

# Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



June 18, 2023:

**The Third Sunday after Pentecost**

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy Johnson

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

Prelude  
Welcome & Announcements  
Centering Music

Cheryl Strecker, Dan Bainbridge

Shelly Conrad

## **Invocation**

One: People of God, Christ summons us to answer God's call of mercy. Christ gathers us and gives us power to be healed and to heal, to forgive and to be forgiven, and to go boldly in the knowledge that we are not alone.

**All: Help us, O God, to know that your presence is at hand, even during the times when we face rejection and when we are ignored. Fill us with your strength and your Spirit, so that words and actions that minimize us serve only to build our resolve and energize our minds.**

One: May we now, sensing the nearness of God, strive to receive your blessings and recognize your unending grace which creates peace among us and gives us the determination to go forward in your name.

**All: Amen!**

## **\*Opening Hymn                    "We Are Called to Be God's People" 580**

We are called to be God's people, showing by our lives his grace,  
One in heart and one in spirit, sign of hope for all the race.  
Let us show how he has changed us, and remade us as his own,  
let us share our life together as we shall around his throne.

We are called to be God's servants, working in his world today;  
Taking his own task upon us, all his sacred words obey.  
Let us rise, then, to his summons, dedicate to him our all,  
That we may be faithful servants, quick to answer now his call.

We are called to be God's prophets, speaking for the truth and right,  
Standing firm for godly justice, bringing evil things to light.  
Let us seek the courage needed, our high calling to fulfill,  
That the world may know the blessing of the doing of God's will.

## **\*Opening Prayer**

## **Father's Day Litany**

Adapted from "A Litany for Father's Day" by Sara Wilhelm Garbers

One: To you who have nurtured us, who have lived so that we might flourish and find life.  
To you who have cared for our becoming, who have given of yourself to make our futures possible.  
To you, our fathers, who adopted us as your own.  
To you, our fathers by choice, who by your actions have loved all who have come into your life.

**All: We see you. We honor you. May God's rich love surround you this day.**

One: To you who know the pain of longing...  
Who desired to be called father but have never known that name.  
Who have loved your children from afar.  
Who have felt helpless to connect or felt themselves unworthy to know the name *Dad*.  
Who long for the homecoming of a child who has chosen a pathway of pain.  
Who are broken over the absence of a father who was or is unable to love you as you are.  
Who yearn for the day when you will see your father again, whether you are separated now by death or by a broken relationship.

**All: We see you. We honor you. May God's rich love hold you this day.**

One: To you who have lost...  
To you who have lost children and ache with grief, whether they have passed from this earth or are absent from you in the midst of being here.

**All: We see you. We honor you. May God's rich love comfort you this day.**

One: To you...our fathers. Our uncles. Our neighbors. Our grandfathers. Our teachers. Our leaders. Our healers. Our friends. To you who nurture. Who love and pray. To your beauty. To your complexity.

**All: We see you. We honor you. May God's rich love be yours this day.**

One: To the fathers who give their lives trying to make the world better for future generations.

**All: We see you. We honor you. We give God thanks for your life and legacy. Amen!**



**Special Music**

“Lost in the Waves”

Bob Martin and Dan Bainbridge

**First Reading**

**Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1:7**

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, “My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.” Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. They said to him, “Where is your wife Sarah?” And he said, “There, in the tent.” Then one said, “I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, “After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?” The LORD said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh, and say, ‘Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?’ Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.” But Sarah denied, saying, “I did not laugh”; for she was afraid. He said, “Oh yes, you did laugh.”

The LORD dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah as he had promised. Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. Now Sarah said, “God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.” And she said, “Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

## Song of Reflection

“Blest Are They”

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!**

Blest are they, the lowly ones, they shall inherit the earth.  
Blest are they, who hunger and thirst, they shall have their fill.

(Refrain)

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

blest are they, the pure of heart, they shall see God.

(Refrain)

Blest are they who seek peace. They are the children of God.

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)

## Second Reading

**Romans 5:1-8**

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.

## Responsorial

**Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19**

**One:** I love the LORD because he has heard my voice and my supplications. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live.

**All:** **What shall I return to the Lord for all his bounty to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord; I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.**

**One:** Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones. O Lord, I am your servant. You have loosed my bonds.

**All:** **I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name of the Lord in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the house of the Lord, in your midst, O Jerusalem. 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 9:35-10:23**

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James, son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

“See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that

time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

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

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

**Message**

*Enduring in Times of Rejection*

Pastor Joy

**Song of Response**

“On Eagles’ Wings” #438

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord, who abide in the 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 God’s 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)

You need not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day;  
though thousands fall about you, near you it shall now come.

(Refrain)

**Celebration of Communion**

Pastor: People of God, come to the table!

**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: Jesus said to his disciples, “*my peace I leave you, my peace I give you.*” Open your hearts now—and may the peace of Christ be with all of you.

**All: And also with you.**

Pastor: Before we come to the table, let us share with one another a sign of peace.

*(All are welcome to show a sign of Christian love to one another, in their own way)*

Pastor: Together, now, let us bless the elements. 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: *Let us pray:* For the prayer requests that have come to us today, whether joys or sorrows.... [prayer requests are presented] .... 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 first and foremost 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.*

**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

Ministry of Music

"Glacier"

Katie Schaaf and Shelly Conrad

***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.***

**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, above all knowledge may we know and comprehend that *you* will never reject us. Be with us as we seek to honor you in our work, in our rest and in our hearts.

All: **May we claim our authority to act as your disciples by telling others of your plentiful love and loyal comfort, no matter where we go. Amen.**

**\*Blessing**



**\*Closing Hymn**

“Be Not Afraid” #430

You shall cross the barren desert, but you shall not die of thirst.  
You shall wander far in safety though you do not know the way.  
You shall speak your words in foreign lands and all will understand.  
You shall see the face of God and live.

**Refrain**

**Be not afraid. I go before you always. Come, follow me, and I will give you rest.**

If you pass through raging waters in the sea, you shall not drown.  
If you walk amid the burning flames, you shall not be harmed.  
If you stand before the power of hell and death is at your side,  
Know that I am with you through it all.

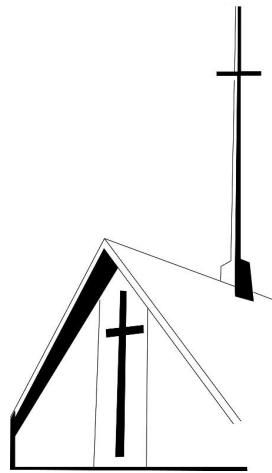
(Refrain)

Blessed are your poor, for the kingdom shall be theirs.  
Blest are you that weep and mourn, for one day you shall laugh.  
And if wicked tongues insult and hate you all because of me,  
Blessed, blessed are you!

(Refrain)

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

**Next Sunday, June 25th, 2023: New Member Sunday  
The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost  
11:00 AM Worship**



*Assigned Readings for Study:*

Romans 6:1b-11

Psalms 69:7-10, 11-15, 16-18

Matthew 10:24-39

**Theme: “Difficult Teachings of Jesus”**

*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 this morning are given to the glory of God by Nancy Alberico in memory of her Dad on Father's Day.

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- June 18:** Service Sunday/Father's Day
- June 21:** RESONATE 7:00 PM
- June 24:** Pride Parade
- June 25:** New Members Sunday
- June 27:** Ladies Lunch 12:00 PM

*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:**

Jacob Snyder (Army), Nick Duncan (Army), Samantha McHenry (Army), Brittany Duncan (Army), Chris Duncan (Marines), Matt Duncan (Army), Tyler Anderson (Army National Guard), Shelby Wescott (Army), Matthew Anderson (Army) and DJ Miaczynski (Marines)

### **PRAYERS FOR:**

Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Kevin Bennett & family & friends, Rod & Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Sue Schweiwer, Diane Walker, George Churley, Robin Adams, Ralph Kester, John M., Todd Carrier, Teddy Long, Jimmyo, Sandy Gool, Tammy McIntyre, Laura Stone, Jared & Priscilla Hall, Ron Celeski, Sally Cubetus, Jan & Tim Crowe and Family, Debra Doerfer & David Magdid & Annette Minich.

***Council Members:** Debbie Anderson (President), Bob Martin (VP), Dina Johnson (Secretary), Janice Skelly, Mike Pruzinsky, April Knapp, Patti Rogers, Carol Rodgers, and Angel Hall.*