GLAD TIDINGS!

March 2026

Gathered by the lake,
we are
Embraced by God
to **grow**
Empowered by Christ
to **care,**
Enriched by the Holy Spirit
to **celebrate**



Congregational United Church of Christ Neenah / Menasha

Hello church!

Each year, Lent invites us on a journey, one part reflection, one part repentance, and one-part holy expectation. This year, our congregation is walking two Lenten paths at once: on Wednesdays, we are exploring *An Unlikely Lent*, and on Sundays, we are following *The Palm Sunday Path*. Though these two series may seem different at first glance, they share one essential theme: Lent is a season of seeing what we might otherwise overlook.

On Wednesday evenings, *An Unlikely Lent* asks us to look again at the Easter story, not through the spotlight on the cross alone, but through the eyes of the crowd that witnessed Jesus's final days. These are the people who stood close enough to feel the tension, the confusion, the hope, and the shock of what unfolded. They are ordinary people whose devotion, opposition, freedom, courage, companionship, and alliances shaped the edges of Jesus's story. Their voices are often quiet. Their names are sometimes unknown. But their experiences help us notice what happens in the margins, in the silence between the grand events, in the overlooked moments that tell the deeper truth.

Then, on Sundays, *The Palm Sunday Path* leads us alongside Jesus as he enters Jerusalem with a public, provocative procession announcing a new kind of reign. This journey, too, calls us to notice details we may miss: the risk his followers felt, the political tension in the air, the boldness of joy expressed under the shadow of danger. Palm Sunday was not simply a parade; it was a courageous and dangerous act of truth-telling, a confrontation with powers that would keep things predictable and unchanged.

In that spirit of public witness, we are invited to participate in a regional Palm Sunday Rally on March 29 at 1 PM in Houdini Plaza, Appleton. You are warmly invited to join others from around the valley as we lift the call to love our neighbors and bear witness to the values at the heart of Christ's message.

Endorsed by the Wisconsin Council of Churches, this gathering is part of a growing movement of congregations and faith communities who are choosing to express shared commitments to compassion, mercy, dignity, and the well-being of our neighbors.

Palm Sunday has always carried a meaningful contrast: Jesus enters not with force or spectacle but with humility and a message that shook the city through truth and love. The spirit of the Palm Sunday Path is rooted in the values lifted in Matthew 25, feeding the hungry, tending the sick, welcoming the stranger, and caring for those who are isolated or overlooked.

Here in the Fox Valley, faith communities across denominations and including people who do not belong to a religious community, have joined together to collaborate, share resources, and explore ways of living out these commitments in public life. This shared effort includes opportunities for learning, singing, interfaith connection, and ongoing, compassionate engagement with our wider community.

Continued on next page

Both series and the rally remind us that the story of Jesus is not a quiet tale told behind closed doors. It is a public story, with real stakes, visible courage, and unnoticed participants whose perspectives reveal the full texture of God's work.

And both ask us the same question:
Are we paying attention to where God is moving, especially in places we don't usually look?

Lent is not solely just a time to meditate on our mortality, our life and inevitable death. That's just Ash Wednesday. Lent is so much more than that. The six weeks of Lent are a time to meditate on life and death and the countless new lives we are afforded by our faith in God. An endless cycle of life and death and life again. Lent has always been about both preparing for the cross and seeing the resurrection in new ways. The people around Jesus, the path he walked, the choices he made, and the risks he took all point to a God who shows up in unexpected and unlikely places. And every time we find God anew, we are afforded the gift of "a new life" if we are willing to accept it. If we keep our eyes only on the "big moments," we may miss the quiet, life-changing invitations unfolding alongside them. And to be frank, it is in those quiet, life-changing invitations that I find the Holy Spirit doing most of the work.

So, this March, I invite you to walk through Lent with eyes wide open.

Look for God not only in the sanctuary but in the conversations at dinner tables, the courage of the uncertain, the kindness of a friend, or the questions that refuse easy answers.

Look for God in the margins, where Jesus so often chose to stand.

And look for the new thing God is doing, even when it comes in unexpected or unlikely ways.
For the cross is not the end of the story.

And every faithful, courageous, overlooked step along the way matters.

Walking this path with you,
Amen and alleluia,
Pastor Rob



3/04 Izzy H.
3/07 Marcy Fry
Melanie Nault
3/09 Bruce Janda
3/11 Judy Brahe
3/16 Chloe R.
3/17 Katie Ellisen-Doe
Jon Janness
3/23 Stephanie Vrabec
Carmen T.
3/24 Connie Regazzi
3/25 Kelli Ellisen
Nolan S.

Wedding Anniversaries

March 13th
Steph and Tim Kellnhauser
March 21st
Doug and Paula Botten

We would like to wish all a happy birthday or anniversary. If your birthday or anniversary was omitted , or you would rather not have it published, please contact church office.



Please keep the following in your thoughts and prayers:

Ongoing Prayers:

Patty Hoehne, Adam Anderson, Dave Zernicke, Crystal Lingenhag, Ann Luebke, Larry Olson, Shirl Alix, Tiffany Williams, Dar Schuff, Jerry Hupe.

Homebound:

Judy Doornbos in California, and Carol Wilcox.



CHOIR PRACTICE DURING LENT

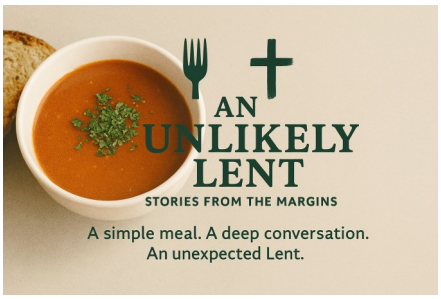
February 18th through April 1st choir practice will be at 5:15 . If you are thinking about joining the choir this would be a good time since it is earlier in the day. Any questions contact Jill jellenrosen@gmail.com



COMMUNITY TABLE

Thanks you to everyone who cooked, donated and worked at the February CT! We served 93 meals. It's always so rewarding to see everyone enjoying a meal and fellowship with old and new friends. The guests are so appreciative of everything the Community Table has to offer which includes give aways of non perishable food.

Our next date to serve is April 21st…..mark your calendar to help with this important ministry of our church.



Lenten Soup Suppers & Conversation Series
• March 4 • March 11 • March 18 • March 25

Each Wednesday evening during Lent, we will gather around the table for nourishment of both body and spirit:

6:00 PM – Supper *Soup • Bread • Mac & Cheese for Kids • Dessert*
6:30 PM – Conversation Series: *An Unlikely Lent*

This year's theme, ***An Unlikely Lent***, invites us to explore short videos that highlight often overlooked people within the Easter story—those who live on the margins, move through the background, or appear in between the moments we usually focus on. As we reflect together, we will discover how God is at work in unexpected places and through unlikely people.

These evenings are designed to be accessible, thoughtful, and welcoming to all ages and stages of faith. There is no pressure to speak, just an open invitation to listen, reflect, and wonder together.

Join us on Wednesday nights this Lent as we share a simple meal and meaningful conversation. ***An Unlikely Lent*** invites us to open our eyes to surprising movements of grace and to consider how resurrection continues to meet us in quiet, ordinary, and unexpected ways.

All are welcome. Bring a friend. Come hungry—for soup, for connection, and for hope.



DAYLIGHTS SAVINGS STARTS MARCH 7TH .

Set your clock ahead 1 hour!
You don't want to be late to church!!



FUN WITH FRIENDS

March 20th

6:30 – 9:00

Karaoke with Darrell
Stay tuned for more information



CALL TO ACTION

We invite you to be part of shaping our church's future. Mark your calendar, bring your voice, and come help dream the next chapter of our life together.

All are welcome as we continue discerning God's dream for our church.

ONE MORE TIME – AND THEN WE GET TO HAVE A PARTY!

SATURDAY, MARCH 14 • 12–3 PM
LUNCH AND CHILDCARE PROVIDED

Join us as we explore our **emerging congregational dream**. We'll begin with lunch and a brief conversation about the themes shaping our shared vision:

- **Deep Connections** – a place where everyone belongs
- **Transformative Relationships** – supporting one another through life
- **Purposeful Living** – discovering our God given call to make a difference

Then we'll move into **small groups** where we will listen to each other, make some choices, and consider what it takes to bring our dreams to life.

Join the group that fits your passion—or move between them to explore multiple ideas.
We'll close with updates from each group.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18 • 5–7 PM
DINNER AND CHILDCARE PROVIDED

Our **final gathering** will feature a congregational dinner followed by a creative, **talent show-style presentation** from the three ministry groups.

Expect:

Music – Skits – Storytelling – Spoken word – Or a few fun surprises!

It will be a joyful celebration of imagination, creativity, and the ideas shaping our future together.



SAVE THE DATE

ALL CHURCH EVENT





RUMMAGE SALE

Friday, June 12 and Saturday, June 13

Items may be dropped off on the Fellowship Hall stage beginning May 18.
Talk to Cindy Anderson or Mary Janness



BAKE SALE

Saturday, June 13

Contact Alanna Smith to donate or volunteer



BRAT FRY

Saturday, June 13

See Connie Regazzi to donate



PLANT SALE

Friday, June 12 & Saturday, June 13

Contact Mary Liesch

HELP FOR THE HOMELESS HYGIENE DRIVE



We are collecting NEW hygiene and cleaning items for local crisis agencies through The Family Radio's Help for the Homeless Hygiene Drive from Feb. 22 through **March 15**. Please place your donations in the *Help for the Homeless* collection box located inside the parking lot door by March 15. Or make a secure financial donation for the purchase of supplies at thefamily.net. The Family Radio Network, Inc. partners with area homeless and crisis agencies by inviting participating communities to donate hygiene and cleaning products. These products make it possible for the agencies to dedicate their limited financial resources to provide qualified personnel, education, counseling, safe housing, and nutritious food to those they serve. Hygiene and cleaning products are not covered by Wisconsin FoodShare (food stamps / SNAP). Some of the most urgently needed items are bathroom tissue, cleaning supplies, dental care, deodorant, diapers/baby care, face/bath soap, feminine care, hair care, laundry detergent, paper towels, razors, and trash bags. **Your donations will remain in** this community. Thank you! More information available at thefamily.net or 800-236-9364.

ITEMS MOST NEEDED: Bathroom, tissue, cleaning supplies, dental care, deodorant, diapers,/baby care, face/bath soap, feminine care, laundry, detergent, paper towels, razors, hair, care, and trash



As the air begins to clear and we feel the first hints of the spring season, my thoughts naturally turn toward the theme of **new beginnings.** It is an invigorating time for our congregation, especially as we wrap up our visioning process and continue to celebrate our incredible **175-year legacy.**

The Heartbeat of Our Building

Being your Moderator gives me a unique "front-row seat" to the daily life of our church. I work closely with Pastor Rob on a weekly—and often daily—basis, and I can tell you firsthand: the vibrancy of this church is no accident.

We are a beautifully busy community. Between our dedicated paid staff, our tireless volunteers, the bustling daycare, and the various community agencies that call our building home, there is a constant hum of activity. This "daily business" requires an immense amount of organization, communication, and grace. While keeping these gears turning isn't always easy, seeing the impact we have on our community makes it **always worth it.**

A Place for Every Member

As we step into this next chapter of our history, I am struck by the fact that there is a place for **everyone** here:

- **The Digital Worshiper:** If you join us online from home, you are a vital part of our reach.
- **The Behind-the-Scenes Helper:** From administrative support, membership on a committee to keeping our space welcoming.

The Community Advocate: Those sharing their talents outside our church walls.

Let's Write the Next Chapter Together

I am deeply committed to the future of this church, and I want you to feel part of that future, too. If you have ever wondered how to get involved or have an idea you've been nursing, my door is always open. Whether you have five minutes or five hours to give, your unique talents are what will define our next 175 years.

I welcome the opportunity to talk with you. Let's find the right spot for you to shine.

With gratitude,

Signa Meyers

DIFFERENT WAYS TO GIVE TO CUCCNM

1. Cash or check in the offering plate or by mailing it to the church.

2. Have your bank send an electronic check. (Bill Pay)

3. Use our QR Code that is linked to our website. Your giving will be taken through Pay Pal were you will use your credit card. *This option charges a fee to the church.*

If you have any questions, please contact Melanie in the church office. office@cuccnm.org or 920-725-4873

Church Information
1511 Nicolet Blvd.
Neenah Wi 54956
920-725-4873

Website: www.cuccnm.org

Pastor
pastor@cuccnm.org

Church Office
office@cuccnm.org

Christian Education Director
ce@cuccnm.org

Wider Church Contacts:

www.ucc.org
(United Church of Christ)

www.wcucc.org
Wisconsin Conference

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

Upon receiving the schedule, please review it to ensure you are available when scheduled. If you are unavailable, please use the contact information to find a replacement for yourself. Please notify the church office **office@cuccnm.org** with the schedule change. Thanks to all for your continued support and service as volunteers! **If you would like to be added to the schedule please contact the church office. We are always looking for substitutes !**

Task	3-1-2026	3-8-2026	3-15-2026	3-22-2026	3-29-2026
Liturgist	Debi Brandenburg	Jody Hoppe	Brandon Moscho	Sue Knuth	Sherri Jischke
Head Usher	Mary Janness	Sue Dollhopf	Connie Regazzi	Sherri Jischke	John La Prairie
Usher 4	Leon Flesburg	Laura Kleist	Gary Joosten	Mark Brandenburg	Arthya Puguh
Usher 2	Connie Regazzi	Mary Liesch	Darrell Parsons	Laura Kleist	Leon Flesburg
Usher 3	Signa Meyers	Wendy Remmel	Signa Meyers	Alan Gear	Sue Knuth
Refreshments	Terri Flesburg	Laurie Kleist	Ginny Stutzman	Signa Meyers	Gay Dickson
Acolyte	Cassie S.	Dylan L	Carl N	Seba S.	Olivia C.
Singing Bowl	Sophie R.	Garrett L	Colin s	Callie P.	Noah C.
Reader	Evie J.	Olivia C.	Colin S	Dylan L	Leah C.
Music	Chloe R.	n/a			
Communion Shepherd	Sophie & Evie				
Communion	Sherri Jischke				



<u>YOU</u> CAN HELP SERVE!

The Ministry of Spiritual Life would like to continue to offer a time for fellowship and snacks after worship each Sunday, but needs your help. We are asking those with surnames starting with "s " to bring in 1 dozen cookies, bars (need not be home-made) or a gallon of juice sometime during the month you are assigned. Label the item "Fellowship" and take to the kitchen freezer/or bring them to the lounge .Your contribution is much appreciated! Watch for your turn to share as your "letter" comes up! Questions contact Terri Flesburg .Here is the schedule:

March: S, **April:** T-V, **May**: W-Z





SUNDAY SCHOOL DURING MARCH

Regular Schedule
3K–8th grade: 10:30–11:15am
9th–12th grade: 11:30am–12:15pm

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL ON MARCH 29TH

Where Kids Start:
3K–8th grade: Begin in worship with parents; leave with teachers after *The Way* (children's message).
3K–5th grade: Must be picked up by a guardian in Rooms 4 or 6.
6th–8th grade: Excused to the lounge after class.
1st Sunday: What's the Scoop?
One-room Sunday School for **3K–12th grade** in Fellowship Hall.
Youth return to worship for Communion.

Classroom Breakdown (during worship unless noted)
3K–2nd grade: Room 4, taught by high school youth
3rd–5th grade: Room 6, taught by rotating adults
6th–8th grade: Room 7, taught by two adults
9th–12th grade: Room 7, taught by Pastor Rob **after worship on the 3rd Sunday**
Registration Email Alanna at ce@cuccnm.org.

MISSION TRIP– COLORADO SPRINGS, CO



Our High School youth will be traveling to Colorado Springs **June 13–21, 2026!** You can support their journey through direct donations or by joining their upcoming fundraisers. If you know a high school student interested in attending, please contact Alanna at ce@cuccnm.org.

Fundraisers for the Faith Development Fund:

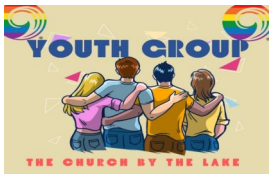


Tuesday, April 14 • Culver's in Neenah • 5–8pm 15% of all profits–including gift card sales–will support Camp Scholarships. All tips go directly to the fund as well.



Saturday, April 18 • Parents Night Out • 6–9pm Bring your kids (ages 3 years–5th grade) to church for an evening of fun while our teens provide childcare. A free will donation will be accepted. Invite your friends!

Youth Group



- **When:** Friday, March 6, 6:00–9:00pm
- **Who:** 6th–8th grade and 9th–12th grade youth

What: Plan and create the Good Friday Worship Service together. The group will choose the format and work as a team to make it meaningful and fun.

Good Friday Worship: Friday, April 3

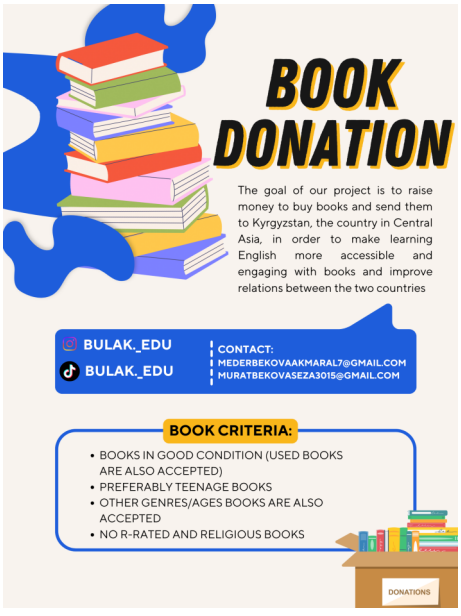


Hey Campers of ALL ages!

Whether you're a long time camper or brand new, Daycholah, Moon Beach, and Cedar Valley have something for everyone. Camp registration is now open and You can find the full camp schedule and register online at **www.ucci.org**. Your kids have also received a personalized family calendar highlighting the camps that best fit your family's schedule.

Camps are available for ages **4 to 104**, plus there are a variety of family camp options. **Scholarships are available for all campers.** Once your camper is registered, please email a copy of the registration to Alanna so the scholarship process can begin. Email: **ce@cuccnm.org**

If you have questions about camp or need help deciding which session is the best fit for you or your child, feel free to call or email Alanna.



Camp AweSum

CAMP AWESUM!

Camp AweSum is open to all 14 and older. They will experience a week of great fun at Moon Beach as they assist families with children of the Autism Spectrum. Diana Hintz will be chaperoning a group August 2nd-8th, please contact Alanna if you are interested in going at ce@cuccnm.org. If these dates do not work for you and would like to attend a different week, let me know, perhaps we can plan 2 weeks to volunteer at this AweSum camp!

Life of the Church Youth Opportunities

Acolyte Sign Up (3rd grade & up): https://signup.com/go/BmsHdox

Singing Bowl Sign Up (any age): https://signup.com/go/ouBnEQZ

Read in church (4th grade & up): https://signup.com/go/MerrYVS

Communion Shepard (any age): https://signup.com/go/bwYDRnu

Musical Talent (any age): https://signup.com/go/eNLSCBZ



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 **10:15 am** **Worship:** What's the Scoop	**2**	**3** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study	**4** **5:15 pm** Adult Choir **6:00 pm** **Lenten** Soup Supper **6:30 pm** Conversation : Unlikely Lent	**5** **6:30pm** Ministry Council	**6** **6-9 :00pm** Youth Group	**7** **6:00pm** AA Meeting
8 **10:15 am** Worship S.S. 3K- 8th **11:30am-12:15pm**	**9**	**10** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study	**11** **5:15 pm** Adult Choir **6:00 pm** **Lenten** Soup Supper **6:30 pm** Conversation : Unlikely Lent	**12**	**13**	**14** **12:00-3:00pm** Appreciative Inquiry **6:00pm** AA Meeting
15 **10:15 am** **Worship:** S.S. 3K- 8th **11:30am-12:15pm**	**16**	**17** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study	**18** **5:15 pm** Adult Choir **6:00 pm** **Lenten** Soup Supper **6:30 pm** Conversation : Unlikely Lent	**19** **12:00pm** Bags to Benches	**20** **1:00 pm** Needlers **6:30 pm** Fun With Friends Karaoke w/ Darrell	**21** **6:00pm** AA Meeting
22 **10:15 am** Worship S.S. 3K- 8th **11:30am-12:15pm**	**23**	**24** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study 6:30 pm Min of Stewardship & Faith Development	**25** **5:15 pm** Adult Choir **6:00 pm** **Lenten** Soup Supper **6:30 pm** Conversation : Unlikely Lent	**26**	**27**	**28** **6:00pm** AA Meeting
29 **10:15 am** Worship **No Sunday School**	**30**	**31** **8:30 am** Discussion Group **11:00 am** Bible Study				



DISCUSSION GROUP
Tuesdays at 8:30-9:30 am
We meet at Four Seasons Restaurant in Neenah for breakfast and lively discussion about current events and faith trends
1104 South Commercial Street, Neenah
Everyone is Welcome!

NEEDLERS



Share Fellowship and do Needlework
All who like to do (or learn to do) any type of needlework.

Needlers meet the 3rd Friday of the month.
March 20th at 1:00pm

LIVE

Sunday Worship is in person.
Services will be broadcast **live on FB** every Sunday morning and later put on our website.

Click below to find our FB page
https://facebook.com/CongregationalUCCNeenahMenasha/
It will be posted on the church website later in the day.



Do you have Anniversary or birthday cards laying around?
Dar Schuff who sends out our monthly birthday and anniversary cards is in need of more greeting cards. Please bring them to church office. Thank you!

BAGS FOR BENCHES
3rd Thursday of month
March 19th
12:00-2:00 PM



Want to be a part of our recycling program and have fun at the same time? Come and fellowship while we sort plastic bags for our next bench. Questions contact Alanna at ce@cuccnm.org





Ministry Council

Moderator:
Signa Meyers

Vice Moderator:
Sue Knuth

Secretary:
Chris Parson

Ministry of Faith Development
Becky Nichols

Ministry of Service:
Mary Janness

Ministry of Spiritual Life
Terri Flesburg

Ministry of Stewardship
Jeff Nichols

At Large:
Connie Regazzi
Sherri Jischke
Chuck Luebke

Church Historian:
Mowry Smith

Communication Coordinator
Marilyn Kostrzak

Time and Talent Coordinator:

Personnel Committee
Dan Jischke

Pastoral Relations Committee
Kerry Fox, Patty Hoehne, Bob Nault

Rev. Rob Van Ess Pastor,
pastor@cuccnm.org
Melanie Nault, Admin. Assistant,
office@cuccnm.org
Alanna Smith, Christian Ed. Dir.,
ce@cuccnm.org

Congregational United Church of Christ
of Neenah / Menasha
1511 Nicolet Blvd.
Neenah, Wi 54956
920-725-4873
www.cuccnm.org
office@cuccnm.org



MARCH 4TH,11TH,18TH & 25TH

Lenten Dinner & Conversation

MARCH 6TH

Youth Group

MARCH 14TH

Appreciative Inquiry 12:00- 3

MARCH 19TH

Bags to Benches

MARCH 29TH

No Sunday School

More information inside