



**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!”

“Investment”

**Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – Year A
November 19, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.**

Worship Leaders:

Pastor: Michael Small

Liturgist: Gay Jacobson

Special Music: Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

Greeter: Chris Kolp

Keyboard: Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

Music Coordinator: Leisa Bragg

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

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

HYMN

“Come, O Thankful People Come”

#422

CALL TO WORSHIP *(Inspired by Psalm 90)*

One: Holy One, you have been our God from generation to generation. Before the universe exploded and the earth was without form, you have been with us.

All: Creator, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

One: We enter your presence to worship and praise your holy name.

All: Mighty One, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

One: Teach us to count the days with joy and appreciation for all your marvelous works and steadfast love.

All: Everlasting God, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.

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: Generous God, you pour your Spirit into us. You bless us with your love. In your presence, there is fullness of joy, comfort for those in despair, and peace in the midst of chaos and confusion. You do not abandon us in time of need or of celebration. We turn toward you now seeking to receive your message, to give you honor, and to commune in your presence. Make yourself known among us, O God, make yourself known to us. Amen.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

All: Sovereign God, we confess that life is hard. We don't always make the best choices, and all too often we realize the options before us are lacking. We are overwhelmed with the enormity of the world's problems. Sometimes, we turn away completely. Sometimes, we respond with our tribal allegiances first in mind. Bitterness and resentment are easy guides. Help us seek wisdom and clarity, compassion and presence, hope and peace over shallow victories, material gain, and violence of the mind, body, or spirit. Bless us to be peacemakers, hope sharers, and love spreaders in the world for our neighbors and for your glory. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

(Each person can take this time to surrender to God privately anything weighing heavy on their heart.)

PRAYER FOR RESTORATION

One: Friends, God is merciful and journeys with us as we navigate uncertain terrain. God is still at work in us and through us that we might have flourishing and abundant lives in community with one another. Receive the grace God grants to begin anew when our journey stalls or diverts from the path of the kingdom. That grace is yours.

PASSING THE PEACE

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also, with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 25:14-30

¹⁴ "Again, it's like a wealthy landowner who was going on a journey and called in three workers, entrusting some funds to them. ¹⁵ The first was given five thousand dollars, the second two thousand, and the third one thousand, according to each one's ability. Then the landowner went away. ¹⁶ Immediately the worker who received the five thousand went and invested it and made another five. ¹⁷ In the same way, the worker who received the two thousand doubled that figure. ¹⁸ But the worker who received the one thousand instead went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried the money.

¹⁹ “After a long absence, the traveler returned home and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The one who had received the five thousand came forward bringing the additional five, saying, ‘You entrusted me with five thousand; here are five thousand more.’

²¹ “The landowner said, ‘Well done! You are a good and faithful worker. Since you were dependable in a small matter, I will put you in charge of larger affairs. Come, share my joy!’

²² “The one who had received the two thousand then stepped forward with the additional two, saying, ‘You entrusted me with two thousand; here are two thousand more.’

²³ “The landowner said to this one, ‘Cleverly done! You too are a good and faithful worker. Since you were dependable in a small matter, I will put you in charge of larger affairs. Come, share my joy!’

²⁴ “Finally the one who had received the one thousand stepped forward and said to the landowner, ‘Knowing your ruthlessness—you who reap where you did not sow and gather where you did not scatter—²⁵ and fearing your wrath, I went off and buried your thousand dollars in the ground. Here is your money back.’

²⁶ “The landowner exclaimed, ‘You worthless, lazy lout! So you know that I reap where I don’t sow and gather where I don’t scatter, do you? ²⁷ All the more reason to deposit my money with the bankers, so that on my return I could have had it back with interest! ²⁸ You, there! Take the thousand away from this bum and give it to the one with the ten thousand.’

²⁹ “ ‘Those who have will get more until they grow rich, while those who have not will lose even the little they have. ³⁰ Throw this worthless one outside into the darkness, where there is wailing and grinding of teeth.’

REFLECTION

“Invest Wisely”

HYMN

"Stars and Planets Flung in Orbit"

#567

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/PASTORAL PRAYER

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.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

One: God trusts us with the resources necessary for all of us to be well and to have our needs met. The Holy One honors us by inviting us to participate in God's reign with the generous sharing of gifts. Let us offer our time, talent, and treasure to the kingdom of God.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

All: Generous God, we bring the gifts of ourselves and our abundance. Magnify and multiply these offerings to meet the needs before us. Continue to cultivate the spirit of generosity among us and make us good stewards as we allocate the use of these gifts in your name. Amen.

HYMN

"For the Fruit of All Creation"

#425

PARTING WORDS

One: As you go on your journey...
Trust in God.
Use your talents.
Multiply the impact of your gifts.
Enter the Holy One's joy.

POSTLUDE



Investment: Service Prayers for the Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost were written by The Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ.

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