

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
February 1, 2026
11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

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

Prelude

“Be Thou My Vision” #502

Bob Martin,

Welcome & Announcements

Julie & Chris Moore

Centering Music

“Sweet, Sweet Spirit” #134

There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place,
And I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord;
There are sweet expressions on each face,
And I know they feel the presence of the Lord.

Refrain

Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove,
Stay right here with us, filling us with your love;
And for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise;
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived
When we shall leave this place.

Invocation

One: Gracious and loving God, we gather today offering praise and worship to you, for it is through your wisdom and guidance that we learn to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly by your side.

All: **We give thanks for the many blessings of this life, and for the gift of heaven which is ours, even now, and we pursue your truth to act with compassion and integrity in all that we do. Amen!**

* Opening Hymn

“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” #71

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
Come, all who hear; now to his 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 his gracious ordaining?

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



Reception of New Members

Song of Celebration "Sing a New Church" #577 Vv. 1-2, 4-5

Summoned by the God who made us rich in our diversity,

Gathered in the name of Jesus, richer still in unity:

*Let us bring the gifts that differ and, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being, one in faith and love and praise.*

Radiant risen from the water; robed in holiness and light,
Many genders in God's image, many genders God's delight:
*Let us bring the gifts that differ and, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being, one in faith and love and praise.*

Bring the hopes of every nation; bring the art of every race.

Weave a song of peace and justice; let it sound through time and space.

*Let us bring the gifts that differ and, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being, one in faith and love and praise.*

Draw together at one table all the human family;

Shape a circle every wider and a people ever free.

*Let us bring the gifts that differ and, in splendid, varied ways,
Sing a new church into being, one in faith and love and praise.*



First Reading

The Book of the Prophet Micah 6:1-8

Hear what the LORD says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. ²Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the LORD has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel. ³“O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! ⁴For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. ⁵O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”

⁶“With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? ⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?” ⁸He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Responsorial

Psalm 15

One: O LORD, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?

All: **Those who walk blamelessly and do what is right and speak the truth from their heart.**

One: Who stand by their oath even to their hurt; who do not lend money at interest and do not take a bribe against the innocent.

All: **Those who do these things shall never be moved. 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 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: ³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. ⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. ¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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

“Step by Step” #494

O God, you are my God, and I will ever praise you.

O God, you are my God, and I will ever praise you.

I will seek you in the morning, and I will learn to walk in your ways;
And step by step you'll lead me, and I will follow you all of my days.

(Repeat)

Message

What God Desires of Us: Justice, Kindness, Mercy

Pastor Joy

Song of Response

“Blest Are They” #666 v. 1,3,4

Blest are they, the poor in Spirit, theirs is the kingdom of God.

Blest are they, full of sorrow, they shall be consoled.

Refrain

Rejoice and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you!

Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!

(Refrain)

Blest are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs.

Blest are they who suffer in faith, the Glory of God is theirs.

(Refrain)

Blest are you who suffer hate, all because of me.

Rejoice be glad, yours is the kingdom; shine for all to see.

(Refrain)

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.

Communion Music

“Trust & Obey”

Bob, Chris, Julie & Cheryl

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

“For the Lord is my Saving Light”

Bob, Chris, Julie & Cheryl

Refrain

The Lord is my Saving Light,
Oh what should I fear.

(Repeats)

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 blessings overflow and your will and wisdom are beyond our understanding.

All: We pray that your generous Spirit will inspire in us a deep desire for justice, kindness, and love, so that as we follow Christ, we do so with the humility to which you call us. Amen!

*Blessing



*Closing Hymn

“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing” #712

Sent Forth by God’s Blessing our true faith confessing,
The people of god from this dwelling take leave.

 The service is ended, O now be extended
 the fruits of our worship in all who believe.

The seed of the teaching, receptive souls reaching,
 shall blossom in action for God and for all.

God’s grace did invite us, and love shall united us
 To work for God’s kingdom and answer the call.

With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,
 The tasks of our everyday life we will face.
 Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,
 Embracing God’s children of each tribe and race.

With your grace you feed us, with your light now lead us;
 Unite us as one in this life that we share.

Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving
 Give honor to Christ and that name which we bear.

If you are able, please remain in the Sanctuary for our Annual Congregational Meeting which starts shortly! Your voice matters.

Thank you!



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



Next Week:
The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
Readings to Study:
Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 112:1-10
Matthew 5:13-20

Theme:
Fulfillment of the Law

***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
Tom and Thea Hyatt in honor of their 53rd Anniversary! Congratulations!*

UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 1: Annual Congregational Meeting & Potluck, 12:00 PM (TODAY!)
February 4: Bible Study, "How Did the Bible Come Together, Part 2" with Pastor Rich, 6:30 PM
February 10: Liberty House Meal Preparation and Sharing with U.S. Veterans
February 11: Spirits & Spirituality, 7:00 PM, Calamari's Squid Row
February 17: Ladies' Group Meeting & Brown Bag lunch in Fellowship Hall
February 18: Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30 PM

(February Council Meeting will be set upon the selection of new CUC Council)

Hearty Soups Needed by our Neighbors!

The CUC Ladies' Group is sponsoring the Jean Reidel Memorial Superbowl Soup Drive going on now and it has been extended through the end of February! Please bring in cans of "hearty soups" to be collected and given to the Bethany Outreach Center of Erie. Thank you!

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,
The Vadzemnieks Family, Sharon Cooper, Sandra Ganley, Celeste Peck,
Linda Foll Johnson, Todd Carrier, The Kuzma Family, Debra Jackman, Rose Goss,
Zoey, Cathie Witmire, Laura Will, Michael, Paul Dietz, Lorre Rapp,
the Smith and Schmidt families, Malcom Bauer

Current Council Members:

Mike Pruzinsky (President), Debbie Anderson (Vice President), Al Tilley (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

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