

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



April 7, 2024

The Second Sunday of Easter

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

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

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

Prelude
Welcome, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

Shelly Conrad & Millie Johnson

Centering Music

“As We Gather” #646

As we gather may your Spirit work within us,
As we gather may we glorify your Name.
Knowing well that as our hearts begin to worship,
We’ll be blessed because we came—we’ll be blessed because we came.
(Repeat all)

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, we come together to worship on this second Sunday of Easter to continue to bear witness to the power, glory, and mystery of the resurrection of Christ.

All: Spirit of God, show us—once more—how faith in the death and resurrection of Christ is a transformational encounter, not a test of doctrine. Help us to welcome questions of faith, as much as Christ himself did. Amen!

*Hymn

“Open the Eyes of My Heart” #656

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart,
I want to see you, I want to see you.
Open the eyes of my heart, Lord, open the eyes of my heart,
I want to see you, I want to see you.

To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory;
Pour out your power and love as we sing “Holy, holy, holy.”

Holy, holy, holy—holy, holy holy;
Holy, holy, holy, I want to see you.

Holy, holy, holy—holy, holy, holy;
Holy, holy, holy, I want to see you.



*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.

(You may choose to shake hands, hug, or simply acknowledge one another without physical touch based on your comfort and/or health needs.)

First Reading

The First Letter of John 1:1-2:2

1 We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— **2** this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us— **3** what we have seen and heard we also declare to you so that you also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. **4** We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. **6** If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; **7** but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. **8** If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, **2** and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Responsorial

An Adaptation of Psalm 133

One: How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

**All: A community in unity is like precious oil that revives the body; or like the dew of the morning—for in unity the LORD ordains blessings, life forevermore.
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 20:19-31

¹⁹When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were, for fear of [persecution], Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²²When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." ²⁴But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." ²⁸Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." ³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. ³¹But these are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Message

Finding Faith through Doubt

Pastor Rich

Hymn

"Open our Eyes" #491

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch him, and say that we love him.

Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen,
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus

(Repeat all)



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: 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

"Tomorrow"

Addy Johnson

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.... [prayer requests are presented] 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.

**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

“Goodness of God”

Leah, Addy, Millie Johnson

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: Holy and loving God, in your love you meet us *where* we are, and *how* we are—sometimes full of faith, and sometimes we are full of questions.

All: Spirit of God, help us to live our questions with integrity so that our faith can grow in authenticity. Amen.

*Blessing



*Closing Hymn

“Lift High the Cross” #287

Refrain:

*Lift high the cross,
the love of Christ proclaim
Till all the world—
adore his sacred name.*

Come, Christians, follow
Where our Savior trod,
Our King victorious,
Christ, the Son of God.

Refrain

All newborn servants
Of the Crucified
Bear on their brow
The seal of Christ who died.

Refrain

O Lord, once lifted
On the glorious tree,
Your death has brought us
Life eternally.

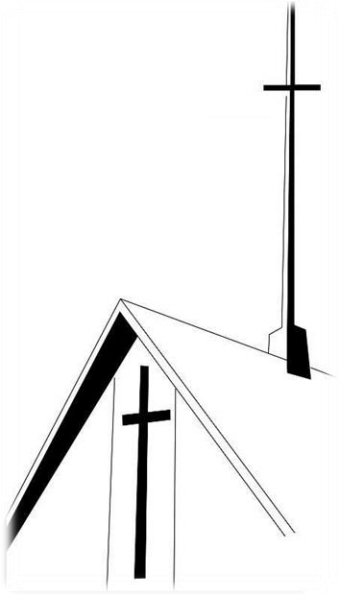
Refrain

So shall our song of
Triumph ever be:
Praise to the Cru-ci-fied
For victory.

Refrain



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



Next Week:
Third Sunday of Easter

11:00 AM

Readings:

1 John 3:1-7

Psalm 4

Luke 24:36b-48

Theme: From Earthly Jesus to Risen Christ

***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 to the glory of God by Ginnie Burger in
Memory of Dad's Birthday**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- April 9: Liberty House
April 15: Council Meeting – 6:30 PM
April 17: Resonate 6:30 PM
April 23: Ladies Lunch
April 28: Praise & Prayer 9:00 AM

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

Right Side - \$161.38 Left Side - \$106.66

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), 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, Diane Walker, Robin Adams, Ralph Kester,
John M., Todd Carrier, Teddy Long, Jimmyo, Sandy Gool, Tammy McIntyre, Laura Stone,
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, Patti Rogers, Celeste Eller & Family, Shirley Carrier,
Dave Woledge, Ev Smith, Karis Fenton, Ruth Schmidt, Jerry Koziol, Uncle Charlie,
Carol & Doug Rodgers, Jane Moran, Ed Mumau, Renee Gullekson, Sharon Cooper,
Mary Ann Schmeisser, Sandra Carlson, Josh Cook & Danny Kaeberlein.

Council Members:

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

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