



**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!”

November 16, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.

Veterans Acknowledgement

Twentieth-Third Sunday after Pentecost

“Gain Your Souls”

Worship Leaders:

Pastor: Michael Small

Liturgist: Gay Jacobson

Special Music: Ken and Linda Barber

Greeter: Linda Barber

Keyboard: Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

Tech: Ace Diehl (Video), Samuel Batson (Audio)
Spiritual Life, Chancel and Communion Preparation

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

† HYMN

"How Firm a Foundation"

#407

Call to Worship (Inspired by Psalm 98)

One: O Sing to our Creator a New Song,

All: Make a joyful noise to God, everyone!

One: With trumpets and sounds of the horn

All: We create joyful sounds for you, God of love.

One: The hills will sing together in bliss.

All: Just as the sea roars and the artists rhyme, we serenade our Creator.

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: Beloved Divine Sustainer,

† For those who are able, please stand.

Like the sunlight, your presence illuminates the world around us. Like the air, your being invigorates us. Even when the world seems to be on fire, your quenching rain soothes our souls. Through your wisdom, we find our hope and strength. Fill our minds with your peace and our hearts with fortitude, knowing you will never depart from us. Amen.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

All: Holy Strength,

At the signs of conflict in our communities and world, we cower instead of running towards the needs of our neighbors. We believe the end is near, but in actuality, this is another wave of dread coming from our fellow humans. Unfortunately, we can't simply wish this conflict away. Instead you call us to walk through the fire and to use our voices. Forgive us when we want to stop instead of continuing to follow the way of Jesus. Give us grace to keep moving forward, even when betrayal and hate are raining upon us. 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: Shame and despair will not overtake us. The grace of God sustains us from dawn until dusk and in the depths of the night. Amen.

† PASSING THE PEACE

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also, with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Living Prayer”

Ken and Linda Barber

Focus Scripture: Luke 21:5-19 *Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation* (p. 690). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition.

⁵ Some disciples were speaking of how the Temple was adorned with precious stones and votive offerings. Jesus said, ⁶ “You see all these things? The day will come when one stone won’t be left on top of another—everything will be torn down.”

⁷ They asked, “When will this happen, Rabbi? And what will be the sign that it’s about to happen?”

⁸ Jesus said, “Take care not to be misled. Many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the One’ and ‘The time is at hand.’ Don’t follow them. ⁹ And don’t be perturbed

† For those who are able, please stand.

when you hear of wars and insurrections. These things must happen first, but the end doesn't follow immediately."

¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and empire against empire. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, plagues and famines in various places—and in the sky there will be frightening omens and great signs. ¹² But before any of this, they'll arrest you and persecute you, bringing you before synagogues and sending you to prison, bringing you to trial before rulers and governors. And it will all be because of my name—¹³ this will be your opportunity to give your testimony. ¹⁴ So make up your minds not to worry about your defense beforehand, ¹⁵ for I'll give you the words, and a wisdom that none of your adversaries can take exception to or contradict. ¹⁶ You'll be betrayed even by your parents, brothers, sisters, relatives and friends, and some of you will be put to death. ¹⁷ Everyone will hate you because of me, ¹⁸ yet not a hair of your head will be harmed. ¹⁹ By patient endurance, you'll save your lives.

Luke 21:5-19 *First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament* (p. 153). Wildman, Terry M. InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

Signs and Warnings

⁵ Some of his followers began to point out to him the beauty of the great lodge with its handsomely carved logs, its large stones, and ceremonial gifts.

A look of sadness came over the face of Creator Sets Free (Jesus).

⁶ "Take a good long look," he said, "for in the days ahead, all of this will fall to the ground. Not one log or stone will be left standing against another."

They looked at him with worried faces.

⁷ "Wisdomkeeper, when will this happen?" they asked. "What will be the sign?"

⁸ "Make sure no one leads you down the wrong path," he warned them, "for many will falsely represent me and say, 'I am the Chosen One, follow me, there is no time left!' Do not follow after them.

⁹ "When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not fear, for these things will come first—but the end is not yet. ¹⁰ Tribal wars will break out, and nations will war against nations. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, food will be scarce, sickness will spread everywhere, and bad signs will appear in the sky.

¹² "Before all of this happens, you will be betrayed by your own people. They will hunt you down, drag you into their gathering houses, and put you in jail. They will hand you over to the government and officials of the People of Iron (Romans). All of this they will do to you because of me and my name. ¹³ But remember, this will be your chance to represent me and tell them the good story. ¹⁴ Do not worry about what to say ahead

† For those who are able, please stand.

of time to defend yourselves, ¹⁵ for I will give you the mouth of a wisdomkeeper, and no enemy will be able to answer you or prove you wrong.

¹⁶ “You will be betrayed by your own family members and friends. They will even have some of you killed. ¹⁷ They will all hate you because you are representing me and my teachings.

¹⁸ “But none of these things can truly harm you, ¹⁹ so you must stand up strong and never give up trusting in me, for my life inside you will help you walk with firm steps.”

REFLECTION

“Stand Firm”

HYMN

"God Speak to Me, That I May Speak"

#531

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

“What I Am Thankful For”

Ken and Linda Barber

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

One: What are the best ways for us to share what we have? How can we best use our gifts when our neighbors hurt and our systems attempt to limit the well-being of God's children? Through our gifts, we are able to bear your strength and boost the hearts of many.

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: Creator God, Source of All Energy,

† For those who are able, please stand.

We see how your gifts transform the hearts, minds, and souls of this world. May your wisdom continue to strengthen our spirits. Through our gifts of treasures, talents, and time, we can serve your children, ensuring no one goes hungry and all are thriving. Through our endurance and compassion, may we build God's Realm here on earth.

† HYMN

“Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life”

#543

PARTING WORDS

One: As we work to faithfully follow God's call,
May the Christ illuminate the road ahead,
May the Spirit invigorate us throughout each day,
May our Creator soothe us and instill hope.
Beloved siblings, even as waves of fear crash over us, God never leaves nor forsakes us and brings us courage as we journey together.
Amen!

POSTLUDE

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

Gain Your Souls: Service Prayers for the Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost was written by Rev. Michelle L. Torigian , an ordained UCC minister in Belleville, Illinois.



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