



**COMMUNITY CHURCH OF WALKER  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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***"No matter who you are, or where you are, you are welcome here!"***

***"Recognize Greatness"***

**Third Sunday After Epiphany – Year A**

**January 22, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.**

**Worship Leaders:**

**Pastor Michael Small**

**Liturgist: Chris Kolp**

**Greeter: Steve Bilben**

**Musician: Leisa Bragg**

**Music Coordinator: Joanna Aamodt**

**Tech:** Gary Jacobson, Aurora Diehl (Video), Esther Covert (Audio)  
Spiritual Life, Chancel and Communion Preparation

**PRELUDE**

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**HYMN**                    **"Dear God, Embracing Humankind"** (vs. 1 and 2)                    #502

**CALL TO WORSHIP (inspired by Psalm 27:1, 4-9)**

One: Our ever-present God dwells in the sanctuary and in homes, in public spaces and our interior lives.

**All: Behold the greatness of the Holy One in the expansiveness of these sacred spaces.**

One: We seek God's face on Sunday mornings and evenings...and throughout the week.

**All: Live in the presence of the Holy One all the days of our lives.**

One: We call out for God's grace, strength, and guidance.

**All: Seek the face of the Holy One. Recognize God's greatness.**

**A TIME OF CENTERING**

*(During this time of centering, open your hearts to God; be in the present, here and now.)*

**PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

One: Great God, we acknowledge your presence among us and the ways you connect us as a community. Make us receptive to your voice and instruments of your love in the world. Thrill us with your majesty and inspire us with your humility. We rejoice in this gathering as we bless your Holy Name in the assembly, gathered across time and space as your people. We seek you. We're grateful to find you. Amen.

## **PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE**

**All: Sovereign God, how often do we turn toward ourselves or others for validation, salvation, and deliverance rather than seek your wisdom, will, and way? How often have we sought our own measure of greatness apart from the realm of your kingdom? How long have you waited for us to seek you? Forgive us, O God, and call us back to your presence, plan, and purpose.**

## **WORDS OF GRACE**

One: The One who creates us in the divine image knows how tempted we may be to consider ourselves more highly than we ought or more lowly than we should. The One who knows us continually reaches toward us with the promise of grace and the hope of mercy, faithfulness, and love. Receive God's forgiveness and restorative embrace.

**PASSING THE PEACE** (*You may nod to your neighbors and say, "The Peace of Christ be with you" – Response "And also with you."*)

## **SPECIAL MUSIC**

Leisa Bragg

**SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 9:1-4, Matthew 4:12-23**

**Isaiah 9:1-4**

<sup>1</sup> "But there will be no more gloom  
for the land that was in anguish!  
In the past God humbled  
the land of Zebulun, the land of Naphtali;<sup>1</sup>  
but in the future God will bring glory  
to this Road to the Sea,  
this Land beyond the Jordan,  
this Galilee of the Nations.

<sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness  
are seeing a brilliant light—

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<sup>1</sup> Galilee, or ha-Galil ("the circle"), as it was known, was an international crossroads. Surrounded by Gentile nations, it was home to several Israelite tribes, including Naphtali to the north (next to the Sea of Galilee, on the northwest side), and Zebulun to the south (further west, near the Mediterranean); together they comprise Upper and Lower Galilee. The great caravans of the world passed through Galilee. The Road to the Sea led from Damascus through Galilee down to Egypt and to Africa; the Road to the East led through Galilee as well. *Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible* (p. 721). Sheed & Ward. Kindle Edition.

upon those who dwell in a land of deep shadows  
light is shining!  
3 God, you have made the nation greater—  
you have brought them abundant joy!  
They celebrate in your presence  
as with the harvest celebrations,  
or as warriors celebrate when dividing spoils.  
4 For the yoke that burdened them,  
the weight on their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressors—  
you have shattered it,  
as you did at the defeat of Midian.

### **Matthew 4:12-23**

<sup>12</sup> When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he went back to Galilee. <sup>13</sup> He left Nazareth and settled in Capernaum, a lakeside town near the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. <sup>14</sup> In this way the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled:

<sup>15</sup> “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
the way to the sea on the far side of the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles:  
<sup>16</sup> the people who lived in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of the shadow of death  
a light has dawned.”

<sup>17</sup> From that time on, Jesus began proclaiming the message, “Change your hearts and minds, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

<sup>18</sup> As Jesus was walking along the Sea of Galilee, he watched two brothers—Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew—casting a net into the sea. They fished by trade. <sup>19</sup> Jesus said to them, “Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of humankind.” <sup>20</sup> They immediately abandoned their nets and began to follow Jesus.

<sup>21</sup> Jesus walked along further and caught sight of a second pair of brothers—James and John, ben-Zebedee. They too were in their boat, mending their nets with their father. Jesus called them, <sup>22</sup> and immediately they abandoned both boat and father to follow him.

<sup>23</sup> Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom of heaven and healing all kinds of diseases and sicknesses among the people.

### **REFLECTION**

### **“Called as Partners”**

### **HYMN**

**“Called as Partners in Christ’s Service”** (vss. 1, 2, 3)

#495

### **PRAYERS FOR THE PEOPLE**

**THE LORD’S PRAYER** (Unison, using debts)

**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.**

## **INVITATION TO GENEROSITY**

One: When Jesus calls his disciples, he promises to transform the gifts they already possess to be used for the glory and kingdom of God. Let us offer our resources in following Jesus.

## **SPECIAL MUSIC**

Leisa Bragg

## **PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING**

**All: Great God, receive our gifts of ourselves and our resources for the benefit and building of the kingdom. Amen.**

## **HYMN**

**"Jesus Calls Us, O'er the Tumult"** (verses 1, 2, and 3)

#172

## **PARTING WORDS**

One: Recognize the greatness within and around you. Follow Jesus out into the world to spread the radiance of Christ, to proclaim the good news, and to be instruments of healing and wholeness. Amen.

## **POSTLUDE**

***Recognize Greatness: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday after Epiphany*** was written by The Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ.



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**Due to Covid-19 It is recommended that:  
We wear masks.  
Keep distance from one another.  
*If you are feeling unwell, please stay at home!***

**Please join us for fellowship following the service in the Fellowship Hall.**