



# THE GOOD NEWS!



## Community Church of Walker United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 267  
Hwy 371 & Tianna Drive  
Walker, MN 56484

(218) 547-1093

[commchurchucc@arvig.net](mailto:commchurchucc@arvig.net)

[www.uccwalker.com](http://www.uccwalker.com)

### Our Mission

To offer a welcoming church home to all, where friendships grow, spiritual needs are met, community concerns are addressed and where

**"God is Still Speaking..."**

## MARCH 2023



**In-person worship is on Sundays at 10:00am.**

Contact Pastor Michael at 218-280-1401 or email [mjsmall.ucc@gmail.com](mailto:mjsmall.ucc@gmail.com) if you have questions or suggestions.

# FROM PASTOR MICHAEL



## A New Thing!

As I write this it is still below zero on Ash Wednesday with the anticipation of snow this evening and colder temperatures in the days to come that will soon pass. Friends, it is still winter as we anticipate the coming of spring, warmer temperatures, buds breaking forth, life emerging – a sort of yearly resurrection.

On Ash Wednesday we were marked with ashes as we received the words – “Remember that you are God’s beloved dust, and to God’s beloved dust you shall return.” Stardust, the same dust from which the whole cosmos is created from . . . and returns to. Some of the brighter stars we see on a clear night, are brightest because they are dying, their life cycle is ending, to dust it all, all shall return.

In recent months, at Community Church of Walker UCC, we have been starkly reminded of the fragility of life with the sudden death of good friends. We have been reminded of our own mortality. Life is a gift, a miracle filled with blessing, wonder, joy, sorrow, grief. From the moment of birth our days are numbered. At best, in all circumstances, it is the hope that we will live life and live it abundantly, fully, with abandon.

As I look out the window, I see snow and trees that are stripped of leaves. They appear to be lifeless, but they will slowly come to life again. They remind us death is not the end. There is more to come. And predictably and thankfully, we are not in control of the life cycle . . . we are here to enjoy the ride.

In recent days, I have been deeply pondering the life of “Church”. Recently attendance at our worship services has been slim. (And friends, we are not alone) I know that “where two are three are gathered . . .” Christ will be present. Worship is good, vibrant . . . but it feels too small. So, I wonder about the weeks, months, and years to come? Will we thrive? Will we survive? Then I think to myself, in a sense CCOWUCC has always been a living thing, Over 125 years ago this congregation was born and has lived these many years. Are institutions immune to life cycle’s – no. Do we age – yes! In ten, fifteen, twenty-five years . . . and on will we be a vibrant presence in the Walker community? Optimistically, I say yes – for the Spirit and Presence of the Holy is with us. Will we be the same as we are today – no. So what then?

Many years ago Ed Lindeman, President of Whitworth College, introduced me to the phrase “We must be intentional about the future – yet not completely tethered to a specific outcome!” Plan, work, dream, risk, try, fail, succeed . . . be intentional about the future – and always trust that God is in the mix and God will lead you to surprise! Have faith!

I invite you to read the words of Mary Kay DuChene who writes for LeaderWise. Her article is entitled “What if . . . ?” In part it reads,

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I heard the trope a lot: “If only the young people would come back to church, and other variations on the theme.” What I wanted to ask him was, ***“What if God has the church right where God wants it to be? What then?” Since that time, I’ve had the opportunity to ask that question many times. Sometimes, it stops people in their tracks.***

***Consider the core theological belief of death and resurrection. Death is part of life, and out of death comes new life.*** The Prophet Isaiah (among others) reminds us that God does new things through death—and through us. When we dig our heels in, refusing to follow where God is leading . . . well, God just keeps moving on, doing whatever new thing God is doing. We eventually die, like the generation in the wilderness, or we get on board to whatever the new thing is that God is doing.

***But what new thing IS God doing? We don’t know, and that not knowing is hard. But we know a couple things we can hang onto like a life-line: God wants us to love God with all our hearts, souls, and minds, and love our neighbors (definition: ALL people) as ourselves. What if, at your next board meeting or fellowship time after worship, you looked at your fellow faithful and asked these questions:***

- What if God has our church right where God wants it to be? What, then, would we do? How, then, would we lead our church and ourselves?
- ***What new thing might God be leading us to, if we simply rest on the deep belief that God wants us to lead lives of faith that express our deep love for the Divine, and also to love our neighbors as ourselves.*** (As a matter of fact, Jesus said what you do to the other you also do to him. In other words, loving your neighbor as yourself IS loving God with all you have and all you are.)



*Photo by Noah Buscher on Unsplash*

***In this American society, when success seems measured by continual growth and improvement, it’s hard to see decline around us and label it as anything but failure. But what if what’s happening isn’t actually decline or failure? What if it’s the catalyst to birth something new that only God can imagine? What if it’s reformation? What if it’s necessary for resurrection? Those are deeply spiritual and theological commitments, and leaning into them might just be an act of loving God with your whole being. It certainly requires trusting God deeply. And that is a faithful response too.***

I too ask myself, ask you – “What if God has CCOWUCC exactly where God want’s us to be . . . , become?” With courage and vision may we ponder what it is that God is calling us to do. . . A New Thing!

In Christ, Pastor Michael

## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

The March meeting will take place on March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm over Zoom.



## Apostle John, by C. F. H.

There lies a little lonely isle  
Where dark the salt waves run,  
And Grecian fishers dry their nets  
Against the eastern sun :

And many a hundred years ago,  
Within that island fair There dwelt an  
exiled Jewish man,  
A man of reverend air ;

His eye was bright as setting suns,  
His aged form unbent ;  
The little children following,  
He blest them as he went.

That head, beloved , at supper time  
Had leant on Jesus ' breast ;  
That honoured hand had taken home  
His Mother for a guest ;

That eye had seen in glorious trance,  
Mysterious things to be,  
Wild visions of impending doom  
On heaven and earth and sea ;

His pen had writ of times to come,  
Of dearer times bygone ;  
He was the fisher's chosen son,  
The Lord's beloved Saint John.

And he had drunk his Master's cup So  
long, so patiently,  
And now he lingered the last,  
Till Christ should set him free.

I wish I'd lived in those old times,  
And been a Grecian child,  
To hear that old man's blessing kind,  
To meet him when he smiled,

To learn the words of holy love  
That ever from his lips  
Fell, gentle as the evening dew  
The thirsty blossom sips.

But love endureth through all age ;  
Nor time, nor distance drear,  
Divide the living and the dead,  
Of Christ's communion dear.

For all His saints in Him are one ;  
The exile o'er the sea,  
The child within his English home,  
The struggling and the free.

The good Saint John hath rest at last ;  
He wears the promised crown ;  
And still by the dear church he watched,  
His words are handed down ;

And we shall meet him, not as once  
On that far island shore,  
But where apostles, martyrs, saints,  
Have peace for evermore.



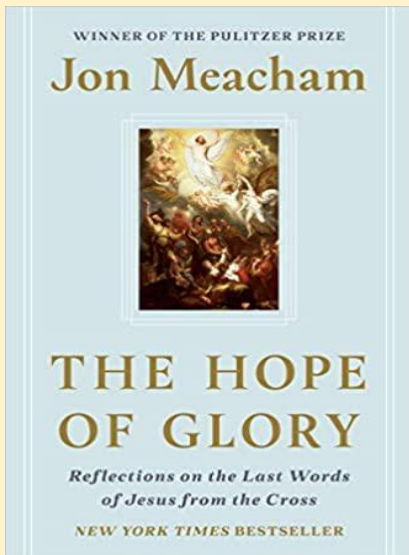
## Recycled Cards

Cards for all occasions are  
for sale in the Fellowship Hall.



## Book Conversation

On Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm via zoom we will complete our read of “*Speak to the Earth and It Will Teach You*” as we read the section on “Clouds”.



On Wednesday March 8<sup>th</sup> – March 22<sup>nd</sup> ***All are invited (including those who have read the book and those who have not)*** to have a bowl of **SOUP** and then a Lenten Book Conversation on renowned historian Jon Meacham's book ***“The Hope of Glory – Reflections on the Last Words of Jesus from the Cross”***.

It is written – *For Jon Meacham, as for believers worldwide, the events of Good Friday and Easter reveal essential truths about Christianity. A former vestryman of Trinity Church Wall Street and St. Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, Meacham delves into that intersection of faith and history in this meditation on the seven phrases Jesus spoke from the cross.*

*Beginning with “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” and ending with “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” Meacham captures for the reader how these words epitomize Jesus’s message of love, not hate; grace, not rage; and, rather than vengeance, extraordinary mercy. For each saying, Meacham composes an essay on the origins of Christianity and how Jesus’s final words created a foundation for oral and written traditions that upended the very order of the world.*

*Writing in a tone more intimate than any of his previous works, Jon Meacham returns us to the moment that transformed Jesus from a historical figure into the proclaimed Son of God, worshiped by billions.*

The format of the conversations will be ***In-Person and Zoom at the church***. The gathering will begin with soup (you may choose to bring a sandwich) at 6:00 pm. Conversation about the book will begin about 6:45 and will end around 8:00 pm.

“The Hope of Glory: Reflections on the Last Words of Jesus from the Cross” may be purchased through Amazon as a Kindle or hardback.

You may participate in the conversation via a Zoom Meeting. The link is below <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86520761843?pwd=QmROV0xCdW8zSndDQTNDc3hVWUHMdz09>

Meeting ID: 865 2076 1843, Passcode: 529351.



## **The Women's Fellowship Report**

As we look enter the month of March, we are midway through Lent, looking forward to Easter, and a fresh renewal of our close relationship with God.

We may also hope for an early Spring but this is Minnesota so you never can be sure!

### **Upcoming events for March**

#### **Joint Quilts Of Love Meeting**

Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM

Fellowship Hall. All welcome to join us.

#### **Quilt Frames Removed**

Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM

STS Crew to assist.

#### **Celebration of Life Set-Up**

Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 AM

Fellowship Hall. STS Crew to assist.

#### **Celebration of Life Service**

Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 PM

Fellowship to follow. Serving Team should be on site by 1:00 PM. Help is appreciated.

#### **NOTE CHANGE OF DATE: Women's Fellowship**

Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1:00 PM

Important future plans to be discussed. Please join us if possible and bring friends.

As March wraps up, please share God's Love for Creation, children/adults of all beliefs, and constant support. Just wear something green and say a prayer. You are loved!

The Women's Fellowship Team

## MARCH DATES TO CELEBRATE

### *Birthdays*

- 13 Bonnie Bailey
- 16 Jerry Bixley
- 17 Daniel Paul
- 24 Betty Fisher



## WORSHIP MINISTRY — MARCH

### GREETERS

To be determined

### LITURGISTS

- 5 Bev Jorland
- 12 Deb Farrell
- 19 Chris Kolp
- 26 Gay Jacobson

### AUDIO

Esther Covert

### VIDEO

Aurora Diehl

### MUSIC

Leisa Bragg



### CHOIR DIRECTOR

Joanna Aamodt

### ALTER & COMMUNION PREPARATION

Earl & Ruth Niederman

# THE GOOD NEWS!

is a monthly newsletter publication of the  
**Community Church of Walker United Church of Christ**  
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**Website:** [www.uccwalker.com](http://www.uccwalker.com)

## **Pastor Michael Small**

**Mailing address:** P.O. Box 38, Hackensack, MN 56452

**Phone:** (218) 280-1401 **Email:** [mjsmall.ucc@gmail.com](mailto:mjsmall.ucc@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

**Hours:** 9:00am-2:00pm Tuesday & Thursday

**Email:** [commchurchucc@arvig.net](mailto:commchurchucc@arvig.net)

**Phone:** 218-547-1093 (leave a message)

**Church Moderator:** Gay Jacobson

**Vice-Moderator:** Bonnie Bailey

**Clerk:** Esther Covert

**Treasurer:** Deb Farrell

**Financial Secretary:** Joanne Detwiler

**Historian:** Sue Standeven

**Board of Trustees Chair:** TBA

**Board of Benevolence Chair:** Doris Johnson

**Board of Christian Education Chair:** TBA

**Board of Memorials Chair:** Wendy Paul

**Board of Music Chair:** Linda Barber

**Board of Spiritual Life Chair:** Ruth Niedermann

**Women's Fellowship President:** Jo Horak

**Minister/Church Relations Board Members:**

Deb Farrell, Bev Jorland, Doris Johnson, Bonnie Bailey

**Choir Director:** Joanna Aamodt

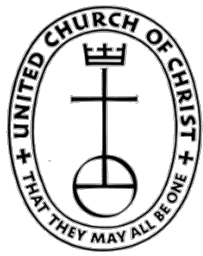
**Custodian:** TBA

**Articles for the April 2023 edition of The Good News! newsletter  
need to be emailed by 11:00 AM Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023**



# MARCH

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	1 WEDNESDAY <i>First Day of Women's History Month</i> 7:00pm Book Conversation on Zoom	2 THURSDAY	3 FRIDAY	4 SATURDAY
<b>5</b> 10:00am Worship Service Fellowship Time after the service	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 11:00am Deadline for Adding to Council Agenda 6:00pm Soup Dinner and Book Conversation In-person and on Zoom	<b>9</b> 9:00am Quilts of Love	<b>10</b> 9:00am Quilt Frame Removal	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> <i>Daylight Saving Time Starts</i> 10:00am Worship Service Fellowship Time after the service	<b>13</b> 6:30-8:30pm St. Mark's Worship Service	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 6:00pm Soup Dinner and Book Conversation In-person and on Zoom	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> St. Patrick's Day 9:00am Celebration of Life Setup	<b>18</b> 2:00pm Celebration of Life Service
<b>19</b> 10:00am Worship Service Fellowship Time after the service	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 1:00pm Women's Fellowship 7:00pm Council Meeting on Zoom	<b>22</b> 6:00pm Soup Dinner and Book Conversation In-person and on Zoom	<b>23</b> 11:00am Newsletter Submission Deadline	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 10:00am Worship Service Fellowship Time after the service	<b>27</b> 6:30-8:30pm St. Mark's Worship Service	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	



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Return Service Requested

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