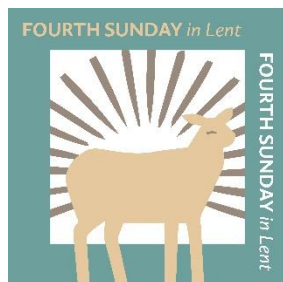


Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 30, 2025
United Church of Christ - Neillsville
Pastor Julie Ruegsegger



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HYMN *"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"*

#43 NCH Charles Wesley

**1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, on earth be found,
Fix in us a humble dwelling,
All your faithful mercies crown;
Jesus, you are all compassion;
Pure, unbounded love impart.
Visit us with your salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.**

**2 Breathe, O breathe your loving Spirit
Into every troubled breast;
Let us all in you inherit,
Let us find your promised rest;
Take away our love of sinning;
Alpha and Omega be;
End of faith, as its beginning,
Set our hearts at liberty.**

**3 Come, Almighty to deliver,
Let us all your life receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Nevermore your temples leave.
You we would be always blessing,
Love you as your angels love,
Pray and praise for your unfailing,
Wounded arms outstretched above.**

**4 Finish, then, your new creation;
Pure and spotless may we prove;
Let us see your great salvation
Perfectly restored in you;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Crowned as saints, we ever shall be
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.**

CALL TO CONFESSION

Psalm 32

¹ Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! ² Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

PRELUDE

Holly Pisors

RINGING OF THE CARILLON

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CENTERING *"Come and Fill Our Hearts"*

**Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O God, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace,
A - - - men. [Repeat]**

"A Listening" by Ann Weems

**Come and fill our hearts with your peace.
You alone, O God, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace,
A - - - men. [Repeat]**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come, let us celebrate the forgiving, reconciling love of God.

**For once we were lost and felt so far away;
now we have been found and welcomed home.
Know that God's love is lavished upon you forever.
We rejoice at the news of forgiveness and hope!
Come, let us celebrate and praise the God of Love.**

OPENING PRAYER

How incredible is your love, O God! We have been made new in your love and reconciled to you and to each other in peace and joy. Be with us this day as we hear your words of comfort and hope. Guide our lives that we may serve you more fully all of our days. AMEN.

³ When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. ⁴ Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.

⁵ Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

⁶ Therefore, let all the godly pray to you while there is still time, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment. ⁷ For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory.

⁸ The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. ⁹ Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."

¹⁰ Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the Lord. ¹¹ So rejoice in the Lord and be glad, all you who obey him! Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

God of mercy and grace, you have given us the ministry of reconciliation and have called us to be ambassadors for Christ. Yet, we have often examined the sin in others and not embraced them in your love. Teach us the way to go in your love. Help us to see others not from the limits of a human point of view but instead to see them through the eyes of Love divine. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

RESPONSE *"I Come to the Cross"*

#251 W&R Bill Barstone and Bob Somma
**I come to the cross seeking mercy and grace;
I come to the cross where you died in my place.
Out of my weakness and into your strength;
Humbly I come to the cross.**

**Your arms are open, you call me by name,
You welcome this child that was lost.
You paid the price for my guilt and my shame;
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come;
Jesus, I come to the cross.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

SCRIPTURE READINGS

NEW TESTAMENT **2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

¹⁶ So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! ¹⁷ This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

¹⁸ And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. ¹⁹ For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation. ²⁰ So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" ²¹ For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

NEW TESTAMENT **Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32**

¹ Tax collectors and other notorious sinners often came to listen to Jesus teach. ² This made the Pharisees and teachers of religious law complain that he was associating with such sinful people—even eating with them!

³ So Jesus told them this story:

Parable of the Lost Son

¹¹ "A man had two sons. ¹² The younger son told his father, 'I want my share of your estate now before you die.' So his father agreed to divide his wealth between his sons.

¹³ "A few days later this younger son packed all his belongings and moved to a distant land, and there he wasted all his money in wild living. ¹⁴ About the time his money ran out, a great famine swept over the land, and he began to starve. ¹⁵ He persuaded a local farmer to hire him, and the man sent him into his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ The young man became so hungry that even the pods he was feeding the pigs looked good to him. But no one gave him anything.

¹⁷ "When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, 'At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will go home to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.'"

²⁰ “So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. ²¹ His son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, and I am no longer worthy of being called your son.’

²² “But his father said to the servants, ‘Quick! Bring the finest robe in the house and put it on him. Get a ring for his finger and sandals for his feet. ²³ And kill the calf we have been fattening. We must celebrate with a feast, ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and has now returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found.’ So the party began.

²⁵ “Meanwhile, the older son was in the fields working. When he returned home, he heard music and dancing in the house, ²⁶ and he asked one of the servants what was going on. ²⁷ ‘Your brother is back,’ he was told, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf. We are celebrating because of his safe return.’

²⁸ “The older brother was angry and wouldn’t go in. His father came out and begged him, ²⁹ but he replied, ‘All these years I’ve slaved for you and never once refused to do a single thing you told me to. And in all that time you never gave me even one young goat for a feast with my friends. ³⁰ Yet when this son of yours comes back after squandering your money on prostitutes, you celebrate by killing the fattened calf!’

³¹ “His father said to him, ‘Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, and everything I have is yours. ³² We had to celebrate this happy day. For your brother was dead and has come back to life! He was lost, but now he is found!’”

SERMON “A New Creation” Pastor Julie

HYMN “What Wondrous Love is This”

#223 NCH *anonymous folk hymn*

1 What wondrous love is this, O my soul! O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this,
that Christ should come in bliss
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the heavy cross for my soul!

2 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing,
To God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I Am,

**While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
While millions join the theme, I will sing.**

3 And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on,
And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on!
And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing and joyful be,
And through eternity I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on,
And through eternity I’ll sing on!

MORNING PRAYERS

PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

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

THE OFFERING SERVICE

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

Doxology

**Praise God throughout these forty days.
Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise.
And praise the Spirit who imparts
God’s love in Christ into our hearts. Amen.**

Prayer of Dedication (All)

Gracious God, bless these gifts and our lives to your service. May these gifts help to bring the new creation that you have envisioned. Amen.

HYMN “This is a Day of New Beginnings”

#417 NCH (vs 1-3) Brian Wren

1 This is a day of new beginnings,
Time to remember and move on,
Time to believe what love is bringing,
Laying to rest the pain that’s gone.

2 For by the life and death of Jesus,
God’s mighty Spirit, now as then,
Can make for us a world of difference,
As faith and hope are born again.

3 Then let us, with the Spirit’s daring,
Step from the past and leave behind
Our disappointments, guilt, and grieving,
Seeking new paths, and sure to find.

LENTEN BLESSING

JOYS AND CONCERNS

RESPONSE *"This is a Day of New Beginnings"*
#417 NCH (vs 4)

4 Christ is alive and goes before us
To show and share what love can do.
This is a day of new beginnings -
Our God is making all things new.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Holly Pisors

ANNOUNCEMENTS
RADIO BROADCAST
11 AM Sunday radio broadcast
on WCCN 98.5FM and 1370AM

This week's radio broadcast
is sponsored anonymously
with the message
"May His Word be Heard by All".

WELCOME

We welcome you to our service of worship!
We are glad that you have joined us on site,
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.

YouTube link for Sunday, March 30, 2025

<https://youtube.com/live/EC6dO100zX0>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, March 30th

- **10 AM** Deacon Host – Barb Shoemaker
Greeter(s) – Wayne & JoAnn Voss
Usher(s) – Larry Marshall, Ken Shoemaker
PowerPoint – Emile Miller

- **11 AM** – Confirmation Class

Tuesday, April 1st

- **1 PM** Bible Study

Wednesday, April 2nd

- **5 PM JAM** at UCC

- **6 PM** Lenten Study at UCC

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

Mar 30 – Sharon & Byrl Buddenhagen

Apr 6 - Doris Bakker

Apr 13 -

Apr 20 -

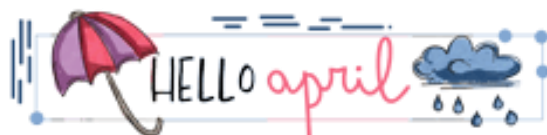
We need people to sign up



This year we will be ordering a variety
of spring blooming plants
for Easter Sunday. These are all 6" pots

Easter Lily	\$17	Daffodil	\$15
Hyacinth	\$15	Cineraria	\$15
Tulip	\$15		

**Please have your order into the office
by Friday, April 10th**



Please have any articles for the
April Newsletter into the office
by **Monday, March 31st**