

# Community United Church

**An Open and Affirming Congregation**

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



**The Fifth Sunday of Easter**

**May 3, 2026**

**11:00 AM**

Pastoral Team:

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

Prelude      *Today's musical selections are presented by Chris and Julie Moore and Bob Martin*

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Music                      "I Love You, Lord" #85

I love you, Lord, and I lift my voice to worship you, O my soul, rejoice!  
Take joy, my King, in what you hear: may it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

*(Repeat)*

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, you sent your living Word into the world in Jesus Christ so that all might have life and have it abundantly.

**All: We believe your living Word is still speaking to us through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Spirit of God, you unite us with Christ, who brings us into unity with God. All blessings, honor, and glory be to you, Loving God, forever and ever. Amen!**

\* Opening Hymn                      "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" #71

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!  
Come, all who hear; now to God's temple draw near,  
Join me in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, above all things so wondrously reigning;  
Sheltering you under his wings, and so gently sustaining!  
Have you not seen all that is needful has been  
Sent by God's gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper your work and defend you:  
Surely God's goodness and mercy shall daily attend you.  
Ponder anew what the Almighty can do,  
If with his love God befriends you.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!  
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him.  
Let the Amen sound from God's people again;  
Gladly forever adore him.

**\*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 First Letter Attributed to Peter 2:2-5, 9-10

Like newborn infants, long for the pure, spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow into salvation— <sup>3</sup> if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good. <sup>4</sup> Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and <sup>5</sup> like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. <sup>10</sup> Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

## Responsorial

## Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

One: In you, O LORD, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me.

**All: Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.**

One: You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake lead me and guide me; take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge.

**All: Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.**

One: My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

**All: Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your 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

John 14:1-14

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. <sup>4</sup>And you know the way to the place where I am going.” <sup>5</sup>Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” <sup>6</sup>Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. <sup>7</sup>If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

<sup>8</sup>Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” <sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup>Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. <sup>11</sup>Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. <sup>12</sup>Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. <sup>13</sup>I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup>If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

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 Contemplation                      “Nothing Can Trouble” #421

Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten. Those who seek God shall never go wanting.

Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten. God alone fills us.

*(Repeat All)*

Reflection                                      *Living in the Way, Truth, and Life*                                      Pastor Rich

Song of Response                              “Christ Beside Me” #425 Vv. 1-3

Christ beside me, Christ before me, Christ behind me—King of my heart;

Christ within me, Christ below me, Christ above me—never to part.

Christ on my right hand, Christ on my land hand, Christ all around me—shield in the strife;

Christ in my sleeping, Christ in my sitting, Christ in my rising—light of my life.

Christ be in all hearts thinking about me, Christ be on all tongues telling of me;

Christ be the vision in eyes that see me, in ears that hear me Christ ever be.

## COMMUNION LITURGY

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 the bread and we take the cup and we 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: Remembering that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here. People of God, come to the table!

### Communion Music

"Thy Word"

### 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](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

“From a Distance”

## 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, in you there is manifold life and truth, and through Jesus we are learning to walk in the ways of the Reign of God.

**All: Remind us that you will never leave nor forsake us. You have called us to join in your work of manifesting the Reign of God on earth. We, your living stones, are building upon your sure foundation until you bring the fullness of heaven to earth and all creation is healed. Amen!**

\*Blessing

\*Closing Hymn “How Firm a Foundation” #411 v. 1,2,5

How firm a foundation, you saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!  
What more can he say than to you he has said, to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

“Fear not, I am with you, O be not dismayed, for I am your God, and will still give you aid;  
I’ll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand, upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.”

“The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose, I will not, I swill desert to its foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I’ll never, no, never, no, never forsake!”

Postlude

“My Feet Upon the Rock”

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



**Next Week:**

**Sunday, May 10, 2026**

**The Sixth Sunday of Easter**

**Scriptures:**

Acts 17:22-31

Psalm 66:8-20

John 14:15-21

**Theme:**

*Keeping the Commandment of Love*

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



## Community United Church

***The altar flowers are given by Kathy Koziol and Lorre Rapp to the glory of God and in celebration of Jerry Koziol's birthday as well as in remembrance of sister Milly upon her heavenly birthday.***

### **Coming up:**

May 6: Discussion Group: "Finding Peace" - Fellowship Hall 6:30 PM

May 12: Memorial Service for David Wooledge in our Sanctuary 4 PM

May 13: Spirits & Spirituality - Fellowship Hall 6:30 PM

May 17: Service Sunday - EARLY lunch packing at 10 AM

**Save the date: On Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, we will have a reception honoring Pastor Rich immediately following the Worship Service!**

***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),  
and Aran Maloney (Air National Guard)

### **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, Shirley Carrier, Debra Jackman, Zoey Cathie Witmire,  
Laura Will, the Smith and Schmidt families, Linda Weber, Veronica, Patty Puzar,  
Joan Schultz, Mary Mong, family and friends of Kim Normandy,  
Michelle and Melissa, Randy Koziol, Barbara Thompson

### **Your 2026 CUC 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**

***We currently have an open position on the CUC Council and are looking for someone who can provide valuable support as Secretary and serve as a voting member. If you are 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](mailto:communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com)