



# THE GOOD NEWS!



**Community Church of Walker  
United Church of Christ**

P.O. Box 267  
Hwy 371 & Tianna Drive  
Walker, MN 56484

(218) 547-1093

[commchurchucc@gmail.com](mailto:commchurchucc@gmail.com)

[www.uccwalker.com](http://www.uccwalker.com)

## **Our Mission**

To offer a welcoming church home to all, where friendships grow, spiritual needs are met, community concerns are addressed and where

**"God is Still Speaking..."**

# MAY 2025



**In-person worship is on Sundays at 10:00am.**

Contact Pastor Michael at 218-280-1401 or email [mjsmall.ucc@gmail.com](mailto:mjsmall.ucc@gmail.com) if you have questions or suggestions.

# FROM PASTOR MICHAEL

## BLESSINGS



Time with family, with a twin sister (undergoing treatment for cancer) and her husband has been a time of blessing, storytelling, remembering, and walking alongside one another for a very short, but precious time. I have also become reacquainted with the land of my birth with trees breaking forth in leaf and blossom, new growth emerging and unfolding from the soil, air filled with the smells of the freshness of spring and all the pollen irritating sinuses.

Memories have washed over me like a gentle Oregon rain. I have awakened to that which shaped and formed who I am. Feet have stood on solid ground.

Stories have been told and there is laughter and tears. I have walked by the homes I grew up in and visited the high school complex I attended. As I sat in the bench in front of the school I saw the flag at half staff in honor of Pope Francis, bringing back the moment I sat at that same place and watched the flag lowered as the news broke concerning a president who had been shot – JFK was dead.

Then looking through the black and white pictures of family, generations past who remain nameless, my family of origin, remembering the endless love of family and friends. Also in those pictures, between the cracks, behind the lens, in the grayness and shadows there is pain, struggle, moments lost and forgotten. This has been a good visit, and I am grateful for all the blessings of this time.

Each of us has been shaped and formed by families, events, friends, relationships of the past and of past generations. May we hold onto the memories that speak of loving kindness, justice, mercy, forgiveness, and hope for the future. May these memories be the ground we stand upon, propelling us into a future that builds healthy and honest relationships with humanity, the earth, and all of creation. May we treasure that which is good and right and let go of the weight of roads not taken, words not said, love not shared, forgiveness not given. . . Knowing we have already been forgiven – set free to soar as eagles.

Rummaging through an old suitcase of pictures, diaries, and writings of my grandfather Harvey, he had typed on a small piece of paper the words below.

### Daily Thought

- A careless word may kindle strife.
- A cruel word may wreck a life.
- A bitter word may hate instill.
- A brutal word may smite and kill.
- A gracious word may smooth the way;
- A joyous word may light the day.
- A timely word may lessen stress;
- A loving word may heal and bless.

May these words shape our days to come and our actions with one another that we may live out the realm of God in thought and actions.

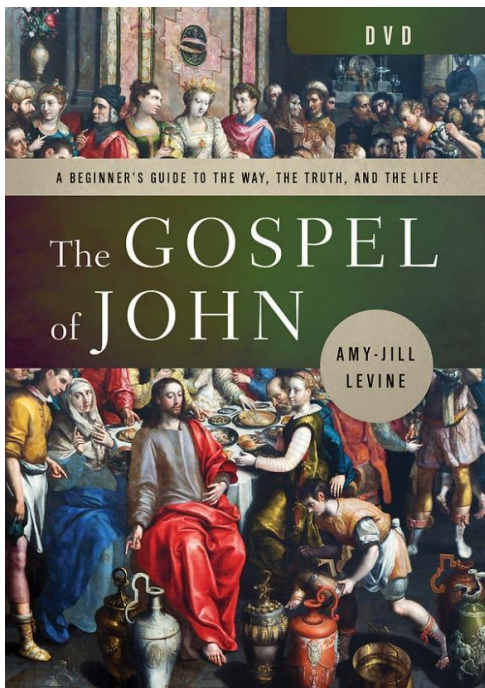
In the spirit of Christ – Pastor Michael



## ***Faith Formation – Book Conversations (Mondays and Tuesdays)***

***5:30 pm meal, conversation 6-7 pm.***

Beginning Monday May 6<sup>th</sup> you are invited to participate in a light meal and conversations around faith that will be generated by a book and resources. Suggested books for conversation starters are listed in the Newsletter. Monday 5/5 – Conversation to choose book. The gatherings will continue Tuesday 5/13, Monday 5/19, Tuesday 5/27. Bring other suggestions to Monday May 5.



### **Unlock the hidden depths of John's Gospel.**

The DVD features Amy-Jill Levine teaching *The Gospel of John* in six engaging video sessions. Use it with the book and leader guide for a six-week Bible study. All sessions are closed captioned.

The Gospel of John DVD contains six video sessions:

1. The Wedding at Cana (11:34)
2. Nicodemus and the Samaritan Woman at the Well (11:43)
3. The Healing of the Man at the Pool (11:31)
4. The Man Born Blind (11:53)
5. Foot Washing (12:14)
6. Mary Magdalene and Doubting Thomas (12:17)

John's Gospel offers readers a new language—of being born anew, of living water, of wind and spirit, of the “I am”—that enhances how we understand the divine, how we experience the world, and how we participate in the mystery of faith.

With her characteristic wit and charm, Amy-Jill Levine introduces readers to the world of the Gospel of John by unpacking the stories in their original context, along with examining how the text is read today. This book considers the Gospel of John in its entirety, moving through the Gospel and exploring the prologue, the wedding at Cana, the Samaritan woman at the well and the woman caught in adultery, the healing of the man at the pool and the man born blind, foot washing, Mary Magdalene and Doubting Thomas, and the Lamb of God.

## **Abundant Lives | A Progressive Christian Ethic of Flourishing (Udis-Kessler)**

### **Praise for *Abundant Lives***

"One of the best introductions to progressive Christian living I have ever seen."

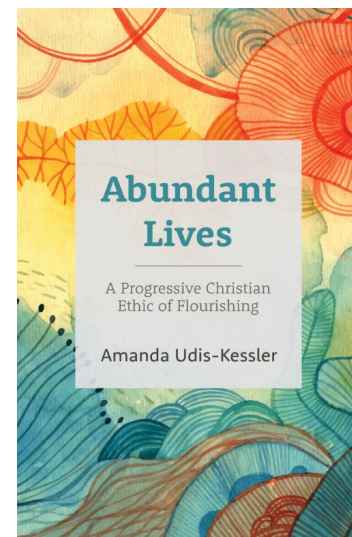
—Brian D. McLaren, author of *Do I Stay Christian?*

"A dazzling yet practical life ethic... This slim volume punches way above its weight."

—Marvin M. Ellison, author of *Making Love Just*

"A must-read for anyone who senses that there might be more to life than partisan divisiveness, ideological separations, and cultural fragmentations."

—Dwight J. Friesen, author of *2020s Foresight*



*Continues on Page 4*

Continued from Page 3

### What is the purpose of freedom?

We can debate freedom, rights, and justice . . . but what is the purpose of such debates if they do not tangibly contribute to human flourishing? *Abundant Lives: A Progressive Christian Ethic of Flourishing* invites our engagement in shared well-being, based on Jesus' commandments to love God, our neighbors, ourselves, and our enemies. Through *Abundant Lives*, Amanda Udis-Kessler provokes rich conversation so that we might understand—and enact—the Kindom of God as a realm of human and planetary flourishing.



### ***You Don't Need to Forgive: Trauma Recovery on Your Own Terms*** by [Amanda Ann Gregory LCPC](#)

You can find peace, whether or not you forgive those who harmed you.

Feeling pressured to forgive their offenders is a common reason trauma survivors avoid mental health services and support. Those who force, pressure, or encourage trauma survivors to forgive can unknowingly cause harm and sabotage their recovery. And such harm is entirely unnecessary--especially when research shows there is no consensus among psychologists, psychiatrists, and other professionals about whether forgiveness is necessary for recovery at all.

*You Don't Need to Forgive* is an invaluable resource for trauma survivors and their clinicians who feel alienated and even gaslighted by the toxic positivity and moralism that often characterizes attitudes about forgiveness in psychology and self-help.

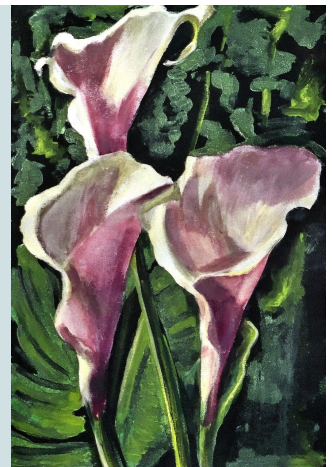
Bringing together research and testimony from psychologists, psychotherapists, criminologists, philosophers, religious leaders, and trauma survivors, psychotherapist and expert in complex trauma recovery Amanda Ann Gregory explores the benefits of elective forgiveness and the dangers of required forgiveness.

Elective forgiveness gives survivors the agency to progress in their recovery on their own terms. Forgiveness is helpful for some, but it is not universally necessary for recovery; each person should have the power to choose.

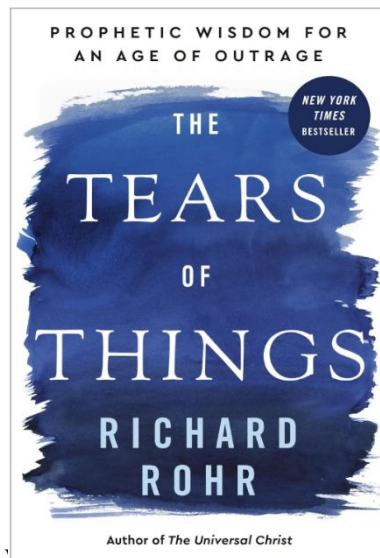
Continues on Page 5

**Jerry Bixby**  
**March 16, 1936 ~ January 21, 2025**

**Celebration of Life Service**  
**May 17, 2025 – 11:00 a.m.**  
 Community Church of Walker UCC



Continued from Page 4



## ***The Tears of Things: Prophetic Wisdom for an Age of Outrage***

by [Richard Rohr](#) (Author)

**NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER •** In his first major work since *The Universal Christ*, one of our most prominent spiritual voices offers a wholehearted and hope-filled model for the world today, grounded in the timeless wisdom of the Hebrew prophets.

**“Richard Rohr is one of the great Christian spiritual masters of our time. Of any time.”—James Martin, SJ, author of *Come Forth***

How do we live compassionately in a time of violence and despair? What can we do with our private disappointments and the anger we feel in such an unjust world? In his most personal book yet, Richard Rohr turns to the

...s, revealing how some of the lesser-read books of the Bible offer us a crucial path forward today.

The prophets’ writings reflect the full spectrum of human maturity. In almost every case, their initial rage and their accusatory words evolve into a profound pathos and lamentation about our shared human condition and the world’s suffering. Through astute critiques of culture and institutions, and their journey from anger to sadness, and ultimately compassion, the prophets exemplify what Rohr calls “sacred criticism”—a distinct approach to confronting evil and injustice that acknowledges the wholeness of history, the interconnectedness of every living being, and the reality of a divine and universal love. In this, they set the stage for Jesus, who follows this identical pattern.

Drawing on a century of biblical scholarship and written in the warm, pastoral voice that has endeared Rohr to millions, *The Tears of Things* breathes new life into ancient wisdom. It paves a path of enlightenment for anyone seeking a compassionate way of living in a hurting world.

### ***Upcoming Themes and Texts for Sunday Worship***

Easter 3C, May 4: John 21:1-19 | “Cast the Nets”

Easter 4C, May 11: John 10:22-30 | “The Works Testify”

Easter 5C, May 18: John 13:31-35 | “Looking for Love”

Easter 6C, May 25: John 5:1-9 | “A Sabbath”

Ascension Sunday 7C, June 1: Luke 24:44-53 | “Opened Minds”

Pentecost C, June 8: John 14:8-17, 25-27 | “Truth, Trouble, and Fear”



# Sacred Poetry



## All Things Obey God

*"He saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth. Job 37:6"*

God's works are very great, but still  
His hands do not appear:  
Though heaven and earth obey His will,  
His voice we cannot hear.

And yet we know that it is He  
Who moves and governs all,  
Who stills the raging of the sea,  
And makes the showers fall.

Alike in mercy He bestows  
The sunshine and the rain;  
That which is best for us He knows,  
And we must not complain.

Whether He makes His winds to blow,  
And gives His tempests birth,  
Or sends His frost, or bids the snow,  
"Be thou upon the earth."

Anonymous

## Lord, Our God, Your Glorious Name

*A Paraphrase of Psalm 8*

Lord, our Lord, your glorious name  
All your wondrous works proclaim;  
In the heavens with radiant signs  
Evermore your glory shines.

Infant voices chant your praise,  
Telling of your glorious ways;  
Weakest means work out your will,  
mighty enemies to still.

Moon and stars in shining height  
Nightly tell their Maker's might;  
When I view the heavens afar,  
Then I know how small we are.

Who are we that we should share  
In your love and tender care,  
Raised to an exalted height,  
Crowned with honour in your sight.

With dominion crowned, we stand  
O'er the creatures of your hand;  
All to us subjection yield,  
In the sea and air and field.

Anonymous

## MAY DATES TO CELEBRATE

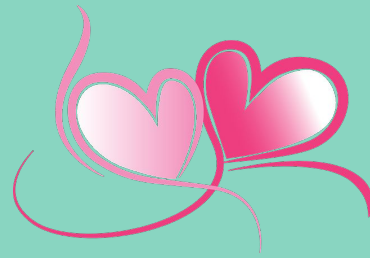
### *Birthdays*

2	Jessie Barber
4	Kris Koch
8	Kathy Hopen
9	Marge Koch
10	Linda Barber
16	Sue Standeven
18	Rebecca Lloyd Benjamin Lloyd
19	Kameron Koch
22	Shaleen Black
31	Sara Koch



### *Anniversaries*

10	Jim and Marilyn Vogt
17	John and Joanna Aamodt
27	Denis and Shaleen Black



## WORSHIP MINISTRY — MAY

	<b>GREETERS</b>
May 4	Marge Koch
May 11	TBD
May 18	TBD
May 25	TBD

<b>LITURGISTS</b>
Chris Kolp
Sonja Huber
Deb Farrell
Bev Jorland

<b>SPECIAL MUSIC</b>
Community Choir
TBD
The EmBELLishments
TBD

### **AUDIO**

Esther Covert

### **VIDEO**

Aurora Diehl

### **MUSIC**

Sabbastian Wilson-Webb



### **CHOIR DIRECTOR**

Joanna Aamodt

### **ALTER & COMMUNION PREPARATION**

Joanne Detwiler



# THE GOOD NEWS!

is a monthly newsletter publication of the  
**Community Church of Walker United Church of Christ**  
 Located at the corner of Hwy 371 & Tianna Drive  
 Walker, MN 56484

**Mailing address:** P.O. Box 267  
 Walker, MN 56484

**Phone:** (218) 547-1093 **Email:** [commchurchucc@gmail.com](mailto:commchurchucc@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.uccwalker.com](http://www.uccwalker.com)

## **Pastor Michael Small**

**Mailing address:** P.O. Box 38, Hackensack, MN 56452

**Phone:** (218) 280-1401 **Email:** [mjsmall.ucc@gmail.com](mailto:mjsmall.ucc@gmail.com)

**Secretary:** Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

**Office Hours:** 10:00am-2:00pm on Thursdays

**Email:** [commchurchucc@gmail.com](mailto:commchurchucc@gmail.com)

**Phone:** 218-547-1093 (leave a message)

**Church Moderator:** Bonnie Bailey

**Vice-Moderator:** *Vacant*

**Clerk:** Bev Jorland

**Treasurer:** Deb Farrell

**Financial Secretary:** Gay Jacobson

**Historian:** Chris Kolp

**Board of Trustees Chair:** Ryan Pels

**Board of Benevolence Chair:** Doris Johnson

**Board of Christian Education Chair:** Joanne Detwiler

**Board of Memorials Chair:** Wendy Paul

**Board of Music Chair:** Linda Barber

**Board of Spiritual Life Chair:** Jo Pels

**Women's Fellowship Chair:** Gay Jacobson

**Minister/Church Relations Board Members:**

Deb Farrell, Bev Jorland, Doris Johnson

**Choir Director:** Joanna Aamodt

**Custodian:** Ryan and Joanne Pels

**Articles for the June 2025 edition of The Good News! newsletter  
 need to be emailed by 11:00 AM Friday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**



## MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>4</b> 10:00am Worship Service w/ Communion 11:00am Fellowship	<b>5</b> <u>Book Conversation</u> 5:30pm Meal 5:00-7:00pm Conversation	<b>6</b> 1:00pm Women's Fellowship	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Fellowship	<b>12</b> 6:30-8:30pm St. Mark's Worship Service	<b>13</b> <u>Book Conversation</u> 5:30pm Meal 5:00-7:00pm Conversation	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Jerry Bixby Celebration of Life 10:00 Visitation 11:00 Service
<b>18</b> 10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Fellowship 11:30am-12:45pm Church Council	<b>19</b> <u>Book Conversation</u> 5:30pm Meal 5:00-7:00pm Conversation	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 11:00am Newsletter Submission Deadline	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> 10:00am Worship Service 11:00am Fellowship	<b>26</b> 6:30-8:30pm St. Mark's Worship Service	<b>27</b> <u>Book Conversation</u> 5:30pm Meal 5:00-7:00pm Conversation	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>



Community Church of Walker  
United Church of Christ  
P.O. Box 267  
Walker, MN 56484

Return Service Requested

A photograph of a wicker basket filled with purple flowers, with a straw hat resting on top. The basket is placed in a field of yellow flowers. The image is framed by a white border with vertical bars on the sides.

# THE GOOD NEWS!

Community Church of Walker United Church of Christ