

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Affiliated with the United Church of Christ & the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)



April 21, 2024

The Fourth Sunday of Easter

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Richard W. McCarty & Pastor Joy L. Johnson

*Whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

Prelude
Welcome, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

Shelly Conrad

Centering Music

Christ Arose #294

*Low in the grave He lay, Jesus my Savior
Waiting the coming day, Jesus my Lord
Death cannot keep its prey, Jesus my Savior
He tore the bars away, Jesus my Lord*

*Up from the grave He arose
With a mighty triumph o'er His foes
He arose a victor from the dark domain,
And He lives forever with His saints to reign
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah, Christ arose!
(Repeat Chorus)*

Invocation

One: Christ Jesus, our Risen Savior, today we recognize you as the Good Shepherd, who has laid His life down for us, His Sheep.

All: You know us, and we belong to You. You speak, and we know Your voice. You ask us to follow, and we shall, knowing that each of us is special to You, and is worthy of Your amazing love. Amen!

*Hymn

"Amazing Love"

(repeat as directed)

*I'm forgiven because you were forsaken
I'm accepted, you were condemned
I'm alive and well
Your spirit is within me
Because you died and rose again*

*Amazing love, how can it be? That You, my King would die for me
Amazing love, I know it's true. It's my joy to honor You
In all I do, I honor You*

*You are my king, You are my king
Jesus, You are my king
Jesus, You are my king*

* Opening Prayer

*The Peace of Christ

One: The Peace of Christ be with you, All!

All: And also with you!

One: Let us share with one another a sign of peace.

First Reading

The First Letter of John 3:16-24

¹⁶We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? ¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

Responsorial

Psalm 23

One: The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.

All: He leads me in right paths for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.

One: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long. Amen!

***Gloria**

“Glory Be to God, Creator” #145

Glory be to God, Creator, glory be to God the Son,
Glory be to God the Spirit, known as Three, yet God the One

As it was in the beginning, it is now and so shall be,
In a world without an ending, glory through eternity.

Holy, holy God Almighty! Holy, holy Prince of Peace!
Holy, holy Wind of Presence! Holy, holy, holy! Amen!



*Gospel

John 10:11-18

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

One: This is the Gospel of Christ for the people of God.

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Message

“The Good Shepherd”

Pastor Joy

Hymn

“Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us” #440

Savior, like a shepherd lead us; Much we need thy tender care
In thy pleasant pastures feed us; for our use thy folds prepare
Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus; thou hast bought us, thine we are
Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus; Thou hast bought us, Thine we are

We are thine, do thou befriend us, be the guardian of our way
Keep thy flock, from sin defend us; seek us when we go astray
Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus; Hear O hear us when we pray
Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus; Hear O hear us when we pray

Thou hast promised to receive us, poor and sinful though we be
Thou hast mercy to relieve us, Grace to cleanse and pow’r to free
Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus; early let us turn to thee
Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus; early let us turn to thee

Celebration of Communion

Pastor: People of God, come to the table! No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at the table of Christ. And He promised that as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we not only remember Him, but we commune with Him by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

All: This is a table of grace. There is room around it for every soul that was, and is, and is to come. We come to the table as a people who are learning the way of Christ. We confess that we are not always right. But we share this faith: that those who trust in Christ Jesus will grow in the assurance of God's eternal love.

Pastor: And so, here at this table we take bread and cup and ask the Holy Spirit to make it for us: communion with Christ, who gave his life as the bread of heaven and as the cup of eternal life.

All: Here at this table we remember that Christ gave his entire life as an outpouring of God's love—a love that will, one day, renew all things. Amen.

Pastor: People of God, come to the table!

Communion Music

"You are My All in All" #427

Shelly Conrad

(Please feel free to sing along as communion is served)

You are my strength when I am weak; you are the treasure that I seek,
You are my all in all
Seeking you as a precious jewel, Lord, to give up I'd be a fool,
You are my all in all

Jesus, Lamb of God, Worthy is your name.

Jesus, Lamb of God, Worthy is your name.

(Repeat)



Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer ("Debts and Debtors")

One: The Lord be with you.

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

One: People of God, let us center our hearts and extend the spiritual power that is within us. *Let us pray:* For the prayer requests that have come to us today, whether joys or sorrows...and as we pray, let us add prayers for our Christian Education program at Community United Church, as we seek leadership and energy to gather and nurture our youth. [personal prayer requests are presented] Holy and Loving God, in your wisdom, meet all these needs in the perfect way of your grace.

All: God hear our prayer!

One: For all that we hold in the silence of our hearts, we come to you in the confidence of quiet, O God, and lift our petitions privately to you. *(Silent prayer)*... Almighty God, Sovereign of Heaven, shower your blessings upon all people! Move the mountains in our lives or help to move us so that we might be fully at peace. This we pray in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray...

All: "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, the Power, and the Glory forever." Amen.

Offering

Our offerings are first and foremost what we give to the world through justice, kindness, and mercy—and these we can do every day. Our offerings can also take the form of financial contributions to the church to support our ministries.

**If you are not in the sanctuary, online donations can be made at:
www.communityunited.church**

*Or, if you prefer to mail in a check, that can be addressed to the church at:
1011 West 38th Street – Erie, PA 16508*

Ministry of Music

"How Sweet It Is"

Dina Johnson & Shelly Conrad

Your offerings make this inclusive ministry possible. Thank you! Because of you, our church reaches through and beyond Erie: providing worship, community, and service. As you can give generously, it is well received.

Offertory Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Congregational Response (BLUE) #147

***“Praise God, from whom all blessing flow:
Praise God, all creatures high and low: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known!
Creator, Word, and Spirit one!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia!”***

*Departing Prayer

One: Good Shepherd, walk beside us, we pray, through both the triumphs and the troubles of our days, and lead us in the right paths for your name’s sake.

All: Remain with us in the dark and stillness of night, and let us lie down in safety, only to be restored and comforted during our walk in this world and filled with hope for the world to come. Amen!

*Blessing



*Closing Hymn

“Alleluia!” #291

Chorus

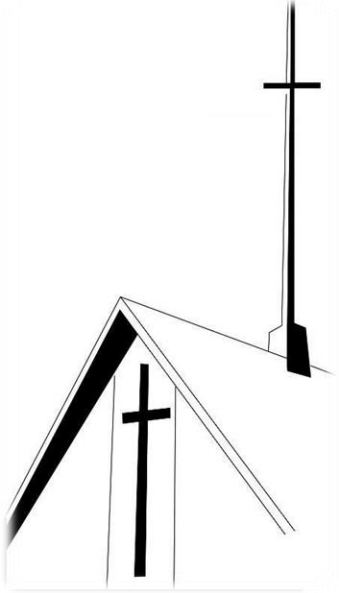
Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord;
Alleluia, alleluia, give praise to His name.

Jesus is Lord of all the earth,
He is the King of creation (Chorus)

Spread the good news o'er all the earth,
Jesus has died and has risen (Chorus)

Come let us praise the living God,
Joyfully sing to our Savior (Chorus)

**Thank you for worshipping with us this morning at
Community United Church!**



**Next Week:
Fifth Sunday of Easter
11:00 AM**

Readings:

1 John 4:7-21

Psalm 22:25-31

John 15:1-8

Theme: Bearing Fruit

***Need to contact us for prayer, conversation, or to connect
online with a small group or church ministry?***

1011 West 38th Street – Erie, PA 16508

(814) – 864 – 4429

www.communityunited.church



Community United Church

The altar flowers this morning are given in celebration of Pastor Joy's birthday by
Dina Johnson

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- April 21: Service Sunday
April 23: Ladies Lunch
April 28: Prayer and Praise at 9 AM as well as 11AM worship
May 1: Supper 'n Study 6:30 PM

SAVE THE DATE: June 1: Craft & Bake Sale at CUC

Need hearing assistance? We have four available units. Please talk to our tech crew in the back of the sanctuary.

Please submit any announcement requests by **Tuesday** for the Sunday bulletin.

WE REMEMBER THOSE IN OUR ARMED FORCES:

Jacob Snyder (Army), Nick Duncan (Army), Samantha McHenry (Army), Brittany Duncan (Army),
Matt Duncan (Army), Tyler Anderson (Army National Guard), Shelby Wescott (Army),
Matthew Anderson (Army), (Marines), Jaden O'Hara (Army)
& Toby Charlton (Marines)

PRAYERS FOR:

Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Kevin Bennett & family & friends, Rod & Dew Johnson,
Harry Lamb, Diane Walker, Ralph Kester, John M., Todd Carrier, Teddy Long, Jimmyo, Sandy Gool, Tammy
McIntyre, Laura Stone, Ron Celeski, Jan & Tim Crowe and Family, Debra Doerfer & David Magid, Annette
Minich, Dave Pakulski, Randi Johnson, Lillian Hendrickson, Ethel Davis,
Jim Haglund, Chelsea Brown, John Waid, Celeste Eller & Family, Shirley Carrier,
Dave Wooledge, Ev Smith, Karis Fenton, Ruth Schmidt, Gary Peck, Jerry Koziol, Uncle Charlie,
Carol & Doug Rodgers, Jane Moran, Ed Mumau, Renee Gullekson, Sharon Cooper,
Mary Ann Schmeisser, Sandra Carlson & Josh Cook.

Council Members:

Debbie Anderson (President), Bob Martin (VP), Nancy Alberico (Secretary), Janice Skelly,
Mike Pruzinsky, Michele Vahey, Patti Rogers, Carol Rodgers, and Angel Conrad

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