

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 the Epiphany

February 8, 2026

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy L. Johnson

Centering Music

“We Exalt Thee” #47

For thou, O Lord, art high above all the earth—thou art exalted far above all gods.

For thou, O Lord, art high above all the earth—thou art exalted far above all gods.

We exalt thee, we exalt thee, we exalt thee, O Lord.

We exalt thee, we exalt thee, we exalt thee, O Lord.

(Repeat All)

Invocation

One: God of Wisdom and Love, you have revealed to us the heart of your desire for humanity, calling us to love you with all that we are and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

All: We worship you, O God, and as we praise you, open our eyes to see the world through your compassion, open our minds to understand the world through your wisdom, and open our hearts to receive the world through your love. Amen!

* Opening Hymn

“I Sing the Almighty Power of God” #31

I sing the almighty power of God that made the mountains rise,

That spread the flowing seas abroad and built the lofty skies.

I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;

The moon shines full at his command and all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord that filled the earth with food;

He formed the creatures with his word and then pronounced them good.

Lord, how your wonders are displayed where e’er I turn my eye,

If I survey the ground I tread or gaze up on the sky!

There’s not a plant or flower below but makes your glories known;

And clouds arise and tempest blow by order from your throne;

While all that borrows life from you is ever in your care,

And everywhere that I may be, you, God, are present there.

***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.

First Reading

The Book of the Prophet Isaiah 58-1-12

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. ²Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God.

³“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. ⁴Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. ⁵Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD? ⁶Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? ⁷Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. ⁹Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, ¹⁰if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. ¹¹The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. ¹²Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

Responsorial

Psalm 112:1-10

One: Happy are those who fear the LORD, who greatly delight in his commandments.

Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.

All: They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous. It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.

One: For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered for ever.

All: They have distributed freely, they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures for ever; their horn is exalted in honour. 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 5:13-20

¹³“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. ¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

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

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Children’s Message

Song of Preparation

“Seek Ye First” #349

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God
And His righteousness
And all these things shall be added unto you
Allelu, Alleluia!

Ask and it shall be given unto you
Seek and ye shall find
Knock and it shall be opened unto you
Allelu, Alleluia!

As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame,
so the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God’s name.
Not to preach our creeds or customs, but to build a bridge of care,
we join hands across the nations, finding neighbors everywhere.

We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way.
We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay.
By our gentle loving actions, we would show that Christ is light.
in a humble, listening spirit, we would live to God’s delight.

As a green bud in the springtime is a sign of life renewed,
so may we be signs of oneness mid earth’s peoples many hued.
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,
may our lives reflect the radiance of God’s new and glorious dawn..

COMMUNION LITURGY

Pastor: People of God, as we journey through the season of Epiphany, we come each week to discover how Christ was revealed to the world. Christ came for us, and for our salvation into wholeness and holiness.

All: Our altar table is another place to encounter the living Christ—who meets us once again in the bread and in the cup. 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 we 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 and find the Light of Heaven as true light for our lives.

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

God is inviting us to serve in response to God's great love for us, so that the whole world may know the fullness of God's peace.

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

"My Redeemer is Faithful"

Kelly and Dina

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, your law of love lives in our hearts by the grace of Christ Jesus.

All: Dwell in us richly, guiding our lives in accordance with your kingdom, and as we depart, fill us with the Holy Spirit that we may walk in your way, shining as lights in the world. Amen!

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn

“Here I am, Lord” #559

I, the Lord of sea and sky, have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night, will make the darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Refrain

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them. They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my Word to them. Whom shall I send?

(Refrain)

I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them, my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

(Refrain)



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



Next Week:

Exodus 24:12-18

2 Peter 1:16-21

Psalm 99

Matthew 17:1-9

Theme:

The Transfiguration of Christ

***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 and Lorre Rapp in loving memory of their mother, Freda, sister Peggy, and sister Ellen upon their heavenly birthdays.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 10: Liberty House Meal Preparation and Share with U.S. Veterans
February 11: Spirits & Spirituality, 7:00 PM, Calamari's Squid Row
February 16: Church Council Meeting
February 17: Ladies' Lunch in Fellowship Hall – brown bag
February 18: Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30 PM

Please continue donating cans of hearty soups for the Jean Reidel Memorial Soup Drive.

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)
Zachary Oliver (PA Army National Guard)

PRAYERS FOR:

Linda Hilbert, Anna Silvia, Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Ralph Kester, Ethel Davis,
Celeste Eller & Family, Michele Serafin, Toni Stevenson, Dave Woledge, Dorothy Moyer,
Sharon Cooper, Sandra Ganley, Celeste Peck, Linda Foll Johnson, Shirley Carrier, The Kuzma Family,
Debra Jackman, Zoey Cathie Witmire, Laura Will, Paul Dietz, Ruth Schmidt, Wendy Wilcox, baby Elijah.

Meet your 2026 Church Council:

Thea Hyatt, President, Ginnie Burger, Vice President, Tracy Davis, Treasurer,
Michele Vahey, Secretary (Interim),
Justin Graff, Angel Conrad, Chuck Becker, Don Cameron

CUC IS LOOKING FOR A COUNCIL SECRETARY

Do you enjoy taking notes and staying organized? Becoming the Council Secretary is a great way to put your skills to good use and make a meaningful contribution to the Church. We currently have an open position on the CUC Council and are looking for someone who can provide valuable support as Secretary and participate actively as a Council member. If you're interested, please speak with any Council member or contact the Church office. Thank you!

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