



**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!”

“Witnesses of These Things”
Third Sunday of Easter
April 14, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Worship Leaders:
Pastor: Michael Small
Liturgist: Deb Farrell
Special Music: Leisa Bragg
Greeter: Gay Jacobson
Keyboard: Leisa Bragg
Music Coordinator: Leisa Bragg

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

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

CHILDREN’S TIME

Deb Farrell

HYMN

“Alleluia! Gracious Jesus!”

#257

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Let us fill our hearts and minds with hope as we hear the Words of Jesus Christ.

All: “Peace be with you.”

One: When peace and justice seem uncertain, let us hear anew the Words of Jesus Christ.

All: “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?”

One: Let us be comforted by the presence of Christ, whose love, and light dwells within us.

All: Let our lives be witnesses of these things.

One: Help us to be instruments of Christ’s peace to all in need of God’s healing love.

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: Risen Christ, create in us a clean heart so that we can meditate in your peace; abide in your mercy; be filled with your justice; and be made new by your love. In your name, we pray. Amen.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

All: Loving God, in your infinite wisdom, we are glad that you make all things new. Where there is hate, show your love. Where there is war, bring your peace. Where there is despair, bring your hope. Where there is fear, bring your understanding. Where there is scarcity, bring your abundance. Where there is systemic oppression, bring equal justice for all. By your perfect grace and mercy, make us new. May it be so. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

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

WORDS OF GRACE

One: Loving God, thank you for the assurance of your grace. You grant us all your peace. Help us to trust in your peace, especially in times of conflict. Believing you will bring peace in our hearts, and to all the earth. Guiding us, so that all may come to know Jesus Christ, who is our Prince of Peace. In his name, we pray. Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also, with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Leisa Bragg

SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:36-53

³⁶ While they were still talking about this, Jesus actually stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you."

³⁷ In their panic and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ Jesus said to them, "Why are you disturbed? Why do such ideas cross your mind? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; it is I, really. Touch me and see—a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones as I do." ⁴⁰ After saying this, Jesus showed them the wounds.

⁴¹ They were still incredulous for sheer joy and wonder, so Jesus said to them, “Do you have anything here to eat?” ⁴² After being given a piece of cooked fish, ⁴³ the savior ate in their presence.

⁴⁴ Then Jesus said to them, “Remember the words I spoke when I was still with you: everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the psalms had to be fulfilled.”

⁴⁵ Then Jesus opened their minds to the understanding of the scriptures, ⁴⁶ saying, “That is why the scriptures say that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead on the third day. ⁴⁷ In the Messiah’s name, repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of all this.

⁴⁹ “Take note: I am sending forth what Abba God has promised to you. Remain here in the city until you are clothed with the power from on high.” ⁵⁰ Then Jesus took them to the outskirts of Bethany, and with upraised hands blessed the disciples.

⁵¹ While blessing them, the savior left them and was carried up to heaven. ⁵² The disciples worshiped the risen Christ and returned to Jerusalem full of joy. ⁵³ They were found in the Temple constantly, speaking the praises of God.

REFLECTION

“Let’s Eat”

HYMN

“God of Grace and God of Glory”

#436

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

Leisa Bragg

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

One: All are invited to give joyously to the church that bears witness to Christ’s love.

All: Let us give with a joyful heart.

One: God’s loving generous love has given us every good and gracious gift.

All: We offer our gratitude for God’s abundant blessings in our lives.

One: Now, let us be a blessing to others in the ways that God has faithfully and generously blessed us.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING

All: Let us remember that weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes early in the morning. May these gifts of blessing be a sign of the love, light, and glory of our redeeming God who has created a world of abundance with all that we need. May we remain thankful witnesses to your generosity, O God, as we dedicate these offerings to you and your beloved creation.

HYMN

"Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love"

#498

PARTING WORDS

One: Living God, we are witnesses to your love and light. Your peace is seen in the dawning of each new day. Your equal justice bears witness in the interconnected universe that you have created. Faithful God, help us to feel the warmth of your loving light in the cooler moments of life. As we leave this worship service, let us go back into the world renewed as instruments of your loving peace and justice for all. May it be so. Amen.

POSTLUDE

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Witnesses of These Things: Service Prayers for the Second Sunday of Easter was written by The Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey, Pastor of Union Congregational United Church of Christ.

