



THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Neillsville, Wisconsin
Church 715-743-2147
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger
Pastor's Office 715-743-2117
Cell Phone 608-558-2397
www.neillsvilleucc.org

JANUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Ephesians 3:16-19

Dear Friends,

The year 2024 has come to a close, and we are looking toward the new year with a variety of emotions. Some may be grateful for an end to one year and looking forward to a new, fresh start. Others may be fearful of what is in store for the year to come, while others are simply curious as to what the new year holds in store. For whatever reason, it is simply human nature to ascribe a certain sense of importance to the turning of the calendar page, marking the date of a brand-new year. The dawn of January 1 may not be noticeably different than December 31, yet we always anticipate change.

The church year doesn't match up with the calendar year. The "New Year" for the church begins with the first Sunday of Advent in December. And yet, there is something special about how the church year aligns with the calendar year, as the turning of the calendar coincides with the season of Epiphany. Epiphany is the season of light, which is sorely needed during the winter months of long, cold nights. Epiphany is all about the manifestation of God: the Magi were led by a star to a baby, the Word became flesh and came to live among us. The signs of God manifest in Jesus continue throughout the season of Epiphany - through his baptism, the miracle of water into wine, teaching in the synagogue, calling disciples to be fishers of all people. These are the stories we will hear in church, but just as important are your stories, too.

No matter how you envision the year 2025, my hope and prayer for you is that you will continue to watch for signs of God manifest in your life. May this New Year and this Epiphany bring you new awareness of the Holy Spirit working in your life. May you see and feel God around you and know that Jesus has been born for you and for all creation. The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not, cannot ever overcome it. The dawning of a new year brings hope and promise. May you be filled with the love of Christ that you may be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

May you have a blessed New Year,

Pastor Julie

January Newsletter - 2024

Overview

Greetings to Neillsville UCC friends and family. It has been another year that has passed in a blink of an eye and here we are starting 2025.

2024 was a busy year as the pastor search process culminated in welcoming Pastor Julie Ruegsegger and husband Earnie to our church and community. She promotes a welcoming environment and is a positive inspiration to all. We also continued our traditions of supporting the community through the monthly food giveaway program, hosting the Angel Tree project for local families, supporting the backpack program and many others.

We are also fortunate to have many members who donate their time and talent to the annual holiday fundraiser. This fundraiser as well as interest from our local endowment funds helps ensure we are able to keep the lights on as well as complete necessary projects and repairs to our church facility.

As you make these things possible for our small church when we are looking to make ends meet, you always remind us of the Christian love we all share. In the past year the funds you have given made an impact on our church's foundation, our families, and the wider community.

The church council, along with the church trustees committee, oversees the church finances and attempts to keep members informed with honest and up-to-date information. In December, the congregation approved the 2025 church budget projecting a \$24,000 deficit. Annually this deficit has been made up through reduced spending of some line items as well as the generosity of our

members. Many of our expenditures are fixed, such as utilities and insurance, that we have little control over, and our trustees have been quite prudent in monitoring all expenses.

As we mentioned at the December 10 congregational meeting, we need to be proactive and consider ways to improve the financial picture through member giving, increasing membership, as well as brainstorming ideas to increase revenue.

When you review your giving amounts for 2025, please consider helping our church family. Consider inviting a friend or a neighbor to one of our services or upcoming event or fundraiser. We will initiate an ad-hoc group to help brainstorm ideas and future fundraisers. We hope to meet in early to mid-January to start the discussion.

If you are interested, please contact Pastor Julie or Paul Vine.

Thank you for all you do for our UCC church.

Paul Vine, Moderator



Continuing the following in our thoughts and prayers.

Janet Harrington	Gayle Schermitzler
Lisa Schermitzler	Fran Ormond
Wallace Garbisch	Duane Marty
	Cheryl Steinbach

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



Meal Giveaway
January 19, 2025

UCC - Neillsville

515 West Second Street

10:45-11:00 AM

JAM for youth
ages 3K to
6th grade

- Wednesday,
January 22nd
5 PM at Calvary



Sunday, December 1 and 15, the radio broadcast was sponsored by anonymously by a “faithful listener”.

Sunday, December 8, the radio broadcast was sponsored anonymously with a message “May His Word be Heard by All”

Sunday, December 22, the radio broadcast was sponsored by Howie & Kathy Mathis “In honor of our family past and present”.

Sunday, December 29, the radio broadcast was sponsored anonymously “In praise of Jesus Christ”.

2025 Radio Broadcast
Sponsors Needed

Would you like to sponsor a radio broadcast? You may choose to dedicate or honor someone for a particular service date.

The cost remains the same - \$75

Please contact Janice in the office or phone 715-743-2147 to reserve a date.



We will once again be collecting soup for the local food pantry. We are challenged by the Calvary Lutheran Church and St. Mary’s Catholic Church to see who can bring in the most cans. Please bring in before Super Bowl Sunday – February 9th

Facts and Figures of December 2024
Attendance for In-Person Worship

December 1	online 6	Sunday 63
December 8	online 4	Sunday 59
December 15	online 8	Sunday 91
December 22	online 6	Sunday 56
Christmas Eve Early service	3	126
Christmas Eve Late service		38
December 29	online 7	Sunday 38



JANUARY
Birthdays

- 3- Kathy Mathis
- 5- Michael Holub, Jr.
- 6- Allan Hoesly
- 9- Wayne Voss
- 11- Lexi Woods
- 16- Michael Holub, Sr.
- 18- Landon Bergemann
- 21- Emilia Mathis
Bruce Rakestraw
- 23- Dorothy Steiger
Paige Voigt
Parker Voigt
- 25- Haddie Mathis
Jim Vradenburg
- 28- Dave Steiger
- 29- Jill Williams
Clinton Woods
- 31- Lisa Hediger

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

No JANUARY Anniversaries



FEBRUARY
Birthdays & Anniversaries

FEBRUARY 1 -9

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

February 1-9 Birthdays

- 1- Patricia Acheson
Toni Carol
- 2- Sue Vornholt
- 5- Kyson Erickson

February Anniversaries

none



Mission and Outreach – Meal Giveaway

We would like to thank all those who have donated to our Meal Giveaway during 2024. We are also thankful for

the grants we have received this month.

- Adler-Clark Electric Community Commitment Foundation was awarded our mission \$1500.
- \$1000 was also received from the Clark County Community Foundation.
- We received \$250 from Thrivent.

The community support has been exceptional for this mission.

Our January meal will be our 48th meal. We are also very thankful for all the hours that our church family and community members have donated to this project.

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	October	November	Year to date
Receipts	\$6,615.00	\$13,808.00	\$9013.00	\$18,822.00	\$133,123.27
Expenses	\$11,464.19	\$16,008.46	\$10,796.19	\$17,601.24	\$137,189.74
Grand Total	(\$4,849.19)	(\$2200.46)	(\$1,783.19)	\$1220.76	(\$4066.47)

In January the annual statements will be printed. These statements could easily be printed on request during the year. If you would like to be on a list to have your statement quarterly please notify the church office or Bonnie. They can be emailed or printed and you can pick them up. Thanks for your continued support of our church.

VANCO – Online Giving



The online giving program is not only for your weekly/monthly offering ... you can also donate to any church activity through VANCO. There is one (1) new activity on the website:

- Christmas Fund
- Stewardship mission

As a committee of our church, if there are any programs that you need added to the VANCO website for online donations, please get a short write up for the webpage to Emile two (2) weeks prior to the date you need it posted.

Your generosity and continued support to the Neillsville UCC is greatly appreciated, whether it is by using your church envelope, a check, cash and/or using VANCO.

If you have any questions or need assistance with VANCO, please contact Emile at 715-937-4626.

Unapproved Congregational Minutes Budget and By-Law Review Neillsville United Church of Christ

The meeting was held on Sunday, December 10, 2023 in the Fellowship Hall at the Neillsville United Church of Christ.

Moderator Vine called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM.

Attendance

Members Present: The following 27 people were in attendance: Hap Eddy, Susie Karl, Russell Karl, Don Quicker, Doris Bakker, Mike Perkl, Byrl Buddenhagen, Kirk Rodman, James Vradenberg, Audrey Vradenberg, Bonnie Shaw, Nancy Rodman, Jennifer Clarkson, Kathy Mathis, Wayne Voss, Howard Mathis, JoAnn Wren, Rosanne Repinski, James Repinski, Paul Schmidt, Allan Hoesly, Bob Petkovsek, JoAnn Voss, Barb Petkovsek, Paul Vine, Emile Miller, and Interim Pastor Jim (see attached sign in sheet).

Minutes

Motion by Kathy Mathis, seconded by Hap Eddy to approve the minutes of the January 1, 2023 Congregational meeting. Voice vote taken with all “aye”; motion carried.

Motion by Doris Bakker, seconded by Don Quicker to approve the minutes of the May 7, 2023 Special Congregational meeting. Voice vote taken with all “aye”; motion carried.

Old Business

Search Committee

Barb Petkovsek, Search Committee Chairman shared that the committee is in communication with one (1) person, but they are still in the confidential stage and cannot share anything else at this time. Pastor Sue and Pastor Jim have agreed to continue to fill the pulpit until the position is filled.

New Business

2024 Committee Update

Moderator Vine stated the following two (2) committees still need members:

- Audit – one (1) person
- Stewardship – two (2) people

If anyone is interested in these positions, they are to contact Paul or a member of the perspective committee.

New Business Continued

2024 Committee Update Continued

Motion by Bob Petkovsek, seconded by Wayne Voss to approve the 2024 Committee membership as presented by Moderator Vine. Voice vote taken with all “aye”; motion carried.

2024 UCC Proposed Budget

JoAnn Voss stated that the Stewardship Committee members are often asked how the \$14,000 is decided for the Wider Mission budget line. Assistant Treasurer Quicker and Interim Pastor Jim stated it is determined by many factors, some including the church membership size, the amount of the giving, and how well the church is doing.

Paul Schmidt asked what specifically are the Memorial Funds used for. Assistant Treasurer Quicker stated that this money is used for special projects and helps with non-budgeted items. For example, if money was not donated towards the parking lot project through other activities of the church like individual donations, the baked goods auction, and the Holiday Fair funds, the Memorial Fund may have been used.

Mike Perkl expressed appreciation to the Holiday Fair funds for the improvements to the Fellowship Hall with the round tables and to the parking lot fund.

Motion by Mike Perkl, seconded by Russell Karl to approve the 2024 budget as reviewed and presented in written form by Assistant Treasurer Don Quicker. Voice vote taken with all “aye”; motion carried.

Closing Prayer

Interim Paster Mohr guided those in attendance in a closing prayer.

Adjournment

Motion by Allan Hoesly, seconded by Russell Karl to adjourn. Voice vote taken with all “aye”; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:28 AM.

Submitted by:

Emile J Miller

Neillsville UCC Council Secretary 12/10/23

New Day's Lyric

May this be the day
We come together.
Mourning, we come to mend,
Withered, we come to weather,
Torn, we come to tend,
Battered, we come to better.
Tethered by this year of yearning,
We are learning
That though we weren't ready for this,
We have been readied by it.
We steadily vow that no matter
How we are weighed down,
We must always pave a way forward.

This hope is our door, our portal.
Even if we never get back to normal,
Someday we can venture beyond it,
To leave the known and take the first
steps.
So let us not return to what was normal,
But reach toward what is next.

What was cursed, we will cure.
What was plagued, we will prove pure.
Where we tend to argue, we will try to
agree,
Those fortunes we forswore, now the
future we foresee,
Where we weren't aware, we're now
awake;
Those moments we missed
Are now these moments we make,
The moments we meet,
And our hearts, once all together beaten,
Now all together beat.

Come, look up with kindness yet,
For even solace can be sourced from
sorrow.
We remember, not just for the sake of
yesterday,
But to take on tomorrow.

We heed this old spirit,
In a new day's lyric,
In our hearts, we hear it:
For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne.
Be bold, sang Time this year,
Be bold, sang Time,
For when you honor yesterday,
Tomorrow ye will find.
Know what we've fought
Need not be forgotten nor for none.
It defines us, binds us as one,
Come over, join this day just begun.
For wherever we come together,
We will forever overcome.

by Amanda Gorman



SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE
January 5, 2025 – March 9, 2025

	Deacon/ host	Greeter(s)	Usher(s)	Power Point
Sunday, January 5, 2025	Karlene Wallace	Lydia Schumacher Karen Northup	Lydia Schumacher Karen Northup	Emile Miller
Sunday, January 12, 2025	Janice Miller	Pat Acheson Herman Seebandt	Don Quicker Jerry Quicker	Bonnie Weyer
Sunday, January 19, 2025	JoAnn Wren	Linda Stalsberg Carla Marty	Hap Eddy Roger Carl	Bar Petkovsek
Sunday, January 26, 2025	Wayne Voss	Howie & Kathy Mathis	Debbie Perkl Mike Perkl	Cris Hedgier
Sunday, February 2, 2025	Byrl Buddenhagen	Larry & Kathy Marshall	Larry Marshall Paul Schmidt	Emile Miller
Sunday, February 9, 2025	Barb Shoemaker	Jenna Ziegler & family	Ken Shoemaker Travis Vine	Bonnie Weyer
Sunday, February 16, 2025	Sally Sadowska	Lydia Schumacher Karen Northup	Marla Raine Joel Raine	Reese Ziegler
Sunday, February 23, 2025	Karlene Wallace	Chad & Lacey Erickson & family	Janet Meredith Emile Miller	Cris Hediger
Sunday, March 2, 2025	Janice Miller	Kirk Rodman Nancy Rodman	Barb Petkovsek Bob Petkovsek	Emile Miller
Sunday, March 9, 2025	JoAnn Wren	Scott & Jill Williams Family	Bonnie Weyer Ray Weyer	Bonnie Weyer
Please call the church office if you are unable to be here, or make arrangements with another church member. 715-743-2147				



2025 United Church of Christ

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Each Tuesday - 1 PM Marge Goetsch Bible Study – church lounge / bring bible	1 7 PM NA	2 Noon- T&C Quilters	3	4
<u>5 Second Sunday after Christmas</u> 10 AM Worship Communion 7 PM NA	6 Epiphany 9 AM Card Making	7 1 PM Bible Study	7 PM NA	9 1:30 Circle of Friends Mtg	10	11
12 <u>Baptism of the Lord</u> 10 AM Worship 7 PM NA	13 6 PM - PEO	14 1 PM Bible Study	15 5:30 Council Mtg *Meal Prep 7 PM NA	16 *Meal Prep	17 *Meal Prep	18
19 <u>Second Sunday after the Epiphany</u> 10 AM Worship Meal Give Away 7 PM NA	20 9 AM Card Making 9 AM T & C Quilters	21 1 PM Bible Study 5:30 Trustees Mtg	22 JAM 5-6 PM at Calvary 7 PM NA	23 6 PM HCE	24	28
26 <u>Third Sunday after the Epiphany</u> 10 AM Worship 7 PM NA		28 1 PM Bible Study	29 7 PM NA	30	31	