

# Community United Church

**An Open and Affirming Congregation**

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



August 16, 2026

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

11:00 AM

Pastor Joy L. Johnson

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

**Invocation**

One: May God be gracious to us and bless us.

**All: May God's face shine upon us,**

One: That your way, O God, may be known upon earth,

**All: your saving power among all nations. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn**

**"Healer of My Soul" #633**

Healer of my soul, keep me at evening.

Keep me at morning, keep me at noon, healer of my soul.

Keeper of my soul, on rough course faring,

Help and safeguard my means this night, keeper of my soul.

I am tired, astray and stumbling, shield my soul from the snare of sin.

Healer of my soul, keep me at evening.

Keep me at morning, keep me at noon, healer of my soul.

**\*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

Isaiah 56:1-8

Thus says the LORD:

Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come and my deliverance be revealed. Happy is the mortal who does this, the one who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it, and refrains from doing any evil.

Do not let the foreigner joined to the LORD say, "The LORD will surely separate me from his people"; and do not let the eunuch say, "I am just a dry tree." For thus says the LORD: To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, I will give, in my house and within my walls, a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.

And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath and do not profane it and hold fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus says the Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel: I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.

## Responsorial

Psalm 67

One: May God be gracious to us and bless us and make God's face to shine upon us,

**All: that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations.**

One: Let the peoples praise you, O God;

**All: let all the peoples praise you.**

One: Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth.

**All: Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.**

One: The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us.

**All: May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere him. 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 15:10-28**

10 Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, "Listen and understand:  
11 it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles." 12 Then the disciples approached and said to him, "Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?" 13 He answered, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. 14 Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit." 15 But Peter said to him, "Explain this parable to us." 16 Then he said, "Are you also still without understanding? 17 Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? 18 But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. 19 For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. 20 These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile."  
21 Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22 Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." 23 But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." 24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." 26 He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." 27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

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****"Blest Be the Tie That Binds" #393**

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;  
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;  
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes, each other's burdens bear;  
and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.

From sorrow, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;  
and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity.

Message

*What's in Your Heart?*

Evon Loyd

## Hymn of Response

“On Eagle’s Wings” # 438

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in his shadow for life,  
Say to the Lord, “My refuge, my Rock in whom I trust.”

### **Refrain**

And he will raise you up on eagle’s wings,  
Bear you on the breath of dawn,  
Make you to shine like the sun  
And hold you in the palm of his hand.

The snare of the fowler will never capture you and famine will bring you no fear,  
Under his wings your refuge, his faithfulness your shield.

*(Refrain)*

You need not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day;  
Though thousands fall about you, near to you it shall not come.

*(Refrain)*







### **Celebration of Communion**

Pastor: People of God, come to the table with open hands and love in your hearts, for this is Christ's table—a place where every person is valued, treated with kindness, and embraced in fairness and love.

**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 we take the 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**

"The Lord is my Shepherd" – Medley

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 in God's presence. Holy and Loving God, we come before you, carrying all that we are. We now bring before you the prayers of this community: *(prayer requests are presented.)* For these prayers, and for all we hold in silence, we trust in your loving care.

All: **God, hear our prayer.**

One: Let us continue in prayer, offering to God what rests quietly within us: *(silent prayers are offered.)* Gracious God, take what we bring, even when it feels small, and use it for your work of love in the world. Help us recognize your abundance, share your compassion, and continue the ministry of Jesus by making room for all at the table. 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 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](http://www.communityunited.church)**

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

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

Offertory/Ministry of Music      "You'll Never Walk Alone"      Cheryl Strecker

Offertory 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: O Holy One, may our souls be comforted.

All: **May our Spirits soar.**

One: May we trust in your abundance and turn from a sense of scarcity.

All: **Morning, noon and night we are yours.**

One: **We are yours.**

All: **Together we are One.**

\*Blessing

\*Closing Hymn      "Called as Partners in Christ's Service" #581 v.1,3,4

Called to Partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,  
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.  
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,  
Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.

Thus, new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense,  
Help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.  
Words of comfort, words of challenge, said with care,  
Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.

So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life  
That surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.  
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,  
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.

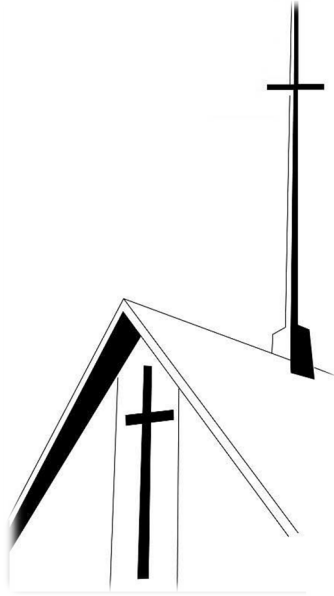
*Until we meet again, remember: you are  
loved.*

Postlude

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



**Next Week:  
Sunday, August 23, 2026  
11:00 AM**

*Readings:*  
Isaiah 51:1-6  
Psalm 138  
Matthew 16:13-20

**Theme: On This Rock: The Courage to Be Real**

***Need to contact us for prayer, conversation, or to connect  
online 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)

communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com



## Community United Church

**The altar flowers this morning are given to the glory of God by Pat and Michele Vahey in celebration of the birthday of Barbara Hickey, Michele's Mom.  
Happy Birthday, Barbara!**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

August 16: Service Sunday is TODAY! Stick around to see this ministry in action!

August 17: CUC Council Meeting 6:30 PM

August 18: Women's Group monthly luncheon – 12 PM

August 19: *Spirits & Spirituality* – 7 PM – Calamari's Squid Row

**SAVE THE DATE: CUC Craft Show September 19th**

***Need hearing assistance? We have four available devices to enhance your worship experience! 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), Zachary Oliver (PA Army National Guard),  
Aran Maloney (Air National Guard), and Connor Bille (Army)

### **PRAYERS FOR:**

Linda Hilbert, Anna Silvia, Dew Johnson, Ethel Davis, Celeste Eller & Family,  
Michele Serafin, Toni Stevenson, Sandra Ganley, Dorothy Moyer, Celeste Peck,  
Linda Foll Johnson, Debra Jackman, Zoey Cathie Witmire, Laura Will,  
Veronica, Joan Schultz, Michelle and Melissa, Tom and Thea Hyatt,  
Randy Koziol, Barbara Thompson, Tanisha and Jaeda, Barbara Hickey, Sandy Gool,  
Jim Haglund, family and friends of Lorre Rapp, Ruth Zavaglia, Brad Stewart, Cain Hickey,  
Zoey Foote, Earl Hall, Patty Brogdan, friends and family of Rosie Goss,  
friends and family of Marilyn Pease, Lynn Oliver, Rowan Oliver

### **Your 2026 Council Members:**

Thea Hyatt, President, Ginnie Burger, Vice President, Tracy Davis, Treasurer, Juli Tonks, Secretary,  
Michele Vahey, Justin Graff, Chuck Becker, and Don Cameron

You may call the church office at 814-864-4429 for pastoral and administrative matters  
or use email: [communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com](mailto:communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com)

Don't forget to check Facebook and our website: **communityunited.church**

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*Thank you for your support of  
Community United Church during  
Erie Gives and always!*