



**COMMUNITY CHURCH OF WALKER  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
P.O. Box 267, Walker, MN 56484 (218) 547-1093  
[www.uccwalker.com](http://www.uccwalker.com)    [commchurchucc@gmail.com](mailto:commchurchucc@gmail.com)

***“No matter who you are, or where you are, you are welcome here!”***

***“Hardness of Heart”***  
***World Communion Sunday***  
***Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost***  
**October 6, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.**

**Worship Leaders:**  
**Pastor: Michael Small**  
**Liturgist: Sonja Huber**  
**Special Music: Chancel Choir – Directed by Sue Grage**  
**Greeter:**  
**Keyboard: Leisa Bragg**

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

## **PRELUDE**

## **WORDS OF WELCOME**

**+HYMN**                    **“Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love”** (vss. 1, 4, 5)                    **#498**

## **CALL TO WORSHIP** *(Inspired by Psalm 26)*

One: The Holy One dwells within and beyond the congregation and makes a home among us.

**All: Prove us, and try us; Holy One, test our hearts and minds.**

One: The glory of the Sovereign One abides with us, illuminating our journey, energizing our gathering and warming our spirits.

**All: Prove us, and try us; Holy One, test our hearts and minds.**

One: Bless the Name of Names, the God of Truth, and the Giver of Life with songs of praise, prayers of hope, and moments of connection.

**All: Prove us, and try us; Holy One, test our hearts and minds.**

## **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: Majestic God, your realm encompasses the universe, the earth, and our community. All creation declares your glory. May we unite with our kin around the world in celebrating you and the connections we share. As we gather in your name, may we remember those we join in faith, hope, and worship on every continent representing every tradition. May we declare in spirit and in truth...one bread, one body...the church striving to one as you, Sustainer, Redeemer, and Spirit are one. Amen.

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

**All: Holy One, we come to this gathering, the table, and your presence mindful that this day particularly celebrates our human connectedness. The reality lies far from the idea and your vision of beloved community. You call us to remember the poor, the marginalized, the immigrant, the isolated and abandoned. You command us to love our neighbor and have blessed us to live in an era in which we may know our neighbors from across the world to amazing degrees. Yet, we cling to our echo chambers and isolationist tendencies. We place our desires and comforts over the good of the world. We demonize difference rather than dignify diversity. Forgive us and have mercy on us while propelling us to new life. Extend your grace to transform our attitude and actions and infuse us with openness, curiosity, and love.**

## **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

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

## **WORDS OF GRACE**

One: Beloved, God's grace and power reside in you in mutual support of a transformed life. As 1 Corinthians 10:13 assures, "No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and [God] will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing [God] will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it." Allow the testing to strengthen you, to build your endurance, and to do a new thing in you and through you for the glory of God.

## **+PASSING THE PEACE**

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also, with you.**

## **SPECIAL MUSIC**

**SCRIPTURE: Mark 10:1-16**

<sup>1</sup> Jesus left there and came to the districts of Judea and the other side of the Jordan. Once more the crowds gathered around and as usual Jesus began to teach them.

<sup>2</sup> Some Pharisees approached Jesus and, as a test, asked, "Is it permissible for husbands to divorce wives?"

<sup>3</sup> In reply Jesus asked, "What command did Moses give?"

<sup>4</sup> They answered, "Moses permitted a husband to write a decree of divorce and to put her away."

<sup>5</sup> But Jesus told them, "Moses wrote the commandment because of your hardness of heart. <sup>6</sup> From the beginning of creation,

'God made them male and female.

<sup>7</sup> This is why one person leaves home and cleaves to another,

<sup>8</sup> and the two become one flesh.'

They are no longer two, but one flesh. <sup>9</sup> What God has united, therefore, let no one divide."

<sup>10</sup> Back in the house again, the disciples questioned Jesus once more about this.

<sup>11</sup> He told them, "If a man divorces his wife and marries another, he commits adultery against her; <sup>12</sup> and if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery."

<sup>13</sup> People were bringing their children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples scolded them for this.

<sup>14</sup> When Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not stop them. It is to just such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. <sup>15</sup> The truth is, whoever doesn't welcome the kingdom of God as a little child won't enter it."

<sup>16</sup> And Jesus took the children in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

## **REFLECTION**

### **"Hardness of Heart"**

## **HYMN**

**"Be Not Dismayed"** (vss. 1, 2, 4)

#460

## **COMMUNION LITURGY**

### **WORDS OF INVITATION**

One: Faith communities around the Earth gather to observe World Communion Sunday. Some call it Holy Communion, others refer to it as the Great Thanksgiving (Eucharist) or Lord's Supper. Some place elements on an altar. In the Protestant tradition, we approach the Table. Every language and tongue, every tribe and nation, every continent and hemisphere represented as the Body of Christ accepts the invitation to unity around a meal prepared by the One who

entered a body, the human condition, and the brokenness of the world. Let us join together in the name of Jesus the Christ to commune as one.

One: God be with you.

**All: The Holy One is with us.**

One: May our hardened hearts be softened.

**All: We lift them up to the Holy One with thanksgiving and in hopeful expectation.**

### **WORDS OF THANKSGIVING**

One: Gracious God, you are holy, and you make us holy. We declare glory and honor due to your precious name. Like generations before us and the heavenly chorus beyond us, we cry, Holy, holy, holy, God of power and might. All realms are filled with your glory. Redeem us, restore us, renew us. Blessed by your Holy Name.

### **WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE**

One: We join in remembrance of your incarnation. Your humble beginnings affirm that the strength of God is perfected in weakness. The years of obscurity left unrecorded and unknown to us remind us that good things benefit from preparation and patience. The record of your baptism reminds us of our own baptism as we entered the waters of life and community with you. Recalling your ministry encourages us to engage in the work of healing, teaching, and presence. Revisiting your passion challenges us to expand our capacity to love generously, sacrificially, and relentlessly.

### **HYMN**

**"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"** (vss. 1, 2)

#345

### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

One: For it was the night of betrayal when Jesus enjoyed a meal with his community of faithful disciples. Imperfect people committed to follow his way encircled that table. The one who would deny him was at the table. The one who would betray him was at the table. Many who would flee in fear of the risk to their own lives sat at that table.

All were welcomed. All were known. All were loved. All were nourished as Jesus took the bread, gave thanks for it, and broke it. As Jesus offered the bread to the gathered, he declared, "This is my body. Take and eat in remembrance of me."

After supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and blessed it. As he offered the cup to the gathered, he declared, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood. Take and drink in remembrance of me."

Ministering in the name of Jesus, we offer bread and cup as we proclaim Christ lived, Christ died, Christ rose, and Christ lives again.

Receive the gifts of God for the people of God.

*(As the cup is served, drink when you are ready – though we are one in Christ we drink as we acknowledge our personal relationship with God/Christ/Spirit)*

## **WORDS OF PRAYER**

**All: Communal God, we give you thanks that as you shared in life and death, you lead us into the resurrected life. At this table, we acknowledge your abiding presence among us. You offered us bread and cup, which we receive in remembrance and expectation of your movement in human history. Form us as your faithful community and shape us as servants and stewards of your realm. By your Holy Spirit, may your covenant reign within our hearts and manifest in the witness of our lives now and forever. Amen.**

## **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**

### **INVITATION TO GENEROSITY**

One: When we consider the gifts of God, stewardship of our resources rises among them. The psalmist marveled, "What are humans that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet." The Sovereign God has given us responsibility and care of our sibling, creation. May we respond to the call to glorify God by the work of our hands, the allocation of our resources, and the generosity of our hearts.

## **MUSICAL INTERLUDE**

**DOXOLOGY:** *(as collection plates come forward)*

Tune #780

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit One. Amen.**

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING**

One: Holy One, we thank you for our abundance and the privilege to share in the flourishing of our community and the world. Bless these gifts and be glorified by our generosity and trust in your provision, sufficiency, and renewing power. Amen.

**+HYMN “You Servants of God, Your Sovereign Proclaim”** (vss. 1, 2, 4) #305

### **PARTING WORDS**

One: May the Holy One be an ever-present companion and partner as you encounter the tests of life. May your softened heart break over the pains, pangs, and problems of the world.

May the strength of the Spirit fill you, the power of the Spirit embolden you, and the leading of the Spirit guide you as co-creators of the kingdom of God...now and forever. Go in abundant hope, peace and love.

### **POSTLUDE**

“+” (for those who are able, please stand)

**WI-FI – “Guest” Scan QR Code for Internet Access**



***Hardness of Heart: Service Prayers for World Communion Sunday, the Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost Year B*** was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay who serves as Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

