



**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 23, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.

The Reign of Christ Sunday

“Today!”

Worship Leaders:

Pastor: Michael Small

Liturgist: Deb Farrell

Special Music: EmBELLishment

Greeter: Sue Standeven

Keyboard: Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

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

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

A TIME FOR/WITH CHILDREN

† HYMN

"All Hail the Power of Jesus Name"

#304

Call to Worship (*Inspired by Psalm 46*)

One: In this present time, no matter what passes before us,

All: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

One: As earth shakes and nations are in an uproar,

All: God is present with us and is our refuge in times of trouble.

One: As the world trembles in fear and worry,

All: May we find stillness and peace, knowing God is God of all.

A TIME OF CENTERING

(During this time of centering, open your hearts to God; be in the present, here and now.)

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

† For those who are able, please stand.

One: Holy Redeemer,

In the dusk of this liturgical year, we recall the beauty of our days together. The blessedness of Christmas love and the light of Epiphany move us to bring illumination to our neighbors. The hope of Easter and the strength of Pentecost inspire us to bring the Good News of God's love to this world. All of this is to create God's Realm here on this earth, where we follow the steps of Christ, knowing the endurance of the Holy Spirit abides with us today and always. Amen.

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

All: Divine Grace,

Jesus promises paradise to his neighbor on the cross. No matter what transgression the person had carried out, Jesus still promised a future filled with hope, mercy, and filled with your love. And yet, even when we pray "your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we like to limit paradise for our neighbors. We quietly ask: What have they done in their lives that they must ask for help, receive assistance, and lack health? Yet what we don't realize is that their misfortunes are not for us to judge. Beloved God, open our hearts wide to mercy – both in receiving and in extending it to others. May we shun judgment and open our hearts to a paradise here on earth where all your children can abide in peace and wholeness. 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: Through the words and acts of Jesus, we experience peace, hope, and grace.

God's love is beyond limits and will move us to open ourselves to the beauty of infinite mercy.

† PASSING THE PEACE

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also, with you.

SPECIAL MUSIC

EmBELLishment

Focus Scripture: Luke 23:33-43 *Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation* (p. 692). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition.

† For those who are able, please stand.

³² Two others were also led off with Jesus, criminals who were to be put to death. ³³ When they had reached the place called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there—together with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. ³⁴ And Jesus said, “Abba forgive them. They don’t know what they are doing.” Then they divided his garments, rolling dice for them.

³⁵ The people stood there watching. The rulers, however, jeered him and said, “He saved others, let him save himself—if he really is the Messiah of God, the Chosen One!” ³⁶ The soldiers also mocked him. They served Jesus sour wine ³⁷ and said, “If you are really the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ There was an inscription above Jesus that read, “This is the King of the Jews.”

³⁹ One of the criminals who hung there beside him insulted Jesus, too, saying, “Are you really the Messiah? Then save yourself—and us!”

⁴⁰ But the other answered the first with a rebuke: “Don’t you even fear God? ⁴¹ We are only paying the price for what we have done, but this one has done nothing wrong!”

⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your glory.”

⁴³ Jesus replied, “The truth is, today you’ll be with me in paradise!”

Luke 23:33-43 *First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament* (pp. 159-160). Wildman, Terry M. InterVarsity Press. Kindle Edition.

Nailed to the Cross

³³ When they came to the place called “The Skull,” they nailed the hands and feet of Creator Sets Free (Jesus) to a tree-pole—the cross. They did the same for the two criminals, putting one on each side of him.

³⁴ “Father, forgive them!” Creator Sets Free (Jesus) cried out. “They do not know what they are doing.”

The soldiers divided up his garments and gambled for them by drawing straws.

³⁵ The people watched as the spiritual leaders mocked him. “He set others free,” they said, “why can he not free himself, if he is Creator’s Chosen One?”

³⁶ The soldiers offered Creator Sets Free (Jesus) wine mixed with bitter herbs ³⁷ and mocked him. “If you are the Great Chief of the tribes,” they laughed, “then set yourself free.”

³⁸ Above his head, carved above the crossbeam, were these words in three languages:

THIS IS THE CHIEF OF
THE TRIBES OF
WRESTLES WITH CREATOR

† For those who are able, please stand.

³⁹ One of the thieves next to him spewed out angry words, “If you are the Chosen One, save yourself and us!”

⁴⁰ Then the other thief spoke up and said, “Have you no fear or respect for the Great Spirit? ⁴¹ We are guilty and suffering for our own wrongdoings, but this man has done nothing wrong!”

⁴² The man *turned to Creator Sets Free (Jesus) and* said to him, “Honored One, remember me when you come into the power of your good road.”

⁴³ Creator Sets Free (Jesus) looked at the man and said, “Listen closely, before the sun sets today, you will walk with me in the beautiful garden.”

REFLECTION

“Today”

HYMN

“When Morning Guilds the Skies”

#86

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

EmBELLishment

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

One: What would happen if we were to set aside our worries and begin to create paradise on earth – here and now? What if we shared just a little extra of our time, talent, and treasures so that others can experience paradise on this side of heaven? When we share our gifts, the universe begins to transform for our neighbors, creation, and ourselves.

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

† For those who are able, please stand.

One: God of All Time and Space,
You call us to transform the world through the extension of your grace to all of creation. May we find new and creative ways to share our treasures, talents, and time in order to create your Realm here on earth. May we work to create paradise beginning here today. Amen.

† HYMN

“Crown with Your Richest Crowns”

#301

PARTING WORDS

One: As we transform our universe into God’s paradise,
May the Spirit of Strength give us courage to care for our neighbors.
May the Christ of Mercy give us peace in each time and space.
May our Creator of Hope inspire us to love in new ways.
Fellow companions on this journey: we are called to build God’s Realm, creating heaven on earth for all. Amen!

POSTLUDE

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

Today: Service Prayers for Reign of Christ Sunday was written by Rev. Michelle L. Torigian , an ordained UCC minister in Belleville, Illinois.



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