



**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!"***

***"Come Peaceably"***

**Fourth Sunday of Lent – Year A**

**March 19, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.**

**Worship Leaders:**

**Pastor Michael Small**

**Liturgist: Chris Kolp**

**Special Music: Grant Raddatz**

**Musician: Leisa Bragg**

**Music Coordinator: Joanna Aamodt**

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

**PRELUDE**

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**HYMN**

**"Amazing Grace"** (verses 1 and 3)

**#547**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Kindred of God, a new vision of leadership is called forth and God calls upon the least likely, the unheard of, and the humble of heart to assemble to receive anointing.

**All: In peace, we anoint the forgotten, the youngest, smallest, and unlikeliest of siblings whom God has raised up to serve.**

One: Though the call may involve risk and danger, we are called to listen, obey, and live a love unwavering.

**All: In peace, we anoint the disinherited and dismissed.**

One: God's call does not depend on our outward appearance or our earthly achievements.

**All: In peace, we anoint neighbor and kin alike, knowing God looks upon the heart.**

One: Let us open our hearts to God this day. Amen.

## **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: Anointed One, your love comes peaceably into our lives if we will but let it. We are so fixated on the gold standard, the familiar, and the safe choice that we often lose sight of what you are raising up right in our very midst. Enliven us with your Spirit this day so that we might get a glimpse of your peace. Take what we might imagine as too small for your kingdom and use it to open the world to your overflowing abundance and provision for all that you have created. In the name of Jesus the Christ we pray. Amen.

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

**All: God of surprises, we know that we do not often perceive the world as you do. We look to the flashy fame, the grand gestures, optimal achievements, and unreachable standards. Yet, in spite of our misguided reach towards perfection, you give us glimpses of your grandeur and grace. Surprise us yet again this day, O God, that in our complacency which allows us to drift towards the same old ways of faith that we may be transformed anew. Provide us with a new cup of oil that we may be anointed by your love so that we may set out into your world to bless and anoint others. In the name of the One whose love and peace make all things new we pray. Amen.**

## **WORDS OF GRACE**

One: Friends, receive the anointing of God's tender love and forgiveness this day. For God's care and compassion for you abides in your heart today and always.

**All: We rise and set out restored and renewed. Amen.**

**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**

"In the Garden"

Grant Raddatz

## **SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 16:1-13 in conversation with John 9:1-41**

<sup>1</sup> YHWH said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve for Saul since I rejected him as ruler of Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and be on your way. For I am sending you to Jesse in Bethlehem, for I have chosen my ruler from among his children."

<sup>2</sup> But Samuel replied, "How can I go? For if Saul learns about it, I will be murdered." YHWH replied, "Take a heifer with you: I am sending you to Jesse. Tell him that you came to offer a sacrifice to YHWH, <sup>3</sup> and invite Jesse to the sacrifice. Then I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me my selection."

<sup>4</sup> Samuel did what YHWH said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met Samuel. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"

<sup>5</sup> Samuel said, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to YHWH. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his children and invited them to the sacrifice.

<sup>6</sup> When they arrived, and Samuel saw Eliab, and said to himself, “Surely, God’s anointed stands here before YHWH.”

<sup>7</sup> But YHWH said to Samuel, “Pay no attention to appearance and height; I have rejected him. YHWH does not see as mortals see; mortals see only appearances, but YHWH sees into the heart.”

<sup>8</sup> Then Jesse called Abinadab to pass before Samuel, who said, “No. YHWH has not chosen this one.”

<sup>9</sup> Next came Shammah, but Samuel said, “Not this one either.”

<sup>10</sup> Seven sons were presented to Samuel by Jesse, who said, “YHWH has not chosen any of these.”

<sup>11</sup> Samuel asked, “Are these all the sons you have?” “There is still the youngest,” Jesse said, “but he is tending the sheep.” Samuel said, “Send for him; we will not begin the sacrificial banquet until the lad arrives.”

<sup>12</sup> So they sent for the boy, a ruddy youth with bright eyes, and handsome to behold. YHWH said, “Rise and anoint this one.”

<sup>13</sup> Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed the boy in the presence of his brothers, and from that day forward the Spirit of YHWH came upon David and was with him. Then Samuel set out on his way to Ramah.

## REFLECTION

### “Come In Peace”

## HYMN

“God of the Prophets” (verses 1, 2 and 3)

#358

## 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: It is not the outward appearance or size of the gifts we have to share that matters to God. It is the loving generosity of our hearts that is closest to the heart of God. We are invited to give this day out of the abundance of our lives, from our heart, knowing that no matter the size of the gift that God knows our hearts.

**All: We give this day from our hearts and may it be pleasing to God.**

## SPECIAL MUSIC

“Take My Life and Let It Be”

Leisa Bragg

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

**All: Generous God, you remind us that you “anoint our heads with oil” and that our “cup overflows” with your abundance. We do not take for granted all that you provide. Take these gifts and use them for the healing and tender care of your hurting world. May your cup of love overflow and abide with the hurting and heartbroken, forgotten and despised, so that we may all be made whole. Amen.**

## HYMN

**"God Is My Shepherd"** (verses 1 and 5)

#479

## PARTING WORDS

One: Kindred, set out from this place not to anoint power, prestige, and the outer appearances of grandiosity. Rather, set out from this place to anoint healing, renewal, and raise up those unexpected places and people that God has set apart for the transformation of the world. Open yourselves to the surprising and unexpected movements of the Holy Spirit, for around the corner of every assumption we carry and every community we live in, is a small shepherd among us waiting to lead with God’s help. Go forth in peace to lead, to love, and be renewed by God. Amen.

## POSTLUDE

***Come Peaceably: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday in Lent*** were written by Rev. Dr. Chad Abbott, Conference Minister for the Indiana Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ and resides in Indianapolis, Indiana.



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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.**