

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



June 1, 2025

Ascension Sunday

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Richard W. McCarty & Pastor Joy L. Johnson

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

Centering Music

“Surely the Presence” #131

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place;
I can feel his mighty power and his grace.
I can feel the brush of angels’ wings, I see glory on each face;
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.
(Repeat all)

Invocation

One: Holy and Loving God, we gather this day to worship you, especially as we consider the great mystery of the Ascension of Christ.

All: Remind us again how Christ’s ascension can fuel our hope. Namely, that we are not alone—even as nations wage war, and troubles that seek to undo the peace in our lives. Loving Savior, with the ancient disciples, let us see you transcend space and time, to know that you are everywhere with us. Amen!

*Hymn

“Alleluia, Sing to Jesus” #320

Alleluia, sing to Jesus! His the scepter, his the throne:
Alleluia! His the triumph, his the victory alone.
Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood.
Jesus, out of every nation, has redeemed us by his blood.

Alleluia! Not as orphans are we left in sorrow now;
Alleluia! He is near us; faith believes nor questions how.
Though the cloud from sight received him when the forty days were o’er,
Shall our hearts forget his promise, “I am with you ever more?”

Alleluia! Heavenly High Priest, here on earth our help, our stay;
Alleluia! Hear the sinful cry to you from day to day.
Intercessor, Friend of sinners, earth’s Redeemer, hear our plea,
Where the songs of all the sinless sweep across the crystal sea.

Opening Prayer

*The Peace of Christ

One: People of God, the Peace of Christ be with you, All!

All: And also with you!

First Reading

Acts 1:1-11

¹ In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and teach ² until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. ³ After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. ⁴ While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for the promise of the Father. "This," he said, "is what you have heard from me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." ⁹ When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ While he was going and they were gazing up toward heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. ¹¹ They said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up toward heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Second Reading

Ephesians 1:15-23

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸ so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may perceive what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰ God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²² And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Song of Response

"He Is Exalted" #122

He is exalted, the King is exalted on high; I will praise Him.

He is exalted, forever exalted, and I will praise His name!

He is the Lord; forever His truth shall reign.

Heaven and earth rejoice in His holy name.

He is exalted, the King is exalted on high.

Responsorial

Psalm 47

One: Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy.
For the Lord, the Most High, is awesome, a great King over all the earth.

All: He subdued peoples under us and nations under our feet. He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. *Selah*

One: God has gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

All: God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.

One: The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.

All: For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted. 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

Luke 24:44-53

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.” ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah^[a] is^[b] to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses^[c] of these things. ⁴⁹ And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

⁵⁰ Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven.^[d] ⁵² And they worshiped him and^[e] returned to Jerusalem with great joy, ⁵³ and they were continually in the temple^[f] blessing God.^[g]

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

All: Come, Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Children's Message & Prayer

Message

The Ascension of Christ

Pastor Joy

Hymn

"Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise" #323 v. 1,3,4

Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia! To his throne above the skies; Alleluia!
Christ, the Lamb for sinners given, Alleluia! Enters now the highest heaven. Alleluia!

See! The heaven its Lord receives, Alleluia! Yet, he loves the earth he leaves, Alleluia!
Though returning to his throne, Alleluia! Still he calls the world his own. Alleluia!

See! He lifts his hands above! Alleluia! See, he shows the prints of love! Alleluia!
Hark! His gracious lips bestow, Alleluia! Blessings on his church below. Alleluia!



Celebration of Communion

Pastor: People of God, the table before us is made by the heavenly hands of Christ Jesus—the Holy One who walked in the fullness of humanity, and the Holy One who reigns in the glory of divinity. At this table, we receive what we need for our spiritual wholeness—light to illuminate our path, shade to give us rest, and above all, a place for us to be, as we are, and *as we are becoming*.

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!

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 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 all who have asked to be on our prayer list—and so we ask: Holy and Loving God, in your wisdom, meet all of these needs in the perfect way of your grace. We pray together:

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 first and foremost what we give to the world through justice, kindness, and mercy—and these we can do every day. Our financial contributions to the church are what allow us to support our ministries. As you can give, please do so joyfully!

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*

***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.***

Offertory/Ministry of Music

"Promise"

Community United Bell Ringers

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: God of grace and glory, the same Christ who ascended—transcending time and space—is the same one who promised his disciples the gift of holy power.

All: Send your Spirit of revelation and wisdom, that we may bear witness to the grace of forgiveness and sing songs of joy with the peoples of the earth; to the One who makes us one body. Amen!

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn “Shine, Jesus, Shine” #319

Lord, the light of Your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness, shining,
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us, set us free by the truth You now bring us,
Shine on me, shine on me.

Chorus

*Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father’s glory,
Blaze, Spirit blaze, Set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy,
Send forth Your word, Lord, and let there be light.*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence, from the shadows into your radiance;
By the blood I may enter your brightness, search me, try me, consume all my darkness,
Shine on me—shine on me!

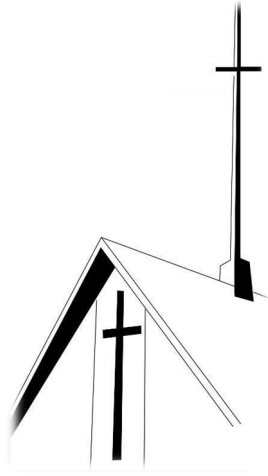
(chorus)

As we gaze on your kingly brightness, so our faces display your likeness;
Ever-changing from glory to glory, mirrored here may our lives tell your story,
Shine on me—shine on me!

(chorus)



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



Next Week:

Pentecost Sunday at 11:00 AM

Readings:

Acts 2:1-21

Romans 8:14-17

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

John 14:8-17, 25-27

Theme: The Coming of the Spirit

***Need to contact us for prayer, conversation, or to connect
online with a small group or church ministry?***

1011 West 38th Street – Erie, PA 16508

(814) – 864 – 4429



Community United Church

The altar flowers this morning are given to the glory of God and in celebration of Mika and Clifford's graduation from high school from their moms, Lori and Kim Tripp.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- June 4: Bible Study and Group Picnic at 6:00 PM at the Conrads' home
- June 7: Second Annual Arts, Craft, and Bake Sale at CUC
- June 11: Spirits & Spirituality at 7:00 PM at Andy's Pub
- June 18: Resonate at 7:00 PM in the Sanctuary

Reminders:

- ***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 signup 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:

Darek Baksik, Laura Will, Keith Vargeson, Joyce Kneidel, 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, Helena Burgos, The Vadzemnieks Family, Doug Moore, and The Schnarrs family .

Current Council Members:

Mike Pruzinsky (President), Debbie Anderson (Vice President), 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 1011
West 38th Street**



**Second Annual Arts,
Crafts, Bake Sale**

**{wooden, crocheted & tie dyed items, jewelry, painted items, &
more, including the best baked goods!}**



Saturday, June 7, 2025

10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Admission \$3.00 per person