



**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!”***

**January 11, 2026 – 10:00 a.m.**

***Baptism of Christ / First Sunday after Epiphany***

**Worship Leaders:**

**Pastor: Michael Small**

**Liturgist: Deb Farrell**

**Special Music: Sabbastian Wilson Webb**

**Keyboard: Sabbastian Wilson-Webb**

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

**PRELUDE**

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**† HYMN**     **"O Radiant Christ, Incarnate Word"** sung to the tune of #531     #168

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Come, you who are weary, you who have been bruised by life, you whose flame has flickered in the winds of the world.

**All: We come, longing to be renewed.**

One: The Holy One who stretches out the heavens is stretching us now— stretching our hearts toward courage, our hands toward compassion, our lives toward gentle justice.

**All: We open ourselves to be stretched into new life.**

One: A voice from heaven says to us, as it said to Jesus: You are my beloved.  
This Spirit rests upon us, too.

**All: We are God's Beloved, called to bring gentle justice.**

One: Come, let us remember who we are.

**All: Let us worship God with joy.**

**A TIME OF CENTERING**

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† For those who are able, please stand.

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

## **PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

One: Let us pray. Holy One, Breath of Creation,  
You stretched out the heavens and set the earth dancing with life.  
You whispered belovedness over Jesus rising from the Jordan,  
and your Spirit rested upon him like a gentle dove.  
Rest your Spirit upon us now.  
Stretch our hearts where they have grown tight.  
Soften the places that have been hardened by fear or disappointment.  
Wake the embers of joy that still glow beneath the ash.  
Remind us that we are your Beloved, not because of what we have done,  
but because of who You are and the love that holds us.  
As we gather at the water today, let us remember who we are,  
and who we are becoming together— your people of compassion, courage, and  
gentle justice. In the name of Christ, the One who shows us how to be human,  
we pray.

**All: Amen.**

## **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

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

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

**Holy One, a new year invites us to begin again. As we reflect on the future, we ask that your grace would meet us as we strive to be the people you have called us to be. Help us to heal spiritually, emotionally, relationally, materially, physically, and financially. Strengthen us and reorient our expectations of ourselves and one another. Give us courage to be true to our faith and values. Remind us that we carry no burden that you do not share with us. Shine your radiance through us. Amen.**

## **WORDS OF GRACE**

One: Image bearers of the holy, the Radiant God knows your struggles, honors your commitments, and meets you in your hopes. Receive the grace of God to liberate you from the past and release you to embrace the future with anticipation that the One who began a good work in you will abide with you through the journey toward renewal and revitalization.

## **† PASSING THE PEACE**

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

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

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## SPECIAL MUSIC

Sabbastian Wilson Webb

**Focus Scripture: Matthew 3:13-17** *Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation* (p. 642). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition.

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. <sup>14</sup> John tried to dissuade Jesus, saying, “I should be baptized by you, and yet you come to me!”

<sup>15</sup> But Jesus replied, “Leave it this way for now. We must do this to completely fulfill God’s justice.” So John reluctantly agreed. <sup>16</sup> Immediately after Jesus had been baptized and was coming up out of the water, the sky suddenly opened up and Jesus saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and hovering over him.

<sup>17</sup> With that, a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Own, my Beloved, on whom my favor rests.”

*Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation* (p. 642). Bloomsbury Publishing. Kindle Edition.

## REFLECTION

“My Beloved”

## HYMN

"Beautiful Jesus"

#44

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/PASTORAL PRAYER

### THE LORD’S PRAYER

**Our Father, in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come; your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

## SPECIAL MUSIC

Sabbastian Wilson Webb

## INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

One: Beloved of God, we remember today who we are— a people formed in water and Spirit, held in love, and called to bring gentle justice to the world. We do not give out of guilt, or out of scarcity, or because the church needs to keep the lights on. We give because love takes form in us. We give because we belong to one another. We give because our lives are woven together with all creation. Our offering is the way we say: Yes— we will live as God’s Beloved. Yes— we will stretch our hands toward compassion. Yes— we will join Christ in the work of

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healing. Let us, then, bring our gifts— our time, our treasure, our commitments, our lives— with joy.

**All: We give because we are God's Beloved, and we belong to one another.**

## **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: Let us pray. Holy One, Source of Living Water, You have gathered us in, washed us in grace, and reminded us that we are your Beloved. As water flows from its source to nourish field and forest, so let our giving flow outward— to nourish hope, to tend to healing, to join the slow and sacred work of renewing the world. Bless these gifts, and bless the lives from which they come. May they ripple outward in acts of compassion, in courage where it is needed, in justice that is gentle and strong. Just as the river does not hold itself, teach us not to hold back our love. We offer what we have and who we are, with joy and trust, for the sake of your dream of flourishing. Amen.

† **HYMN**

**“We Yearn, O Christ, for Wholeness”**

#179

## **PARTING WORDS**

One: Beloved of God, you are the ones upon whom the Spirit rests. You are the ones God delights in. You are the ones called to bring gentle justice to the world. Go now as people who have passed again through the waters— washed in mercy, renewed in courage, and stretched wide in compassion. Do not fear the bruised reed. Do not turn away from the dimly burning flame. Let your tenderness be your strength, and your joy be your witness. For nothing— nothing in life or in death, nothing in the heights or the depths, nothing in the world as it is or in the world as it is becoming— can separate you from the love of God. Go in peace, to love and to live, in the name of the Creator, the Christ, and the Spirit who makes all things new. Amen.

## **POSTLUDE**

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† For those who are able, please stand.

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