

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



The Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2026

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

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

Centering Music

“Where the Spirit of the Lord Is” #396

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is peace.
Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is love.
There is comfort in life’s darkest hour,
There is light and life, there is help and power
In the Spirit, in the Spirit of the Lord.
(Repeat)

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, you create us to be free and to flourish. To do so, you call us to live by the law of love and to follow the ways of your wisdom.

All: Like a shepherd you lead us, O Christ, into safe pastures for our souls where we can live in peace and love, forever. Amen!

* Opening Hymn

“Come, Christians, Join to Sing” #87

Come, Christians, join to sing: Alleluia! Amen!
Loud praise to Christ our King; Alleluia! Amen!
Let all, with heart and voice, before his throne rejoice;
Praise is his gracious choice: Alleluia! Amen!

Come, lift your hearts on high, Alleluia! Amen!
Let praises fill the sky; Alleluia! Amen!
Christ is our Guide and Friend; to us he’ll condescend;
His love shall never end: Alleluia! Amen!

Praise yet our Christ again, Alleluia! Amen!
Life shall not end the strain; Alleluia! Amen!
On heaven’s blissful shore—his goodness we’ll adore;
Singing forevermore, “Alleluia! Amen!”

***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 Acts 2:42-47

The [disciples] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Responsorial

Psalm 23

One: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

All: God makes me lie down in green pastures; the Holy One leads me beside still waters; the LORD restores my soul.

One: The LORD leads me in right paths for the sake of God's name.

All: Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

One: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

All: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long. 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 10:1-10

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

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

“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)

Reflection

Christ as Good Shepherd and Gate

Pastor Rich

Song of Response

“On Eagle’s Wings” #438 Vv. 1-2

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in his shadow for life,

Say to the Lord, “My refuge, my Rock in whom I trust.”

Refrain:

And he will raise you up on eagle’s wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,

Make you to shine like the sun—and hold you in the palm of his hand.

The snare of the fowler will never capture you—and famine will bring you no fear,

Under his wings your refuge, his faithfulness your shield.

(Refrain)

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

“Remembrance”

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

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 Little Prayer”

Pastor Rich

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 Christ you have revealed yourself as the good shepherd and the strong gate for the wellbeing of our souls.

All: **Help us to know your voice and to follow it. Grant us the faith to trust that you lead us in many ways—and above all, that you are leading us to the fullness of love and peace. Amen!**

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn “Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us” #440 Vv. 1, 4

Savior, like a Shepherd lead us, much we need thy tender care;
In thy pleasant pastures feed us, for our use thy folds prepare:
Blessed Jesus, Blessed Jesus, thou hast bought us, thine we are;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou has bought us thine we are.

Early let us seek thy favor, early let us do thy will;
Blessed Lord and only Savior, with thy love our bosoms fill:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou hast loved us, love us still.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou hast love us, love us still.

Postlude

Cheryl Strecker

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



Next Week:

Sunday, May 3, 2026

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

Scriptures:

1 Peter 2:2-5, 9-10

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

John 14:1-14

Theme:

Living in the Way, Truth, and Life

***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 Dina Johnson in celebration of Pastor Joy's birthday.***

Coming up:

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

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

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

**Save the date: On Sunday, May 17th, 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, and Michelle and Melissa

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

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FINANCIAL UPDATE FOR COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH

2026

Month	Revenue	Expenses
January	\$10,199.53	\$12,191.98
February	\$11,545.57	\$11,042.40
March	\$10,263.00	\$11,115.80

The Pastors' Discretionary Fund for Benevolences currently totals \$2,942

Thank you for giving generously!