



**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!”***

***February 22, 2026***

**First Sunday in Lent** | John 2:1-11; Matthew 13:31-32  
**the good news is... so good it catches us by  
surprise**

**Worship Leaders:**  
**Pastor: Michael Small**  
**Liturgist: Joanna Aamodt**  
**Greeter: Chris Kolp**  
**Special Music: Ryan and Jo Pels**  
**Keyboard: Sabbastian Wilson-Webb**

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

## **PRELUDE**

## **WORDS OF WELCOME**

† HYMN

**"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"**

**#43**

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: The good news of the gospel is:

**All: manna in the desert, water turned into wine,  
love after loss, forgiveness after pain.**

One: The good news of the gospel is:

**All: release for the captive, hope for the hopeless,  
mourning turned to dancing, and strangers turned to friends.**

One: So come on in. There's no time to waste!

This surprising good news is here for you.

**All: Let us worship this good-news God.**

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† For those who are able, please stand.

## A TIME OF CENTERING

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

## CALL TO CONFESSION

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God,

somewhere along the way we picked up the message that in order to be faithful, we have to be serious.

We have to pray on our knees without ceasing.

We have to be somber in worship and quiet in our studies.

We have to check our wiggles and our questions at the door.

But then you say the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed—unruly and untamed. You turn water into wine—surprising and extravagant.

And all of a sudden, we wonder:

Can we be like that mustard seed?

Can we be faithful and unruly?

Can we be playful and curious?

Can we be messy and still be yours?

We know the answer already.

The Spirit whispers: *of course, of course, of course.*

Forgive our doubt.

Pull us closer into your embrace.

With faith like a mustard seed, we pray.

Amen.

## MOMENT OF SILENCE

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

## WORDS OF GRACE

### † PASSING THE PEACE

One: The Peace of Christ be with you.

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

## SPECIAL MUSIC

Ryan and Jo Pels

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

**Focus Scripture:** John 2:1-11 *Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation* (p. 694). Bloomsbury Publishing. Kindle Edition.

<sup>1</sup> Three days later, there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, was there. <sup>2</sup> Jesus and his disciples had likewise been invited to the celebration.

<sup>3</sup> At a certain point, the wine ran out, and Jesus' mother told him, "They have no wine."

<sup>4</sup> Jesus replied, "Mother, what does that have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."

<sup>5</sup> She instructed those waiting on tables, "Do whatever he tells you."

<sup>6</sup> As prescribed for Jewish ceremonial washings, there were six stone water jars on hand, each one holding between fifteen and twenty-five gallons. <sup>7</sup> "Fill those jars with water," Jesus said, and the servers filled them to the brim. <sup>8</sup> "Now," said Jesus, "draw some out and take it to the caterer." They did as they were instructed.

<sup>9</sup> The caterer tasted the water—which had been turned into wine—without knowing where it had come from; the only ones who knew were those who were waiting on tables, since they had drawn the water. The caterer called the bride and groom over <sup>10</sup> and remarked, "People usually serve the best wine first; then, when the guests have been drinking a while, a lesser vintage is served. What you've done is to keep the best wine until now!"

<sup>11</sup> Jesus performed this first of his signs at Cana in Galilee; in this way he revealed his glory, and the disciples believed in him.

**Matthew 13:31-32** *Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation* (pp. 648-649). Bloomsbury Publishing. Kindle Edition.

<sup>31</sup> Jesus presented another parable to the crowds: "The kingdom of heaven is like the mustard seed which a farmer sowed in a field. <sup>32</sup> It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the biggest shrub of all—it becomes a tree so that the birds of the air come to perch in its branches."

## REFLECTION

**"Surprise!"**

## HYMN

**"In a Neat and Tidy Garden"**

Insert

# In a Neat and Tidy Garden

ALL THE WAY 8.7.8.7 D ("All the Way My Savior Leads Me")

Words: Anna Strickland (2025)

Music: Robert Lowry (1875)



In a neat and ti - dy gar - den grows a se - cret ti - ny seed  
Green and ten - der leaves I har - vest from the mus - tard grow - ing wild  
O - ther gar - den - ers may strug - gle and pre - tend they have con - trol



There a - mong the plan - ted bar - ley will e - merge a shock - ing weed  
To en - rich and spice my dish - es that were un - til now too mild  
O - ver land that God cre - a - ted but I'll tell you what I know:



Grow - ing quick - ly through the so - il to break forth in va - cant spot  
Un - ex - pec - ted and sur - pris - ing, un - con - trolled by hu - man hand  
I am not the Mas - ter Gar - dener, just a stew - ard of this place



What a joy when I dis - cov - er God has plan - ted in my plot!  
See the reign of God is grow - ing, ta - king root through - out the land!  
God has seed - ed ev - ery a - cre with sur - pris - ing, wi - ld grace!



What a joy when I dis - cov - er God has plan - ted in my plot!  
See the reign of God is grow - ing, ta - king root through - out the land!  
God has seed - ed ev - ery a - cre with sur - pris - ing, wi - ld grace!

## 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

Ryan and Jo Pels

### INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

### 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

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.  
It sounds like welcome and feels like home.  
It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.  
It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table,  
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.  
I have seen it alive in the world.  
And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage,  
even when mercy feels out of reach,  
I remember the one who welcomed the children  
and led with nonviolence.  
I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable  
and inspired those around him.  
I remember that the good news really is good news, for I have seen it alive  
in the world. Thanks be to God! Amen.

†HYMN

“O God, How We Have Wandered”

#202

### PARTING WORDS

### POSTLUDE

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

**Worship Materials from “*Telling the Good: Grounding Ourselves in the Good News this Lent*” from A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org). Used with permission.**

