



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

**CCOWUCC Update and News
By Michael Small**

For The Week of: November 25, 2024



By Any Other Name
By Liz Miller who serves as the Designated Pastor of Granby Congregational Church, UCC

Then the man said, “You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans and have prevailed.” - Genesis 32:28 (NRSV)

There are over a dozen instances in the Bible when someone receives a new name. The reasons are many: their faith transforms and a new name reflects this as when Saul becomes Paul, or a new name accompanies a leadership role like when Hoshea becomes Joshua. Sometimes new names mark a new season in life, as when Abram and Sarai became Abraham and Sarah. Sometimes it is God who bestows the new name, and sometimes it's a person who wishes they had God-like authority, like when Pharaoh renames Joseph to Zaphenath-paneah.

The one commonality these diverse name-change stories have is that none of them are followed up with questions from a well-meaning friend or onlooker. We don't get a single instance in scripture where someone introduces their new name and is met with, “Where did that come from?” or “Why'd you choose that name?” No one sighs, rolls their eyes, or says, “That's too hard to learn; do you mind if I still call you the old one?”

When someone shares something new about themselves, like a name change or a new identity, it is tempting to make it about ourselves instead of accepting the holy invitation to know them more fully. It is tempting to center our curiosity and questions instead of centering the strength it takes for that person to ask you to use the name they long to hear, the name that feels as right and sacred as if God herself bestowed it.

Prayer

Thanks be to God for the gift of names that fit us best, the names you've known us by all along.



Walker Area Food Shelf

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📦 PO Box 1101 - Walker MN 56484

November 13, 2024

Greetings from the Walker Area Food Shelf

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to those I haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting. My name is Kristine James and I'm the new Executive Director for the Walker Area Food Shelf.

In my four months here, I've seen that the Food Shelf is a beacon of hope for families facing food insecurity here in Walker and the surrounding areas. Over the past 30 years as a 501(c)3 our mission hasn't changed and remains simple:

To ensure that no one in our community goes without the nourishment they need.

We believe, as I'm sure you do too, that everyone deserves access to healthy, nutritious food regardless of their life situation. We work hard every day to make that a reality for our neighbors.

Meet Sarah (not her real name), a single mother of three who found herself in a tough spot when her job was eliminated earlier this year. Like many, she never expected to need help from a food shelf, but with bills piling up and grocery prices rising, she turned to the Walker Area Food Shelf. "I was embarrassed and nervous when I came to the Food Shelf, but the volunteers were so kind, and they made me feel comfortable. It meant the world to me," Sarah recalls.

Sarah's story is just one of many, demonstrating how your donations directly impact lives. Each month, we serve an average of 270 families and 930 individuals. Every contribution helps us provide essential support to people like Sarah, who find themselves facing unexpected challenges. Together, we can make a difference in people's lives here in our area.

The Food Shelf is proud to be a part of a community that looks out for one another...

...especially when times are tough. Please join us in providing hope and nourishment to our neighbors in need.


- ❖ **Christ the King (Reign of Christ) Sunday – November 24th** – Pilate asks, “What is truth?” The truth is the Jesus does not come from Pilate’s empire/kingdom, but from the kingdom of God that is grounded in love and justice for all. Hear wonderful music from Celebrate (Linda and Ken Barber, Chris Kolp). The worship service may be viewed on the church website www.walkerucc.com or by clicking on the QR Code.



- ❖ **Prayers from United Church of Christ:** – “Holy One: You embrace us with a love that will not let us go. We find our souls restless until we rest in you. Calm the winds of anxiety and fear that surrounds us. Help us to center our trust in You and not in the things of this world. We pray for peace and justice in this world. Move us from prayer to action. Move our hearts to embrace one another with love and compassion. Come Holy Spirit come and settle our troubled world and spirits. In the name of the Prince of Peace we do pray. Amen.” – Kent Siladi, Stamford, CT. [Learn more](#) about the People’s Prayers for Peace, [share a prayer](#) of your own, and [read other prayers](#).



First Sunday of Advent December 1, 2024
Give Generously to the “Christmas Fund” during the
Christmas Eve Service December 24th at 4:00 p.m.



“...the Glory of God
shone around them...
Luke 2:9”

Be the Light

Blessings

Among the many letters and notes the Pension Boards receives from recipients of gifts made possible by contributions to the Christmas Fund were these words:

As I have been blessed, I hope that this gift will be a blessing to the many faithful servants in the United Church of Christ - especially widows and clergy families - in perpetuity.


- Lydia Morrow
Annapolis, MD

Thanks to your generosity, last year the Christmas Fund provided over \$1.9 million in pension and health benefits, emergency grants, and thank-you checks to retired church servants and their families.

Every gift came from people like you. This year, please give what you can to continue supporting those who’ve devoted their lives to serving others.

This Christmas, celebrate the blessings in your life by making a gift to our ministers, church workers, and their families.

Visit christmasfund.org to learn more and donate online.



Donate Online Here!



“...THE
**GLORY OF
GOD** SHONE
AROUND THEM...”

LUKE 2:9

Donate to The Christmas Fund

Your care and compassion will make a tangible difference in the lives of our ministers, church workers, and their families in need.



Donate Online Here!



www.christmasfund.org



❖ December 1st Worship Information – First Sunday of Advent

- **Theme: For All the Joy**
- **Revised Common Lectionary for 11/24/2024**
 - Jeremiah 33:14-16 • Psalm 25:1-10 • 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 • Luke 21:25-36
- **Focus Prayer:** God of Hope, surround us with your joy in season and out of season. Amen.



- **Focus Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13** *Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible* (pp. 2486). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition.

⁹ How can we thank God enough for you, for all the joy we feel before God on your account? ¹⁰ We earnestly pray night and day to be able to see you again and make up for any shortcomings in your faith. ¹¹ May our loving Abba God and Jesus, our Savior, direct our steps back to you. ¹² May Christ increase to overflowing your love for one another and for all people, even as our love does for you; ¹³ may Christ strengthen your hearts, making them blameless and holy before our Abba God at the coming of our Savior Jesus with all the holy ones.

- In Conversation with **Luke 21:25-36** *First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament* (p. 154). Wildman, Terry M. InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

THE DAY OF SORROW AND DESTRUCTION

²⁵ “There will also be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, and on the earth the nations will tremble with fear. Panic and confusion will grow strong when they hear the sea roar and see the waves swell. ²⁶ The people will shake with fear, and hearts will fall to the ground when they see what is happening to the world around them. Even the powers of the spirit-world above will tremble and shake.

²⁷ “Then they will look up and see the True Human Being coming with power, riding on the clouds, and showing his shining-greatness!

²⁸ “When you see all these things begin to happen, stand strong, my followers. Lift up your heads! For the time of your captivity will soon come to an end!”



STORY ABOUT THE FIG TREE

²⁹ Then he told them a wisdom-story: “Look at this fig tree or any tree, and see what it is saying to you.

³⁰ When the branches of a tree grow soft and buds appear, you know that it is nearly summer.

³¹ In the same way when you see these things happening, you will know that Creator’s good road is about to come into full bloom.

³² “I speak from my heart! All of this will happen to this generation, during the lifetime of the people who live today. ³³ What I have told you is sure, for my words will last longer than the sky above and the earth below.

³⁴ “So keep your eyes straight. Do not let your hearts fall to the ground. Do not give yourselves to drinking or worrying about your life’s possessions, or that day will take you by

surprise. ³⁵ For it will come without warning, to all who live on the land, like a beaver that is snared in a trap. ³⁶ So stay on guard, praying that you will find a safe path through this time and stand strong before the True Human Being.”

- **Focus Questions:**
 - What brings you joy?
 - What challenges your joy?
 - Have you made a commitment to joy? Why or why not?
 - How do or can you realize joy beyond life circumstances?
 - What keeps you vigilant?
- **Special Music: Chancel Choir – Liturgist: Joanna Aamodt**

Events in December

Book Conversation December 4th

Soup – 6:00 pm

Conversation – 6:30 pm

Call Out to Something Greater

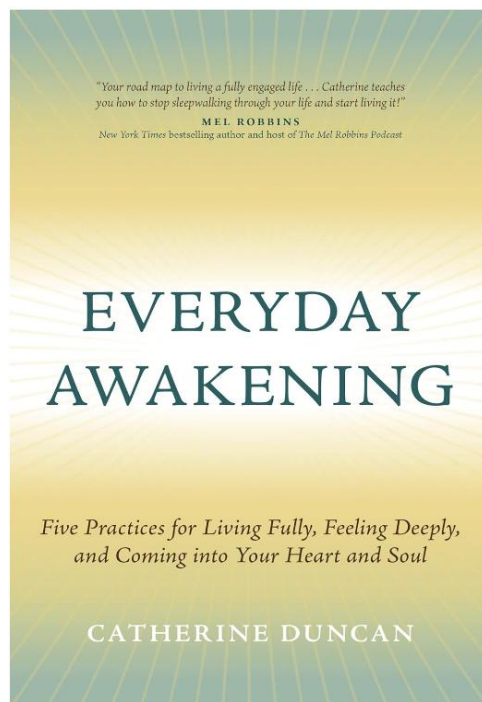
Come back to the present moment and breathe.

- *As you come into your heart and soul, reach out and talk to something beyond you. In your mind or heart, either silently or out loud, say whatever comes into your heart.*
- *If no words come, you can try any or all of these:*

Thank you. Please forgive me. Be with me. Pour your healing spirit through me. Fill me with your love and light and peace. Help me open to your presence, your wisdom, your guidance. Lead me and guide me every step of my path. Protect me and my family. I pray for my family and friends. Be with me. Thank you.

**Video and Conversation on
Forgiveness**

**Community Church of Walker – UCC
Sunday – December 8th 4:00 p.m.
All are Welcome!**



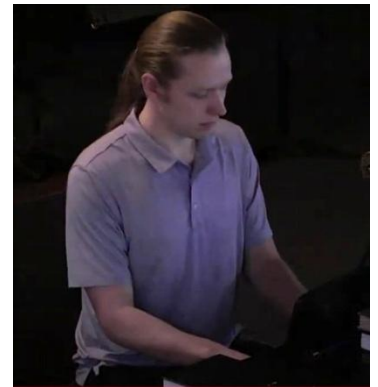
**Women's Fellowship
Christmas Party
Wednesday
December 11th - 12 noon
Sue Grage's Home - Park Rapids
Carpooling from Walker**



**Christmas Concert at
Union UCC Hackensack
Features**

Sabbastian Wilson Webb

Friday, December 13, 2024, 7:00 p.m.



Christmas Eve Service

**Community Church of Walker
- UCC**

12/24 at 4:00 p.m.

**All Are Welcome to this most
Holy Night to a worship service filled with**

music, carols, and words shaped by LOVE!

All Donations go to the UCC Christmas Fund Offering



Holy Humor Sunday

Lessons and Laughter

First Sunday of Christmas

December 30th at 10:00 a.m.

This service is designed with two truths in

mind. First, the Christmas season is

hallmarked by joy. The angels sing. The

shepherds run. The star shines. Mary cherishes. Christ is born! In response

to all this good news, we sing "Joy to the World!" with grateful celebration.



Second, by the time the Sunday after Christmas rolls around, all of us are usually running on empty. Therefore, this service is intentionally designed to not only provide some much needed levity and support one another, but to also lean into the holy joy of this season.



❖ **NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

- 11/25 Chris Kolp
- 11/27 Joanne Detwiler

❖ **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

- 12/10 Nathan Kalli
- 12/12 Rev. Michael Small
- 12/12 Vern Bader
- 12/14 Larry Johnson
- 12/18 Tim Johnson
- 12/25 Earl Niedermann

❖ **DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

- 12/27 Steve and Chris Kolp
- 12/28 Jack and Kathy Hopen

❖ ***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

❖ **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.

❖ Addresses – You are invited to be in touch.

Meryle O'Connor
Waterford Estates
6288 Louisiana N. #111
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428

Betty Fisher
4222 Larch Street NE
Bemidji MN 56601

Kevin Wedel
107 Highland Ave. W.
Apartment 102
Walker MN 56484

Alison Koch
1803 South Court Street
Fergus Falls MN 56537

❖ ***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)
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., # 2319
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-297-8063

E-mail:
sen.steve.green@senate.mn
<https://www.house.mn.gov/members/profile/15458>

Rep. Matt Bliss (R) District: 02B
311 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-5516
Toll Free: 877-838-5537
E-mail:
rep.matt.bliss@house.mn.gov
<https://www.house.mn.gov/members/profile/15458>

Office of Governor Tim Walz
130 State Capitol
75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
<https://mn.gov/governor/connect/contact-us/contact-form.jsp>

Rep. Pete Stauber (R) U.S. House # 8
145 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-6211
<https://stauber.house.gov/>

Senator Amy Klobuchar (DFL) MN
425 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510
phone: 202-224-3244
fax: 202-228-2186

<https://www.klobuchar.senate.gov/public/>

Senator Tina Smith (DFL) U.S. MN
720 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: (202) 224-5641
<https://www.smith.senate.gov/>

Prayers and Blessings – Pastor Michael