

First Sunday in Lent

March 9, 2025

United Church of Christ - Neillsville

Pastor James Mohr

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PRELUDE "Prelude & Fugue in F" J.S. Bach
Karen Mohr

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]

Poem: "Lent" 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 into the wilderness.
Let us seek God together.
Come into a place of mystery.
Let us seek God together.
Come into a place of challenge.
Let us seek God together.
Come into a place of preparation.
Let us seek God together.
Come into a place where you can find God,
and find yourself.
Let us seek God together.
Come and worship God.

HYMN "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"
#439 NCH Martin Luther

**1 A mighty fortress is our God,
a bulwark never failing;
Our present help, amid the flood
of mortal ills prevailing.**

For still our ancient foe
does seek to work us woe
with craft and power great,
and armed with cruel hate,
on earth without an equal.

2 Did we in our own strength confide,
our striving would be losing,
But there is one who takes our side,
the One of God's own choosing.
You ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus sets us free!
With mighty power to save,
Victorious o'er the grave.
Christ will prevail triumphant.

3 And though this world with devils filled
should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear for God has willed
the truth to triumph through us.
The powers of evil grim,
we tremble not for them;
their rage we can endure,
for lo, their doom is sure:
one little word shall fell him.

4 That word beyond all earthly powers
forever is abiding;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours,
for Christ is with us siding.
Let goods and kindred go,
this mortal life also;
the body they may kill;
God's truth shall triumph still;
God's reign endures forever.

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION

O God, we have not always wanted to follow
where you lead us. Though we want you to travel
with us, we have not always wanted to travel with
you. Forgive us, God, and strengthen our faith that
we may not be afraid of traveling the path you have
set before us. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

CHILDREN'S TIME "This Thing Called Lent"

SCRIPTURE READINGS

OLD TESTAMENT Deuteronomy 26:1-11

When you have come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, ²you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. ³You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, "Today I declare to the Lord your God that I have come into the land that the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us." ⁴When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the Lord your God, ⁵you shall make this response before the Lord your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. ⁶When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, ⁷we cried to the Lord, the God of our ancestors; the Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. ⁸The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; ⁹and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me." You shall set it down before the Lord your God and bow down before the Lord your God. ¹¹Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

OLD TESTAMENT Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

¹You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
²will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

⁹Because you have made the Lord your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place,

¹⁰no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

¹¹For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

¹²On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

¹³You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

¹⁴Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name.

¹⁵When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them.

¹⁶With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

NEW TESTAMENT Romans 10:8b-13

⁸But what does it say? "The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); ⁹because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved.

¹¹The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame."

¹²For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

NEW TESTAMENT Luke 4:1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ²where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. ³The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." ⁴Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" ⁵Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶And the devil said to him, "To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." ⁸Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" ⁹Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' ¹¹and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" ¹²Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ¹³When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

SERMON "Ah Wilderness!" Pastor Jim

RESPONSE TO THE WORD (All)

UCC Statement of Faith NCH #885

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 *"Lord Jesus, Who Through Forty Days"*

#211 NCH Claudia F.I. Hernaman

1 Lord Jesus, who through forty days
for us did fast and pray,
Teach us with you to mourn our sins,
and close by you to stay.

2 As you with Satan did contend,
and did the victory win,
O give us strength to persevere,
in you to conquer sin.

3 And through these days of penitence,
and through this Passion-tide,

Yes, evermore, in life and death,
O Christ, with us abide.

4 Abide with us, till when this life
of suffering shall be past,
An Easter of unending joy
we may attain at last.

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

Recognizing that all that we have comes from God,
let us offer back to God, not our leftovers, but the
first and best of what we have received.

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)

Dear God, use these gifts, and our lives, to feed
and nourish, spreading your love where it is most
needed.

HYMN *"Lead Us from Death to Life"*

#581 NCH Satish Kumar Marty Haugen

Refrain:

Lead us from death to life,
from falsehood to truth,
from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
let peace fill our universe.

1 Still all the angry cries, still all the angry guns,
Still now your people die,
earth's sons and daughters.
Let justice roll, let mercy pour down,
Come and teach us your way of compassion.

(Refrain)

2 So many lonely hearts, so many broken lives,
Longing for love to break into their darkness.
Come, teach us love, come, teach us peace,
Come and teach us your way of compassion.

(Refrain)

3 Let justice ever roll, let mercy fill the earth,
Let us begin to grow into your people.
We can be love, we can bring peace,
We can still be your way of compassion.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

HYMN "Lead Us from Death to Life"
#581 NCH

Refrain:

Lead us from death to life,
from falsehood to truth,
from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace;
Let peace fill our hearts, let peace fill our world,
let peace fill our universe.

LENTEN BLESSING "God, Lead Me" by Kate Bowler

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Karen Mohr

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

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 9, 2025

<https://youtube.com/live/G-Z1CPGDUT4>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, March 9th

- **10 AM** Deacon Host – Jo Ann Wren
Greeter(s) – Jill & Scott Williams Family
Usher(s) – Ray & Bonnie Weyer
PowerPoint – Bonnie Weyer

- **11 AM** – Confirmation & Mentors will Meet

Tuesday, March 11th

- **1 PM** Bible Study

Wednesday, March 12th

- **6 PM** Lenten Study at Calvary

Thursday, March 13th

- **1:30 PM** Circle of Friends Meeting

- **4 PM** Future Connections & Outreach Meeting

Coffee fellowship after worship -

Sign up on back bulletin board

- Mar 9 – JoAnn & Wayne Voss
- Mar 16 – Nancy & Kirk Rodman
- Mar 23 – Bonnie & Ray Weyer
- Mar 30 -

We need people to sign up

This week's radio broadcast is sponsored by
Sue & Jim Pople
in loving memory of Sue's parents,
Norbert & Phyllis Embke

 **Meal Giveaway**
March 16, 2025
UCC - Neillsville

515 West Second Street

10:45-11:00 AM

Prepared by Living Hope