

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



August 10, 2025

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

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!*

Centering Music

"Wait for the Lord" #166

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!
(Repeat)

Invocation:

One: Holy and loving God, from you come promises of wholeness, restoration, mercy, and peace. We your people live by faith to see all such promises fulfilled.

All: In this time of worship, grant us the endurance to wait and hope in you. For you show up when we least expect it—in the face of the stranger and in miraculous moments. Spirit of God, grant us the gifts of faith, hope, and love, that we might endure in times of waiting, with assurance that your Reign is soon coming in fullness. Amen!

Opening Hymn

"Christ Be My Leader" #453

Christ be my leader by night as by day;
Safe through the darkness, for he is the Way.
Gladly I follow, my future his care,
Darkness is daylight when Jesus is there.

Christ be my teacher in age as in youth,
Drifting or doubting, for he is the Truth.
Grant me to trust him; though shifting as sand,
Doubt cannot daunt me; in Jesus I stand.

Christ be my Savior in calm as in strife;
Death cannot hold me for he is the Life.
Nor darkness nor doubting nor sin and its stain
Can touch my salvation: with Jesus I reign.



*** 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 New Testament Letter to the Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance, and he set out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ By faith, with Sarah's involvement, he received power of procreation, even though he was too old, because he considered him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore."

¹³ All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, ¹⁴ for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better homeland, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.



Responsorial

Psalms 33:13-22

One: The LORD looks down from heaven; God sees all humankind.

All: From where God sits enthroned, the LORD watches all the inhabitants of the earth—God who fashions the hearts of them all and observes all their deeds.

One: A king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a vain hope for victory, and by its great might it cannot save.

All: Truly the eye of the LORD is on those who revere God, on those who hope in the Holy One's steadfast love, to deliver their soul from death and to keep them alive in famine.

One: Our soul waits for the LORD; God is our help and shield.

All: Our heart is glad in God because we trust in God's holy name. Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you. 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**

Luke 12:32-40

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

³⁵ “Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; ³⁶ be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. ³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them. ³⁸ If he comes during the middle of the night or near dawn and finds them so, blessed are those servants.

³⁹ “But know this: if the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

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

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

Children’s Message

Song of Preparation

“Cares Chorus” #493

I cast all my cares upon you,
I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.
And anytime that I don’t know what to do.
I will cast all my cares upon you.
(Repeat)

Message

Staying Alert for the Reign of God

Pastor Rich

Hymn

“Hymn of Promise” #515

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
There's a dawn in every darkness bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity;
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.



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

“Your Great Name”

Cheryl Strecker

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]. We also pray for all who have asked to be on our prayer list—and so we ask: Holy and Loving God, in your wisdom, meet all of these needs in the perfect way of your grace. We pray together:

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

Your offerings are first and foremost what we give to the world through justice, kindness, and mercy—and these we can do every day. Our financial contributions to the church are what allow us to support our ministries. As you can give, please do so joyfully!

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

Offertory/Ministry of Music

"The Promise"

Lizdel and Liz Alward

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Congregational Response #147**

"Praise God, from whom all blessings 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, your promises to us are sure. We humbly ask you to grant us the gift of faith that will sustain us in our waiting, especially when life is difficult.

All: Remind us that we are part of the great lineage of saints—who endured in their life by faith. By your grace, they came into victory in this life and in the life to come. Remind us that when all seems lost, you are still at work to restore all that is broken, and even to breathe eternal life into death. Amen!

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn

“God of the Ages, History’s Maker” #78

God of the ages, history’s Maker,
Planning our pathway, holding us fast,
Shaping in mercy all that concerns us:
Father, we praise you, Lord of the past.

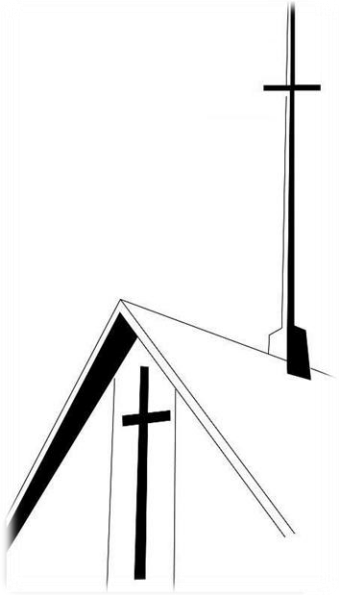
God of this morning, gladly your children
Worship before you, trustingly bow:
Teach us to know you—always among us,
Quietly sovereign—Lord of our now.

God of tomorrow, strong overcomer,
Princes of darkness own your command:
What then can harm us? We are your people,
Now and forever—kept by your hand.

Lord of past ages, Lord of this morning,
Lord of the future, help us, we pray:
Teach us to trust you, love and obey you,
Crown you each moment, Lord of today.



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



Next Week:

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Readings:

Jeremiah 23:23-29

Psalm 82

Luke 12:49-56

Theme: Taking a Stand

***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 from Kim Tripp in celebration of Esmerelda's 4th birthday!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- August 12: **Erie Gives**, Liberty House
- August 14: Finance Meeting
- August 18: Church Council 6:30 PM
- August 20: Resonate – Sanctuary 7:00 PM

Reminders:

- *There are openings for you to attend an upcoming small group gathering – sign up in Fellowship Hall*
- *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:

Jackson Feiock (Army), Jacob Snyder (Army), Nick Duncan (Army), Brittany Duncan (Army), Matt Duncan (Army), Tyler Anderson (Army National Guard), Shelby Wescott (Army), Jaden O'Hara (Army), Toby Charlton (Marines), Cole Posnett (Army), Hunter Miaczynski (Army) & Mathew Anderson (Army)

PRAYERS FOR:

Darek Baksik, Laura Will, Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Ralph Kester, Teddy Long, Tammy McIntyre, Debra Doerfer & David Magid, Annette Minich, Dave Pakulski, Ethel Davis, Chelsea Brown, Celeste Eller & Family, Michele Serafin, Toni Stevenson, Dave Woledge, Ev Smith, Karis Fenton, Ruth Schmidt, Carol & Doug Rodgers, Jane Moran, Josh Cook & Danny Kaeberlein, Helena Burgos, The Vadzemnieks Family, Sharon Cooper, Sandra Ganley, Celeste Peck, Linda Foll Johnson and Dave Woledge

Current Council Members:

Mike Pruzinsky (President), Debbie Anderson (Vice President), Al Tilley (Treasurer), Nancy Alberico (Secretary), Janice Skelly, Angel Conrad, Michele Vahey, Justin Graff, and Mark Davis

Need to contact our Council President? Please email at: mpruzinsky@icloud.com