 2024</b>	JoAnn Wren	Sandy Bieneck	Bob Petkovsek	Janice Miller
		Michelle Bergemann	Barb Petkovsek	
<b>Sunday, December 8, 2024</b>	Wayne Voss	Stepanie & Craig Heck	Paul Schmidt	Bonnie Weyer
			Cris Hediger	
<b>Sunday, December 15, 2024</b>	Barb Shoemaker	Kirk & Nancy Rodman	Mickey Marty	Emile Miller
			Joel Raine	
<b>Sunday, December 22, 2024</b>	Byrl Buddenhagen	Byrl & Sharon Buddenhagen	Ken Shoemaker	Crispin Hediger
			Russ Karl	
<b>Sunday, December 29, 2024</b>	Sally Sadowksa	Jim & Rosie Repinski	Paul Vine	Crispin Hediger
			Kelley Burch	
Please call the church office if you are unable to be here, or make arrangements with another church member. <b>715-743-2147</b>				



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>NO CONFIRMATION</b> On Nov. 10, 17, 24		Each Tuesday - 1 PM Marge Goetsch Bible Study – church lounge / bring bible	7 PM NA		1	2 <b>TIME CHANGE</b> <b>SET YOUR</b> <b>CLOCKS BACK</b>
<b>3 <u>Twenty-fourth</u></b> <b>Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10 AM Worship <b>Communion</b> 5:30 Confirmation 7 PM NA	4 9 AM Card Making	5 1 PM Bible Study	6 5–6 PM Christmas Program Practice at UCC  7 PM NA	7 Noon- T&C Quilters	8	9 <b>HOLIDAY FAIR</b> 9–1
<b>10 <u>Twenty-fifth</u></b> <b>Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10 AM Worship Stewardship “Thank- You Sunday” & lunch 7 PM NA	11  6 PM - PEO	12 1 PM Bible Study	13  *Meal Prep  7 PM NA	14 1:30 PM Circle of Friends Meeting *Meal Prep	15  *Meal Prep	16
<b>17 <u>Twenty-sixth</u></b> <b>Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10 AM Worship  <i>Meal Give Away</i> 7 PM NA	18 9 AM Card Making  9 AM - T&C Quilters	19 1 PM Bible Study  5:30 Trustees Mtg	20 1 PM- Stewardship Mtg 5-6 PM Christmas Program Practice at UCC 6 PM Council Mtg 7 PM NA	21	22	23
<b>24 <u>Twenty-seventh</u></b> <b>Sunday after Pentecost</b> 10 AM Worship *Christmas decorating after worship 7 PM NA	25 *Decorate the sanctuary tree after school	26 1 PM Bible Study 6 PM – HCE meeting	27  7 PM NA	28 <b>THANKS</b> <b>Giving</b> <b>Day</b>	29	30

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