



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!”

CCOWUCC Update and News For The Week of: May 29, 2023

Members and Friends,



Photo Credit: Nina Strehl

WORD FOR THE DAY - FROM GRATEFUL.ORG

“In appreciating our neighbor, we’re participating in something truly sacred.” — Fred Rogers

DAILY QUESTION

Who is one of the kindest people I know? What can I learn from their kindness?

You may subscribe to the daily “Word for the Day” by going to <https://grateful.org>.

1. **Sunday, May 28th** Sue Grage led us in worship as we celebrated the birth of the church on Pentecost and remembered those who have gone before us. The service may be seen on www.uccwalker.com or by clicking the QR code.



2. **MAY IS FOOD SHELF MONTH** for the members and friends of CCOWUCC. The fourth Tuesday volunteers will work from 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm. Thanks for all the good work of those who volunteered during the month of May and thanks to Bev Jorland for coordinating these activities and representing CCOWUCC of the Board for the Walker Area Food Shelf.



3. **Pastor Michael continues to be in Athens, Georgia** with Sheila, his wife. Yesterday, at First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Watkinsville GA, members and friends of First Christian celebrated the ten profound years of Sheila’s ministry with them as they celebrated her retirement. Sheila and Michael will return to Minnesota on June 8th as they both attend a Anti-Racism/Diversity training at the College of St. Benedict in St. Michael.



4. **Surround and lift up in prayer** all those who are undergoing and anticipating cancer treatments – Kevin Wedel, Bob Horak, Ruby Haugen, Beth Alderson, Autumn (granddaughter of Bruce and Ruby Haugen). Also, those with on-going health concerns – Andrew, Marla Parks (sister of Linda Barber), Alison Koch, Duane Grage, Nancy Jacobson, Betty Fisher, Sue Standeven, Josh. Those who are healing from grief, especially the family of Jo Horak. Those who struggle. And may we always pray for love, forgiveness, and lift up life-giving prayers and actions.

5. **Today is Memorial Day!** Memorial Day is an American holiday, observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in the years following the Civil War and became an official federal holiday in 1971. Many Americans observe Memorial Day by visiting cemeteries or memorials, holding family gatherings and participating in parades. Unofficially, it marks the beginning of the summer season.



May we all pause on this day, in prayer and thanksgiving for those who have served and sacrificed. In addition, I would like to expand our thanks to all who have served in service to humanity. ***May it be a blessed Memorial Day!***

6. **The Strengthen the Church Offering is this Sunday, June 4th.** *The Strengthen the Church Offering* reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the Church. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations, and are split 50/50 between Minnesota and the denomination.



You are invited to give generously as we stand in covenant with the UCC.

7. **Walt Rehberg Preaching Sunday June 4th** The text from Matthew comes from the very end of the book. It has been called the Great Commission – it is the sending forth, the commissioning, the blessing of Christ to go forth into all the world with confidence – telling the good news.

8. **Sunday June 4th** Lectionary texts are:

• Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Psalm 8 • 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 • Matthew 28:16-20

9. **Sunday June 4th** the focus text comes from Matthew 28:16-20

¹⁶ The Eleven made their way to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had summoned them. ¹⁷ At the sight of the risen Christ they fell down in homage, though some doubted what they were seeing. ¹⁸ Jesus came forward and addressed them in these words:

¹⁹ “All authority has been given me both in heaven and on earth;
go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.
Baptize them in the name of Abba God,
and of the Only Begotten, and of the Holy Spirit.

²⁰ Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you.
And know that I am with you always, even until the end of the world!”

10. **Questions to ponder concerning the focus text for Sunday May 28th 2023:**

- How do you understand power?
- What power do you hold? What is the nature of your authority?
- When do you delegate your power and authority?
- How do you understand God's power to be at work in you and through you?
- How do you share your authority?

11. **Pastor Michael to attend the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ** gathering on June 9th and 10th at the College of Saint Benedict.

Those attending will ground ourselves in Psalm 24:1, an ancient arrangement of reverence, in opening worship and evening worship on Friday, June 9, offering praise and lament.



Rev. Brooks Berndt, PhD (Minister for Environmental Justice Education for Faithful Action Team, United Church of Christ, National Ministries) will lead the Bible study on Saturday morning, June 10. He brings his passion, knowledge, and aptitude to help us do a deep dive about what it means that the “Earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.”

In the closing worship on Saturday afternoon, we will break bread together, honor and remember our church communities that have closed and the pastors we have lost, commission our leaders, and prepare for what God is calling us to be. Rev. Nikki Darlene Frontz (chaplain at United Theological Seminary, Community and Spiritual Leader serving Solomon’s Porch in Minneapolis, US Air Force/Minnesota Air National Guard service member in the final stages of becoming a chaplain) will be our preacher.

Pastor Nathan Holst (faith formation minister, activist/organizer, and musician) and Conie Borchardt (music director, Edina Morningside Community Church UCC) will lead our music during the worship services and in the transition time during our plenary sessions.

12. **June 11th – All Members and Friends** are invited to a planning meeting for an **All-Church Rummage Sale (August 4-5)**. The Planning meeting will be led by Sue Grage and will follow worship on June 11th. All hands will make light work. If you don’t show up, you might become the chair of a committee.

13. **A Celebration of Life for Jo Horak will be Tuesday, June 13th at 1:00 pm.** Below you may read her obituary.

Joyce “Jo” Horak, Social Worker, Conservationist, Social Justice Advocate, Eastern Star Member and Community Volunteer Leader, dies at 77.

Joyce “Jo” Horak, a graduate of the University of Northern Iowa, Member of Easter Star, Alpha Xi Delta Sorority “Mom of the Year”, Literacy Champion, Conservation and Social Justice Advocate was an inspirational woman who dedicated her life to service.



While Jo was in the hospital, she had a beautiful Mother’s Day celebration with the entire family, including her joyful grandchildren, Elise and Carson, sharing stories, laughing, and reminiscing. She passed away peacefully with her family around her holding her hands on May 16, 2023. She was 77.

She looked so peaceful. The sunlight was streaming through the windows and her face looked luminous like an angel. She was brave and courageous to the end, not letting the ovarian cancer deter her from selflessly helping others.

Jo’s life was an example of a life well lived. Jo believed in living a full, productive life and making a difference to the very end. As a childhood polio survivor, her strength and inner resilience were honed early in life. Her wise doctor recommended a horse as the best physical therapy and she

and her horse were inseparable throughout her childhood. This piqued an interest in the popular cowboy stars, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans and fueled her lifelong passion of America's Wild West history and literature.

A spirit of adventure shared with husband, Robert led them to purchase the first of their two airplanes as newlyweds when he returned from serving in the Navy on the USS Walke DD-723. Robert piloted the sporty, red and white Piper Tri-Pacer, with Jo co-piloting, as they flew frequently to Texas and then continued flying to different states to explore the country, visiting numerous air shows, fly-ins and family and friends along the way, many to this day who recall flying in their plane and having a bird's eye view of the country. Jo also worked for the Federal Aviation Administration as an FAA Testing Administrator early in her career.

Jo's true calling and formal degree studies were a career as a social worker, where she focused on youth and restorative justice, helping them get back on a positive and productive path. She believed that if one person believed in child or youth, it could turn his or her whole life around. This was seen not only in Jo's technical knowledge, but in practical ways as well, networking to open up doors to give kids a chance at their first jobs and even driving them on the first day of their jobs with positive encouragement and coaching on the way.

A gifted, natural artist and designer, Jo found joy in creating beautiful home and garden environments. Her home was a welcome sanctuary, and her Christmas holiday decorating was the stuff of legend, with 12 separate themed Christmas trees, that awed family and friends and served to create joyful memories.

Her other great love was nature. In nature she found her solace and soul uplifted. As a long time volunteer at the Carpenter Nature Center in Hastings, MN she planted trees, educated visitors, participated in field trips. At her own home in Walker, the family of Pileated Woodpeckers were her day brightener.

Jo is preceded in death by her beloved parents, Lillian and Laddie, her in-laws, Lottie and Jerry

Those left behind to cherish the loving memory of Jo are her loving husband of nearly 58 years, Robert "Bob", daughters, Kari Oeltjen and Kristy (Robert) Meyer, grandchildren, Elise and Carson Meyer, Elise and Carson's godparents, Linda Will and David Roussopoulous, sister-in-law, Marilyn Blazek, niece, Teri (Rodney) Dostal, nephew, Marc Hlavac, great nephew and niece, Charles (Jacki) Dostal family, Susan (Randy) Mushman family, great nephew and niece, E.J. (Beth) Hlavac family and great nephew, Riley Hlavac; and gratitude for the blessing of amazing and supportive friends, who are truly more like family on the journey of life's adventures these many years. Plus, we are grateful for the added blessing of the friends of Jo's daughters, whose friendship, love and support have bolstered our spirits and brought more love and laughter into our lives.

The Celebration of Life will be held on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. at Community Church of Walker, United Church of Christ, Walker, Minnesota. Pastor Michael Small will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, it was Jo's wishes that a Memorial Tree be planted at the Carpenter Nature Center Arboretum in Hastings, MN as a living legacy. Robert and Jo choose to do this for each of their parents when they passed and enjoyed seeing the living legacy trees, now 40 feet tall, and their memorial plaques, when they walked their beloved and much spoiled beagle, Bailey, there overlooking the Mississippi River and watching the Bald Eagles soaring over the bluffs.

Carpenter Nature Center, 12805 St. Croix Trail S., Hastings, MN 55033 (Attn: Erika Jensen, Development Coordinator). Erika@carpenternaturecenter.org (651) 437-4359 ext. 101. On-line memorial tributes: carpenternaturecenter.org (Select "Donate to CNC" and then select "Tribute Gifts")

14. **Outdoor Clean-up** at the church of Friday June 16th beginning at 9:00 am. Bring spirit, sweat, and any tools you are comfortable with. Many hands make light work. Back-up date June 17th.
15. **Outdoor Gazebo Worship Service** to be held on Sunday, June 18th (weather permitting). Bring your chair, dress appropriately, and be prepared to worship, surrounded by pines, birds, and even deer.
16. **The First Outdoor Gazebo – June 18th** will **Bill and Julie Kaiser** - Bill and Julie have been performing together for over 20 years. Their creative blend of bluegrass, folk and original songs, accompanied by acoustic guitar, has come to be known as Folkgrass. The Kaisers and their unique sound will both be new to the Gazebo Concert series. Should be a fun, toe tapping evening. Bring chair and drink.
17. **Church Council will meet** on Tuesday, June 20th at 7:00 pm. This meeting will be in-person and virtual via zoom. Join Zoom Meeting - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87222500074?pwd=M0lmZmQ4VWkrRGgwQjhOMXVLVXJydz09> Meeting ID: 872 2250 0074, Passcode: 272892.
18. **Women's Fellowship meets at 1:00 pm, Tuesday, June 20th.**
19. **St. Mark's WELS meets at CCOWUCC** serving as a "Worship Station". They will continue to meet on the second and fourth Monday of each month between 6:30 – 8:30 pm.
20. **Newsletter Deadline** is June 22nd.
21. **Birthdays**
 - 6/4 Marilyn Vogt
Rev. Enno Limvere
 - 6/10 Sheila Hunter
 - 6/15 Matthew Artley
22. **Anniversaries**
23. **Information for bulletin** needs to be at the church by Tuesday morning commchurchucc@arvig.net.
24. **A Reminder!!!** – current bulletins, Churchly Happenings, and **Good News, Good News** - our monthly newsletter, and the **Weekly Update** may be found on the church website – www.uccwalker.com
25. Addresses – You are invited to be in touch.

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Democracy works best if we speak with one another. Whatever your opinion, I encourage each of you to be in contact with your representatives. Communicating is an on-going and two-way process of sharing gratitude and wisdom.

Below is listed state and national elected leadership for the Walker Area.

If you do not reside in the Walker area, go to <https://www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/> to obtain information on the elected state leadership for your location.

Senator Steve Green (R) (Dis.02)
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E-mail:
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Rep. Matt Bliss (R) District: 02B
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Senator Amy Klobuchar (DFL) MN
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Prayers and Blessings – Pastor Michael