

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



August 27, 2023

The thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

"On This Rock"

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy L. Johnson

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

Centering

“Thy Perfect Love”

Joe Gruelich and Shelly Conrad

Invocation

One: “Who do you say I am?”

All: Some say Messiah, some say “Human One.”

One: “Who do you say I am?”

All: Some say Emmanuel, God-with-us, some say Wisdom, Teacher of Truth. Some say Ruler of Peace, Bringer of Justice.

One: Community United church, Who do you say I am?

All: You are the Body to which we belong; We are Your people, each needed, treasured. In You we are transformed into Your Hope, Your Love, Your Vision. You are the One we long for, the One we seek here today, The One who empowers our lives.

One: Come, let us worship!

All: AMEN!

Opening Prayer

***Opening songs**

“All People That On Earth Do Dwell” #661

All people that on earth do dwell
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice
Serve Him with joy His praises tell
Come now before Him and rejoice

O enter then his gates with praise
Approach with joy His courts unto
Praise, laud and bless His Name always
For it is seemly so to do

Because the Lord our God is good
His mercy is forever sure
His truth at all times firmly stood
And shall from age to age endure

“How Great Is Our God”

The splendor of the King, Clothed in Majesty
Let all the earth rejoice, All the earth rejoice
He wraps Himself in light And darkness tries to hide
And trembles at His voice, Trembles at His voice

Chorus:

How great is our God; Sing with me, how great is our God
And all will see how great, How great is our God

Age to age, He stands and time is in His hands
Beginning and the end, Beginning and the end
The Godhead, three in one; Father, Spirit, Son
The Lion and the Lamb, Lion and the Lamb

Name above all names, Worthy of all praise
My heart will sing, how great is our God

First Reading

The Message

Isaiah 51:1-6

Listen to me, all you who are serious about right living and committed to seeking God. Ponder the rock from which you were cut, the quarry from which you were dug. Yes, ponder Abraham, your father, and Sarah, who bore you. Think of it! One solitary man when I called him, but once I blessed him, he multiplied. Likewise I, God, will comfort Zion, comfort all her mounds of ruins. I'll transform her dead ground into Eden, her moonscape into the garden of God, A place filled with exuberance and laughter, thankful voices and melodic songs. "Pay attention, my people. Listen to me, nations. Revelation flows from me. My decisions light up the world. My deliverance arrives on the run, my salvation right on time. I'll bring justice to the peoples. Even faraway islands will look to me and take hope in my saving power. Look up at the skies, ponder the earth under your feet. The skies will fade out like smoke, the earth will wear out like work pants, and the people will die off like flies. But my salvation will last forever, my setting-things-right will never be obsolete.

Song of Response

“God is Love”

God is love, and all who live in love, live in God

Responsorial

One: I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; before the “gods” I sing your praise.

All: I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted your name and your word above everything.

One: On the day I called, you answered me; you increased my strength of soul. All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord, for they have heard the words of your mouth. They shall sing of the ways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord.

All: For though the Lord is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he perceives from far away. Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies; you stretch out your hand, and your right hand delivers me.

One: The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O lord, endures forever.

All: Do not forsake the work of your hands. 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 Lesson

Matthew 16:13-20

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ And they said, “Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Hymn of Response

“Knowing You” #357

All I once held dear, built my life upon
All this world reveres, and wars to own
All I once thought gain I have counted loss
Spent and worthless now, compared to this

Chorus:

Knowing You, Jesus; Knowing You
There is no greater thing
You're my all, You're the best
You're my joy, my righteousness
And I love You, Lord

Now my heart's desire is to know You more
To be found in You and known as Yours
To possess by faith what I could not earn
All-surpassing gift of righteousness

Oh, to know the power of Your risen life
And to know You in Your sufferings
To become like You in Your death, my Lord
So with You to live and never die

Passing of the Peace

(When prompted, all are welcome to show a sign of peace with one another, in their own way)

Celebration of Communion

Pastor: Beloved children of God, you are personally invited to the table of Jesus, Son of the Living God, and our Redeemer. It is the same Jesus who knows your name, who asks you to come forward *just as you are*, and whose love pursues you your whole life long.

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: Together, now, let us bless the elements. 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 "I am the Bread of Life" #703

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

One: The Lord be with you.

All: *And also, with you.*

One: Let us pray today for all whose names or circumstances have been presented before us, whether from within the sanctuary or online. Let us also pray for each individual whose name is printed on the prayer list found on the last page of the bulletin, and may we also remember and pray for all those in our armed forces.

(prayer requests are read – when you are prompted, please respond, "God, hear our prayer.")

One: 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 now in the confidence of quiet, O God, and we ask for your healing, your grace, and your mercy upon ourselves and on those for whom we care.

(Silent prayers)

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

Your offerings make this inclusive ministry possible. Thank you! Because of you, our church reaches through and beyond Erie: providing worship, community, and service. Please give generously for the maintenance of our building, our programs and 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, which can be addressed to the church at:

1011 West 38th Street – Erie, PA 16508

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Congregational Response**

“All People That On Earth Do Dwell” #661

All people that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice
Serve Him with joy His praises tell, Come now before Him and rejoice

***Departing Prayer**

One: God of many names, we know that Jesus asks each of us, “Who do you say that I am?”
We pray for Your precious grace and guidance, so that in all we do we acknowledge
Christ as the rock of our lives and cherish those who have come before us and have
built His Church.

**All: Help us to live as Jesus taught us: loving You, loving neighbor, and unified in
Christ. Amen!**

***Blessing**

***Closing Song**

“My Hope is built on Nothing Less” #405

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus’ name

Chorus:

*On Christ, the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand*

In every rough and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the vale
When all around my soul gives way
He then is all my hope and stay [Chorus]

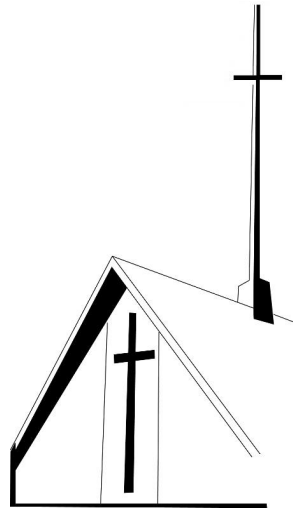
His oath, his covenant, his blood,
support me in the whelming flood;
when all around my soul gives way, he then is all my hope and stay. [Chorus]

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

Next Sunday – September 3, 2023

10:55 AM Announcements

11:00 AM Worship



Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture for Study:

Jeremiah 15:15-21

Psalms 26:1-8

Matthew 16:21-28

***Need to contact us for prayer, conversation, or to connect
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 to the glory of God by Ginnie Burger honoring the 38th anniversary of her marriage.

Please consider signing up for our prayer ministry. This is not a prayer chain, nor another meeting or committee. We simply ask for those who are interested to email communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com and let us know if we can email you prayer requests for the church. It will not become a group email chain, nor a discussion group. It is simply (but importantly) an opportunity to pray for the life and ministries of Community United Church.

Today's Elder: Thea Hyatt Deacons: Becky Pomeroy & Patty Rogers

UPCOMING EVENTS:

August 29: Ladies Lunch – 12:00 PM
September 6: Bible Study – “Supper & Study” - 6:30 PM
September 11: Council Meeting – 6:30 PM
September 12: Liberty House
September 13: Spirits & Spirituality – Calamari’s 7:00 PM

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

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) and DJ Miaczynski (Marines)

PRAYERS FOR:

Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Kevin Bennett & family & friends, Rod & Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Sue Schweiwer, Diane Walker, George Churley, Robin Adams, 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 Pikulski, Randi Johnson, Lillian Hendrickson, Wilma and Janice Skelly, Ethel Davis, Jim Haglund, Chelsea Brown, John Waid & Dina Johnson.

Council Members: Debbie Anderson (President), Bob Martin (VP), Dina Johnson (Secretary), Janice Skelly, Mike Pruzinsky, April Knapp, Patti Rogers, Carol Rodgers, and Angel Conrad.