

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



May 18, 2025

The Fifth Sunday of Easter

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!*

Prelude
Welcome & Announcements

Cheryl Strecker and Bob Martin

Centering Music

“Open Our Eyes” #491

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch him, and say that we love him.
Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen,
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.
(Repeat all)

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, throughout time, your prophets and messengers have provided us glimpses of heaven. By these, we are inspired to believe that there is Life beyond this life, and to take comfort in knowing that we are part of a larger story, an eternal story.

All: As we find such images of heaven this morning, we not only take our place among all the angels and saints who glorify you, but we learn again what it means to live on earth as it is in heaven. Amen!

*Hymn

“Christ the Eternal Lord” #335 Vv. 1-2, 4

Christ the eternal Lord whose promise here we claim,
Whose gifts of grace are freely poured on all who name your Name;
With thankfulness and praise we stand before your throne,
Intent to serve you all our days and make your glory known.

Christ the unchanging Word to every passing age,
Whose timeless teachings still are heard set forth on Scripture’s page;
Transform our thought and mind, enlighten all who read,
Within your word by faith to find the bread of life indeed.

Christ the unfading Light of everlasting day,
Our morning star in splendor bright, the Life, the Truth, the Way;
That light of truth you give to servants as to friends,
Your way to walk, your life to live, till earth’s brief journey ends.

Opening Prayer

*The Peace of Christ

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

All: And also with you!

One: Let us share with one another a sign of peace.

First Reading

The Book of Revelation 21:1-6

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

*"See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them;
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them and be their God;
⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away."*

⁵ And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶ Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

Responsorial

Psalm 148

One: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise God in the heights!

All: Praise God, all you heavenly angels; praise God all you heavenly host!

One: Praise God, sun and moon; praise God all you shining stars! Praise God, you highest heavens!

All: Let all praise the name of the LORD, for God's name alone is exalted; God's glory is above earth and heaven. 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 13:31-35

When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and as I said to the [people] so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ ³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

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

“Crown Him King of Kings” #340

Crown him King of kings; crown him Lord of lords.
Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God;
Emmanuel—God is with us,
And he shall reign, he shall reign
He shall reign forever more.
(Repeat all)

Message

Visions of Heaven Inspiring Love on Earth

Pastor Rich

Hymn

“There is a Redeemer” #117

There is a Redeemer—Jesus, God’s own Son;
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One

Refrain:

*Thank you, O my Father, for giving us your Son,
And leaving your Spirit till the work on earth is done.*

Jesus, my Redeemer, name above all names;
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Hope for sinners slain.
(Refrain)

When I stand in Glory, I will see his face;
There I’ll serve my King forever in that holy place.
(Refrain)

Celebration of Communion

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

The Invitation

Bob Martin



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

Ministry of Music

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

What a Wonderful World

Bob Martin

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, you are the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, glory outshining all the lights of heaven.

All: **Pour out upon us your Spirit of faithful love and abundant compassion, so that we may rejoice in the splendor of your works and serve all others with love—while we wait in expectation for the new heaven and new earth you promise when Christ shall come again. Amen.**

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn

“Community of Christ” #615

Community of Christ, who make the cross your own,
Live out your creed and risk your life for God alone:
The God who wears your face,
To whom all worlds belong,
Whose children are of every race and every song.

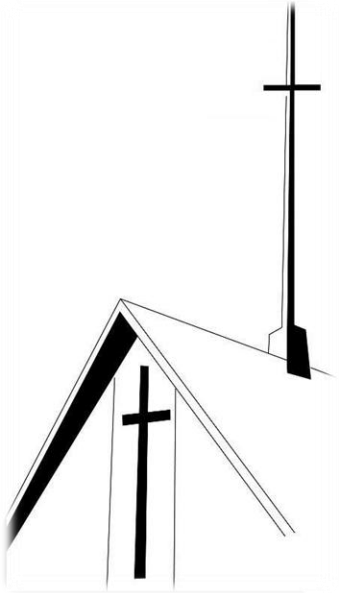
Community of Christ, look past the church’s door
And see the refugee, the hungry, and the poor.
Take hands with the oppressed,
The jobless in your street,
Take towel and water, that you wash your neighbor’s feet.

Community of Christ, through whom the word must sound—
Cry out for justice and for peace the whole world round:
Disarm the powers that war
And all that can destroy,
Turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish into joy.

When menace melts away, so shall God’s will be done,
The climate of the world be peace and Christ its sun;
Our currency be love
And kindness our law,
Our food and faith be shared as one forevermore.



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



Next Week:
Sixth Sunday of Easter
11:00 AM

Readings:

Revelation 22:1-5

Psalm 67

John 14:23-29

Theme: The Promise of the Holy Spirit – We Are Never Alone

***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

www.communityunited.church



Community United Church

The altar flowers this morning are given to the glory of God from Patti Rogers in memory of Mom and Dad.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- May 18: Service Sunday: Preparing bagged lunches for our neighbors in need at 12:15 PM in the Meeting Room.
- May 18: *Church and the Paranormal: Ancient and Contemporary Unidentified Flying Objects* at 12:45 PM in the Fellowship Hall.
- May 21: Resonate Contemplative Service at 7:00 PM

SAVE THE DATE: June 7: Second Annual Arts, Craft, and Bake Sale at CUC

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 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

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**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