

# Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



## All Saints & Souls Sunday

November 5, 2023

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy Johnson

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

Prelude  
Welcome & Announcements

Cheryl Strecker

Centering Music

“We Exalt Thee” #47

For thou, O Lord art high above all the earth; thou art exalted far above all gods.  
For thou, O Lord art high above all the earth; thou art exalted far above all gods.

We exalt thee, we exalt thee, we exalt thee, O Lord.

We exalt thee, we exalt thee, we exalt thee, O Lord.

*(Repeat all)*

### **Invocation to Worship**

One: Holy and loving God, in you there is eternal life. It is the life that is *true life*, which can be experienced on earth and in the fullness of heaven.

**All: As we gather to worship you today, O God, remind us that we join the eternal worship of heaven—where angels and saints and all who have gone before us encircle your throne, in song, praise, and prayer. Blessing and honor and power and might be to our God, now and forever. Amen!**

\*Opening Song

“Come, Christians, Join to Sing” #87

Come, Christians, join to sing: Alleluia! Amen!

Loud praise to Christ our King; Alleluia! Amen!

Let all, with heart and voice, before God’s throne rejoice;

Praise is his gracious choice: Alleluia! Amen!

Come, lift your hearts on high, Alleluia! Amen!

Let praises fill the sky; Alleluia! Amen!

Christ is our Guide and Friend; to us he’ll condescend;

His love shall never end: Alleluia! Amen!

Praise yet our Christ again, Alleluia! Amen!

Life shall not end the strain; Alleluia! Amen!

On heaven’s blissful shore—his goodness we’ll adore,

Singing forever more, “Alleluia! Amen!”

\*Opening Prayer

\*Passing of the Peace

One: The Lord be with you!

**All: And also with you!**

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

*[Please be mindful that some people may not be able to shake hands or hug due to health precautions]*

## First Reading

## The Book of Revelation 7:9-17

<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!" <sup>11</sup> And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> singing,

*"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom  
and thanksgiving and honor  
and power and might  
be to our God forever and ever! Amen."*

<sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" <sup>14</sup> I said to him, "Sir, you are the one who knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. <sup>15</sup> For this reason they are before the throne of God and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. <sup>16</sup> They will hunger no more and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat, <sup>17</sup> for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

## Memorials & Communion with our Saints

"Goodness is Stronger than Evil" #296

*Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;  
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.  
Victory is ours, victory is ours—through him who loved us.  
Victory is ours, victory is ours—through him who loved us.*

One: In his vision of heaven, the prophet John saw "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the Throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands." People of God, look more closely through that opened door to heaven. Among the multitude too numerous to count are our loved ones who have gone before us into the near presence of God.

*Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;  
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.  
Victory is ours, victory is ours—through him who loved us.  
Victory is ours, victory is ours—through him who loved us.*

One: People of God, see now through the eyes of the Spirit. Look again at that great multitude around God's throne—and see the ones who have gone before us. Grandparents and parents. Siblings and friends. Spouses and partners. Teachers and co-workers. Neighbors and devoted civil servants. Those who have died serving their country, and those who did not know they were going to die. The young and the old. The sick and the healthy. Jesus, be merciful in our sorrow, and help us to believe the good news and the power of your resurrection: that when we exhale our last breath on earth, we awaken with the breath and life of heaven.

*Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;  
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.  
Victory is ours, victory is ours—through him who loved us.  
Victory is ours, victory is ours—through him who loved us.*

(Sing twice)

### **Second Reading**

**1 John 3:1-3**

<sup>1</sup> See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup> Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

### **Responsorial**

**Psalm 34:1-10, 22**

One: I will bless the LORD at all times; God's praise shall continually be in my mouth.

**All: My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.**

One: I sought the LORD, and the Holy One answered me and delivered me from all my fears.

**All: O taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are those who take refuge in God. The LORD redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in God will be condemned. 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**

**Matthew 5:1-12**

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. <sup>5</sup> “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup> “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. <sup>7</sup> “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. <sup>8</sup> “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. <sup>9</sup> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. <sup>10</sup> “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup> “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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

**All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!**

Message:

“Life unto Life”

Pastor Rich



Song of Response

“Blest Are They” #666

Blest are they, the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of God.  
Blest are they, full of sorrow, they shall be consoled.

Chorus:

*Rejoice and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!  
Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God.*

Blest are they, the lowly ones, they shall inherit the earth.  
Blest are they who hunger and thirst, they shall have their fill. *(Chorus)*

Blest are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs.  
Blest are they, the pure of heart, they shall see God. *(Chorus)*

Blest are they who seek peace. They are the children of God.  
Blest are they who suffer in faith, the glory of God is theirs. *(Chorus)*

Blest are they who suffer hate—all because of me.  
Rejoice be glad, yours is the kingdom; shine for all to see! *(Chorus)*

## Celebration of Communion

Pastor: People of God, come to the table! Christ 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: 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

Cheryl Strecker



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

One: The Lord be with you.

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

One: *Let us pray:* For the prayer requests that have come to us today, whether joys or sorrows.... [*prayer requests are presented*] .... We also pray for everyone who has asked their name to be on the prayer list [*see last page of the bulletin*]. Holy and Loving God, in your wisdom, meet all of 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.*

*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.*

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

**[www.communityunited.church](http://www.communityunited.church)**

*Or, if you prefer to mail in a check, which can be addressed to the church at:*

1011 West 38<sup>th</sup> Street – Erie, PA 16508

## Ministry of Music

“Come Healing”

Leah Johnson, Julie Lokahi, Patrick Thiem

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

\*Congregational Response #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: God of unfailing light, in your realm of glory the poor are blessed, the hungry filled, and every tear is wiped away.

**All: Strengthened by this vision, may we follow in the way of holiness that Christ made known in life and death.**

One: All blessing, honor, and glory, all wisdom, praise and thanks be yours, O God—the Source of our salvation!

**All: And so we pray in communion with all the saints on earth and in heaven: bless us with your healing presence; make us hungry for justice; strengthen our faith; and increase our love for others, especially those we find it most difficult to love. Amen!**

\*Blessing

**\*Closing Song**

“For All the Saints” #529 Vv. 1-5

For all the saints—who from their labors rest,  
Who thee by faith before the world confessed,  
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest.

*Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Thou was their rock, their fortress and their might;  
Thou, Lord, their captain in the well-fought fight;  
Thou in the darkness—drear, their one true light.

*Alleluia! Alleluia!*

O blest communion, fellowship divine!  
We feebly struggle—they in glory shine.  
Yet all are one in thee, for all are thine.

*Alleluia! Alleluia!*

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,  
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,  
And hearts are brave—again and arms are strong.

*Alleluia! Alleluia!*

But lo! Their breaks a yet more glorious day:  
The saints triumphant rise in bright array;  
The King of glory passes on his way.

*Alleluia! Alleluia!*



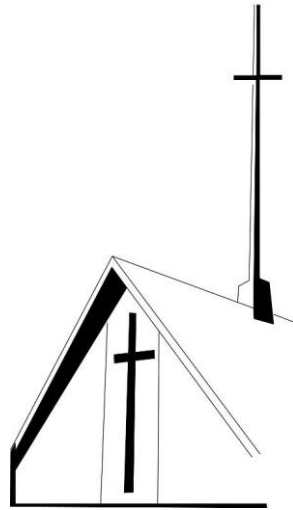


**Thank you for worshipping with us this morning at  
Community United Church!**

**Next Sunday – November 12, 2023**

**10:55 AM Announcements**

**11:00 AM THIRD ANNUAL INTERFAITH SERVICE**



**Temple Anshe Hessed & Community United Church**

**“Wisdom from Judaism and Christianity”**

Considering our annual Interfaith service, if you would like to join a short scripture, communion, and prayer service on November 12, please join in the sanctuary at 10:00 AM before the coffee social at 10:15 AM.

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

1011 West 38<sup>th</sup> Street – Erie, PA 16508

(814) – 864 – 4429

[www.communityunited.church](http://www.communityunited.church)



## Community United Church

**The altar flowers this morning are given to the glory of God by Carol Rodgers  
in Memory of Walter Curty**

**Today's Elder:** Lee Pomeroy  
**Next Week's Elder:** Carol Rodgers

**Deacons:** David Holmes & Pat Vahey  
**Deacons:** Sandra Carlson & Patti Rogers

**Reminder: Fleece Orders are Due Today! Samples are available in Fellowship Hall.**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

November 8: Spirits & Spirituality – Calamari's 7:00 PM  
November 12: Communion Offered, 10:00 AM; Interfaith Service 11:00 AM  
November 13: Council Meeting 6:30 PM  
November 14: Liberty House  
November 15: Resonate 6:30 PM  
November 19: Service Sunday  
November 26: Prayer & Praise Service – 9:00 AM, Main Worship at 11:00 AM

*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), DJ Miaczynski (Marines), Jaden O'Hara (Army) & Toby Charlton (Marines)

### **PRAYERS FOR:**

Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Kevin Bennett & family & friends, Rod & Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Sue Scheiwer, 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, Patti Rogers, Celeste Eller & Family, Shirley Carrier, Karis Fenton.

### **Council Members:**

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