

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



August 2, 2026

The Tenth 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!*

Welcome and Announcements

Centering Music

"Holy Ground" #654

We are standing on holy ground,
And I know that there are angels all around.
Let us praise Jesus now;
We are standing in his presence on holy ground.
(Repeat)

Invocation

One: O God, you meet us in the wilderness places of our lives, in our questions, our struggles, and our deepest hungers.

All: We come holding on, trusting that you will meet us in the night and lead us toward morning.

One: Like the crowds who gathered around Jesus, we come hungry for compassion, for healing, for hope, and for a deeper understanding of your love.

All: We open our hearts to receive your blessing, our hands to share your abundance, and our lives to reflect your grace.

One: May this time of worship remind us that we never wrestle alone and we never come to Christ empty.

All: We come as we are, and we come ready to be transformed. Amen!

***Opening Hymn** "Come Away from Rush and Hurry" #655

Come away from rush and hurry to the stillness of God's peace.
From our vain ambition's worry, come to Christ to find release.
Come away from noise and clamor, life's demands and frenzied pace;
Come to join the people gathered here to seek and find God's face.

In the pastures of God's goodness we lie down to rest our soul.
From the waters of God's mercy we drink deeply, are made whole.
At the table of God's presence all the saints are richly fed.
With the oil of God's anointing into service we are led.

Come, then, children, with your burdens—life's confusions, fears and pain.
Leave them at the cross of Jesus; take instead his kingdom's reign.
Bring your thirsts, for he will quench them—he alone will satisfy.
All our longings find attainment when to self we gladly die.

***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

Genesis 21:22-31

At that time Abimelech, with Phicol the commander of his army, said to Abraham, "God is with you in all that you do; ²³ now therefore swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my offspring or with my posterity, but as I have dealt loyally with you, you will deal with me and with the land where you have resided as an alien." ²⁴ And Abraham said, "I swear it." ²⁵ When Abraham complained to Abimelech about a well of water that Abimelech's servants had seized, ²⁶ Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this; you did not tell me, and I have not heard of it until today." ²⁷ So Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two men made a covenant. ²⁸ Abraham set apart seven ewe lambs of the flock. ²⁹ And Abimelech said to Abraham, "What is the meaning of these seven ewe lambs that you have set apart?" ³⁰ He said, "These seven ewe lambs you shall accept from my hand in order that you may be a witness for me that I dug this well." ³¹ Therefore that place was called Beer-Sheba because there both of them swore an oath.



Second Reading

Romans 9:1-5

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit— ² I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own brothers and sisters, my own flesh and blood. ⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; ⁵ to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Responsorial

Psalms 17:1-7,15

One: Hear a just cause, O LORD; listen to my prayer and give ear to my plea.

All: O God, hear our voices and receive the prayers of our hearts.

One: You have tested my heart and visited me by night; you know my thoughts and my ways.

All: Guide us in your truth and help us walk faithfully in your presence.

One: Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me under the shadow of your wings.

All: In times of struggle and uncertainty, be our refuge and our strength.

One: Show your wondrous love, O God, and save those who seek refuge in you.

All: Surround us with your mercy and hold us close in your care.

One: As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied, seeing your likeness.

All: May our hearts rest in the hope of your presence and the promise of your love. 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 14:13-21

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. ¹⁴ When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵ When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to them, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” ¹⁷ They replied, “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.” ¹⁸ And he said, “Bring them here to me.” ¹⁹ Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. ²⁰ And all ate and were filled, and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹ And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

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

“Open My Eyes, That I May See” #480

Open my eyes, that I may see
Glimpses of truth you have for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unlock and set me free.
Silently now, on bended knee,
ready I wait your will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!
(repeat)

Message

Some of Us Came Here Hungry

Douglas Hearn

Hymn of Response

"Come, Share the Lord " #696 v.1,2

We gather here in Jesus' name, his love is burning in our hearts like living flame;
For through his loving Son the Father makes us one;
Come, take the bread, come, drink the wine, come, share the Lord.

No one is a stranger here, everyone belongs;
Finding our forgiveness here, we in turn forgive all wrongs.

He joins us here, he breaks the bread,
The Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead;
The one we love the most is now our gracious host:
Come, take the bread, come, drink the wine, come share the Lord.

We are now a family, of which the Lord is head;
Though unseen he meets us here in the breaking of the bread.



Celebration of Communion

Pastor: Beloved children of God, as we gather around a table that has never been meant for the perfect, the powerful, or those who have everything figured out. This is a table for those who are searching, those who are weary, those who are hungry for hope, and those who long to know they are loved.

All: We come as we are. We bring our joys and our struggles, our questions and our faith, trusting that God's grace is enough for us all.

Pastor: At this table we remember Jesus, who saw a hungry crowd and did not send them away. He did not tell them there was not enough. He did not ask them to prove their worthiness. He took what they had, gave thanks, broke the bread, and revealed the abundance of God's love. On the night before he was betrayed, Jesus gathered with his disciples, took bread, gave thanks, broke it and offered it to them, saying, "This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant poured out for you and for all people. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

All: Loving God, we give you thanks for the gift of this table. Here we are reminded that your love is wider than our divisions, deeper than our fears, and stronger than anything that seeks to separate us. Feed us with your grace, strengthen us with your Spirit, and send us from this place to share your love with a hungry world. Amen.

Pastor: Come, for all things are ready. This is Christ's table, and all are welcome.

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 open ourselves to the presence of the God who meets us in our hunger, strengthens us in our struggles, and calls us into lives of compassion and love. *Let us pray:* Holy and Loving God, we come before you today carrying all that we are. Some of us come with gratitude, some with questions, and some with burdens that feel too heavy to carry alone. You are the God who met Jacob in the struggle and blessed him through the wrestling. You are the Christ who saw a hungry crowd and responded with compassion. Remind us that your grace meets us wherever we are and that your abundance is greater than our fears. Today we lift before you the joys and concerns of our community. We pray for those who need your comfort, your healing, your strength, and your peace. We offer these prayers now: *(prayer requests are presented)*...for these prayers and all those held silently in our hearts, we trust in your loving care.

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

One: In the quiet of this moment, we offer to you the prayers we cannot speak aloud. *(silent prayers)*... 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

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

“Days Like These”

Bob Martin

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: Jesus, Bread of Life, you have met us at your table and reminded us that your love is abundant and your grace is enough.

All: May we carry the nourishment of Christ into a hungry world.

One: Holy Spirit, you strengthen us in our struggles and bless us in our wrestling.

All: May we trust your presence and share your hope with others.

One: Loving God you have welcomed us, fed us, and called us to make room for all your children.

**All: May we go from this place as people of compassion, generosity, and love.
Amen.**

***Blessing**

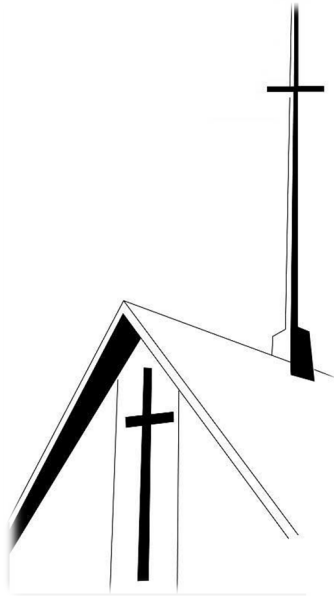
"Oh Jesus, I Have Promised" #458

O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
Remain forever near me, my Master and my Friend:
I shall not fear the battle if you are by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.

O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will.
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;
Now speak and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you
That where you are in glory, your servant shall be too;
And, Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
O give me grace to follow, my Master and my Friend.

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



**Next Week:
Sunday, August 9, 2026
11:00 AM**

Readings:
Romans 8:31-39
Psalm 22
John 12:37-43

Theme: Finding God in the Dark

***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

communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com



Community United Church

The altar flowers this morning are given to the glory of God by Cheryl Strecker in memory of Peter Strecker

UPCOMING EVENTS:

August 11: ERIE GIVES event- Give through the Erie Gives website on **August 11, 2026, from midnight to midnight**, or by phone at **814.454.0843, from 8am to 8pm**. Checks may also be taken to the Hagen History Center on August 4th between 10-2 and 4-6 only

August 11: Liberty House Veterans' Ministry
August 13: Crafternoon in Fellowship Hall – 1:30-3:30 PM
August 16: Service Sunday
August 18: Women's Group monthly luncheon – 12 PM
August 19: *Spirits & Spirituality* – 7 PM – Calamari's Squid Row

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, Linda Weber, Veronica, Patty Puzar, 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, Cal Bretz, Zoey Foote, Earl Hall, Patty Brogdan, family and friends of Rosie Goss.

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

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in our music and livestreaming:
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Read Here about one area of our Outreach Activities:

<https://communityunited.church/devotions/a-place-where-everyone-belongs-heres-what-your-erie-gives-dollars-make-possible>



Thank you for your support of Community United Church! Your dollars reach many!

