

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

February 4, 2024

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy Johnson

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

Centering Music “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” #489

Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.
(Sing 3x)

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, as you sent Christ into the world to be our redeemer—and to establish a new community of faith—your Spirit now dwells among us, calling and empowering us to be the Body of Christ to the world.

All: **Even as we gather to worship you for your love and goodness, O God, we ask that you teach us once more what it means to bring the good news of your kingdom to the world—whether in word or deed. Amen!**

* Opening Hymn “Come Great God of All the Ages” #548

Come, great God of all the ages, make your earthly mission known;
Speak through every deed and person, let your way and will be shown.
Guide the church to true commitment, give direction now, we ask;
Fit us for the work of building, dedicate us to the task.

Come, Christ Jesus, flesh and spirit, sure foundation, cornerstone,
Help us form the church eternal, may your vision be our own.
Send a message to each follower, lead all people to your way;
Urge us to strong faith and action as we build the church today.

Come, great Spirit, in and with us, tune our ears to hear your call;
Through the moving of your presence, let redeeming love recall
Ministry in dedication, love embodied in our deeds;
Challenge us to do your bidding, see your purpose, fill all needs.

Come, O come, in celebration, household of the one true God,
In commitment and rejoicing let us go where Christ has trod;
As we act in faith and reverence, Lord, the future see,
Place us in the church triumphant, now and for eternity.

***Opening Prayer**

***Sign of Peace**

One: The peace of Christ be with all of you.

All: And also with you.

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

(You may choose to greet one another without physical touch based on your comfort and/or health needs.)



First Reading

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

¹⁶ If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! ¹⁷ For if I do this of my own will, I have a wage, but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. ¹⁸ What then is my wage? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

¹⁹ For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a servant to all, so that I might gain all the more. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to gain Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might gain those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not outside God's law but am within Christ's law) so that I might gain those outside the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, so that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some. ²³ I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I might become a partner in it.

Responsorial

Psalm 111

One: Praise the LORD! How good it is to sing praise to our God, for the Holy One is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.

All: God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. God determines the number of the stars; the LORD gives to all of them their names.

One: Great is our Lord and abundant in power; God's understanding is beyond measure.

All: The LORD lifts up the downtrodden; God casts wickedness to the ground. O Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving—the LORD takes pleasure in those who revere God, in those who hope in God's steadfast 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**

Mark 1:29-39

⁹ As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. ³⁰ Now Simon’s mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her at once. ³¹ He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them. ³² That evening, at sunset, they brought to Jesus all who were sick or possessed by demons. ³³ And the whole city was gathered around the door. ³⁴ And he cured many who were sick with various diseases and cast out many demons, and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him. ³⁵ In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. ³⁶ And Simon and his companions hunted for him. ³⁷ When they found him, they said to him, “Everyone is searching for you.” ³⁸ Jesus answered, “Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also, for that is what I came out to do.” ³⁹ And he went throughout all Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

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

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Message *The Church Empowered to Proclaim the Gospel in Word and Deed* Pastor Rich

Song of Response

“One Bread, One Body” #689

Chorus:

*One bread, one body, one Lord of all, one cup of blessing which we bless.
And we, though many, throughout the earth, we are one body in this one—Lord.*

Gentile or Jew, servant or free,
Woman or man—no more. *(Chorus)*

Many the gifts, many the works,
One in the Lord of all. *(Chorus)*

Grain for the fields, scattered and grown,
Gathered to one, for all. *(Chorus)*

COMMUNION LITURGY

Pastor: People of God, come to the table! All who hunger and thirst are fed here by the Servant of servants, Jesus Christ. Here, all are loved, all are welcomed, all is forgiven.

All: Here at this table, food for the body also becomes food for the spirit.

Pastor: This is a table of grace. There is room around it for every soul that was, and is, and is to come.

All: We come to the table as 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 the living Christ, body and blood, love poured out, forever!

All: Here at this Table we remember that Christ indeed 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

Communion 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 and extend the spiritual power 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 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

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

1011 West 38th Street – Erie, PA 16508

Offertory

“Take Me to the King”

Katie Schaaf

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: Holy and loving God, infuse in us the wisdom, love, and grace we need to go out into the world to bring your grace and empowerment.

All: **Send us, now, as messengers of Christ’s good news—that in the reign of God, there is love, forgiveness, and welcome. Amen!**

*Closing Hymn

“Awesome God” #658

Our God is an awesome God, he reigns from heaven above

With wisdom, power and love—

Our God is an awesome God!

(Sing 3x)

Postlude

Cheryl Strecker

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



The Six Sunday after Epiphany & Church Renewal Series

Readings to Study:

2 Kings 2:1-12

Psalm 50:1-6

Mark 9:2-9

Theme:

*Christ's Transfiguration Reveals the Life of the Church:
From Mountaintop to Valley*

***Need to contact us for prayer, conversation, or to connect 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 Kathy Koziol in memory of her Mother & Sisters

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- February 7: Supper & Study 6:30 PM
February 12: Council Meeting 6:30 PM
February 13: Liberty House
February 14: Ash Wednesday, 6:30 PM
February 17: Resonate 6:30 PM

The Ladies Group is collecting cans of soup (chicken noodle, tomato, vegetable) to benefit the Bethany Outreach Center, which provides emergency supplies to families in the Erie community. This initiative, called the "Soup-er Bowl" collection, is in honor of our late Pastor Jean Reidel, who is fondly remembered. Please bring soup cans to the church anytime up to and including Ash Wednesday, February 14th.

Need hearing assistance? We have four available units. Please talk to our tech crew in the back of the sanctuary.

Please submit any bulletin requests by **Tuesday** to ensure there is time to get them in.

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,
Ron Celeski, Jan & Tim Crowe and Family, Debra Doerfer & David Magid, Annette Minich,
Dave Pikulski, 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, Gary Peck, Jerry Koziol, Uncle Charlie
& Carol & Doug Rodgers.

Council Members:

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