

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



The First Sunday of Lent

March 9, 2025:

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy Johnson

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

Centering Music

“Change My Heart, O God” #373

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.
You are the Potter, I am the clay;
Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.
Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.
(Repeat)

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, as we step into the Season of Lent, you offer steadfast love as our strong refuge, and your boundless grace is our sheltering presence.

One: In the unity of worship, we trust that you, O God, will speak to us *and through us*—as we walk anew the path of Christ, which leads to the misery and mystery of his cross, and then again, to his triumph over the grave. Amen!

* Opening Hymn “You, Lord, Are Both Lamb and Shepherd” #99

You, Lord, are both lamb and shepherd. You, Lord, are both prince and slave.
You, peacemaker and sword bringer—of the way you took and gave.
You, the everlasting instant; you, whom we both scorn and crave.

Clothed in light upon the mountain, stripped of might upon the cross,
Shining in eternal glory, beggared by a soldier’s toss,
You, the everlasting instant; you, who are both gift and cost.

You, who walk each day beside us, sit in pow-er at God’s side.
You, who preach a way that’s narrow, have a love that reaches wide.
You, the everlasting instant; you, who are our pilgrim guide.

Worthy is our earthly Jesus! Worthy is our cosmic Christ!
Worthy your defeat and victory. Worthy still your peace and strife.
You, the everlasting instant; you, who are our death and life.

***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.

Confession

One: Christ Jesus, we sometimes forget that you—*yourself*—faced rejection, condemnation, isolation, and death. Our perception can sometimes become so narrow that we do not sense that you are with us in our troubles. We confess, we have sometimes felt discouraged, abandoned, and even betrayed by you, O God, when all manner of things have not gone well for us.

All: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

One: Instead of following where you lead, O God, at times we follow a tempter who shows us a vision of the world that is a counterfeit of what you desire for us. We confess, at times we have been deceived by *imitations* of love, abundance, and joy.

All: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

One: Help us to trust you to journey with us and to guide us.

All: Help us to rest in your promise to never leave nor forsake us. Amen.

Lenten Meditation & Candles

Song of Reflection

“Jesus Remember Me” #285

Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.

(Sing Three Times)



First Reading

The Apostle Paul's Letter to the Romans 10:8b-13

[As it is written:] “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim), ⁹ because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For one believes with the heart, leading to righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, leading to salvation. ¹¹ The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Responsorial

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

One: You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress; my God in whom I trust."

All: Because you have made the LORD your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

One: For God will command the angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

All: Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name. When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble; I will rescue them and honor them. Amen!

*Lenten Acclamation

"Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights" #250 V. 1

Throughout these Lenten days and nights, we turn to walk the inward way,
Where meeting Christ, our guide and light, we live in hope till Easter Day.

*Gospel

Luke 4:1-13

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ² where for forty days he was tested by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over he was famished. ³ The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." ⁴ Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'"

⁵ Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And the devil said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." ⁸ Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

⁹ Then the devil led him to Jerusalem and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' ¹¹ and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" ¹² Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" ¹³ When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

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

“Jesus, Your Name” #361

Jesus, your name is power, Jesus, your name is might.
Jesus, your name will break every stronghold—Jesus, your name is life.

Jesus, your name is healing, Jesus, your name gives sight.
Jesus, your name will free every captive—Jesus, your name is life.

Jesus, your name is holy, Jesus, your name is might.
Jesus, your name, above every other—Jesus, your name is life.

Message

In the Desert with the Devil

Pastor Joy

Song of Response

“O How He Loves You and Me” #270

O how he loves you and me,
O how he loves you and me;
He gave his life—what more could he give?
O how he loves you, O how he loves me,
O how he loves you and me.
(Repeat)

COMMUNION LITURGY

Pastor: People of God, come to the table! Christ promised that as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we not only remember him, but we commune with him by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

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 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

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer

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 that is 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 the 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 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, that can be addressed to the church at:

1011 West 38th Street – Erie, PA 16508



Offertory

Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Lenten Congregational Response #576

***Make me a servant, humble and meek.
Lord, let me lift up those who are weak!
And may the prayer of my heart always be:
Make me a servant! Make me a servant!
Make me a servant today!***

*Departing Prayer

One: Holy and loving God, send us forth to follow wherever your Spirit leads.

All: May your angels guard our hearts and our souls, so that even in harm's way we will not be consumed. Remind us that whether in falling or in rising we are forever in the protection of your love. Amen!

* Blessing

*Closing Hymn "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" #252

Lord, who throughout these forty days
for us did fast and pray,
Teach us with you to mourn our sins
And close by you to stay.

As you with Satan did contend,
And did the victory win,
O Give us strength in you to fight,
In you to conquer sin.

As you did hunger and did thirst,
So teach us, gracious Lord,
To die to self, and so to live
By your most holy Word.

And thro' these days of penitence,
And thro' your Passion-tide,
Forever-more, in life and death,
O Lord, with us abide.

Abide with us, and through this life—
Of doubts and hope and pain,
An Easter of unending joy
We may at last attain!

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



Next Sunday:

11:00 AM

Readings:

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Psalm 27

Luke 13:31-35

**The Second Sunday of Lent:
Christ the Prophet and Mother Hen**

***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 and honor of church family from Ginnie Burger.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

March 12: Soup & Simplicity - Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM

March 19: Resonate - 7:00 PM

March 16: Service Sunday - 12:15 PM

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

Have you signed up for Small Group discussion opportunities to continue our discernment for church growth and stewardship? See sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

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)

PRAYERS FOR:

Pat Czytuck, Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Ralph Kester, John M., Todd Carrier, Teddy Long, Tammy McIntyre, Debra Doerfer & David Magid, Annette Minich, Dave Pakulski, Ethel Davis, Chelsea Brown, Celeste Eller & Family, Michele Serafin, Linda Foll-Johnson, Toni Stevenson, Dave Woledge, Ev Smith, Karis Fenton, Ruth Schmidt, Carol & Doug Rodgers, Jane Moran, Josh Cook & Danny Kaeberlein, The Vadzemnieks Family, Doug Moore, Reverend Susan Strouse & Reverend Barbara Peronteau, and John & Tina Schnarrs

Current Council Members:

Mike Pruzinsky (President), Debbie Anderson (Vice President), Melanie Vadzemnieks (Treasurer), Nancy Alberico (Secretary), Janice Skelly, Angel Conrad, Michele Vahey, Justin Graff, and Mark Davis

Need to contact our Council President? Please email at: mpruzinsky@icloud.com

Community United Church is committed to ethical and legal compliance in our music and livestreaming:
CCLI Church Copyright License: 11405428 Streaming License: 20856761