

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



October 4, 2026

The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

“Listening, Growing and Moving Forward Together”

Pastor Joy L. Johnson

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

Centering Music

"Blessed be the Lord God Almighty" # 19

Blessed be the Lord God almighty,
Who was, and is, and is to come;
Blessed be the Lord God almighty,
who reigns forevermore.
(repeat)

Invocation

One: Gracious and loving God, the heavens declare your glory, and creation speaks of your enduring faithfulness.

All: Open our ears to hear your voice, and open our hearts to receive your grace. Clear away whatever holds us back, and cultivate in our community a true passion to grow.

One: Honoring the strong foundation of our past, we press on together toward the goal ahead, looking to our future with hope, trust, and expectation.

All: Unite us together in love, O God, and guide our steps as we listen, grow, and move forward as one body. Amen!

***Opening Hymn**

"Great is the Lord #50

Chorus

Great is the Lord, he is holy and just by his power we trust in his love.
Great is the Lord, he is faithful and true by his mercy he proves he is love.

Great is the Lord and worthy of glory! Great is the Lord and worthy of praise!
Great is the Lord, now lift up your voice, now lift up your voice.
Great is the Lord! Great is the Lord!

Chorus

Great are you Lord and worthy of glory! Great are you Lord and worthy of praise!
Great are you Lord, I lift up my voice. I lift up my voice.
Great are you, Lord! Great are you, Lord!

***Opening Prayer**

***The Peace of Christ**

One: The peace of Christ be with you, all!

All: And also with you!

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

*Please note there is no Children's Message with Pastor Joy today
kids may now depart to Children's Time!*

First Reading

Philippians 3:7-14

⁷But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. ⁸Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, ⁹and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: ¹⁰That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; ¹¹If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. ¹²Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. ¹³Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, ¹⁴I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Responsorial

adapted from Psalm 19

One: The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

All: Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

One: The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eyes;

All: The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and drippings of the honeycomb.

One: May the words we speak and the thoughts we carry within us be acceptable to you.

All: O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. 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 22: 33-46

³³Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: ³⁴And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

³⁵And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. ³⁷But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

³⁸But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. ³⁹And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. ⁴⁰When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

⁴¹They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

⁴²Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? ⁴³Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

⁴⁴And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. ⁴⁵And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. ⁴⁶But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet

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

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Children's Message (*resumes again next week*)

Song of Preparation

"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.

Message

Listening, Growing, and Moving Forward Together

Pastor Joy



Hymn of Response

Knowing You" # 357

All I once held dear, built my life upon,
All this world reveres and wars to own.
All I once thought gained I have counted loss,
Spent and worthless now compared to this.

Refrain

Knowing you, Jesus, knowing you,
There is no greater thing.
You're my all,
You're the best.
You're my joy,
my righteousness,
and I love you, Lord.

Now my heart's desire is to know you more,
to be found in you and known as yours.
To possess by faith what I could not earn,
all our passing gift of righteousness.

Refrain

Oh to know the power of your risen life.
And to know you in your sufferings,
to become like you in your death, my Lord,
so with you to live and never die.

Refrain

Celebration of Communion

Pastor: Beloved children 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 bread... and we take the 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

"He Shall Feed His Flock"

Cheryl and Sarah

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 draw on the Holy Spirit's power within us. We bring forward now the prayer requests that have come to us today, whether they be joys or sorrows.... *(prayer requests are presented)*. We also pray for all who have asked to be on our printed 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 now 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

Offertory/Ministry of Music "Amazing Grace, My Chains are Gone" Cheryl and Sarah

Offertory 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, send us out to be living proof of your grace in all that we do.

All: **May we put your love into motion in every choice that we make**

One: Keep our eyes open and our hearts ready as we step into your future.

All: **Lead us in courage, mercy, and peace. 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 services ended. Oh, 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 unite 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.

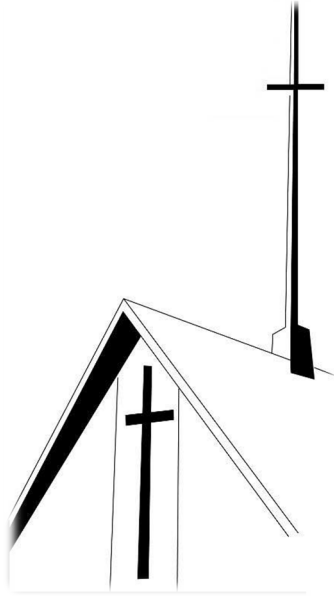
Unite us as one in this life that we share.

Then may all the living, with praise and Thanksgiving,
give honor to Christ and that name which we bear.

*Until we meet again, remember: you are
loved.*

Postlude

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



**Next Week:
Sunday, October 11, 2026
11:00 AM**

Readings:
Isaiah 25:1-9
Psalm 23
Matthew 22:1-14

“Grace Has You Covered”

***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

www.communityunited.church

communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com



Community United Church

**The flowers this morning are given to the glory of God
and in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness month.**

We give sincere thanks to the generous donor.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Sunday, October 4: TODAY: Community-Building Updates during worship, then lunch!
- Thursday, October 8: Crafternoon 1:30 PM in Fellowship Hall
- Sunday, October 11: Sunday Worship
- Tuesday, October 13: Liberty House Veterans' Ministry
- Wednesday, October 14: **Spirits & Spirituality:** Calamari's at 7:00 PM
- Sunday, October 18: Rev. David Ackerman is in the pulpit, followed by a reception.
Service Sunday is held as usual

***Need hearing assistance? We have four available devices to enhance your worship experience!
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),
Aran Maloney (Air National Guard), and Connor Bille (Army)

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, Debra Jackman,
Zoey Cathie Witmire, Laura Will, Veronica, Joan Schultz, Tom and Thea Hyatt,
Randy Koziol, Barbara Thompson, Tanisha and Jaeda, Barbara Hickey, Sandy Gool, Jim Haglund,
Shirley Carrier, Ruth Zavaglia, Brad Stewart, Cain Hickey, Zoey Foote, Earl Hall, Patty Brogdan,
Lynn Oliver, Rowan Oliver, Katrina Strohmeier, Theodore, Bill and Marilyn, Mellisa, Janell, Renee's Mom,
Joseph Sherrell and Patricia Hardman, Baby Asa, Adam, Kelsey, and Colton Ohrn.

Your 2026 Council Members:

Thea Hyatt, President, Ginnie Burger, Vice President, Tracy Applebee Davis, Treasurer,
Juli Tonks, Secretary, Michele Vahey, Justin Graff, and Chuck Becker

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

There are available Church Council positions – please let us know if you're interested!

Don't forget to check Facebook and our website: **communityunited.church**

Community United Church is committed to ethical and legal compliance
in our music and livestreaming:

CCLI Church Copyright License: 11405428 / Streaming License: 20856761

Are you Fluent with Social Media?

Community United Church is looking for a Social Media Specialist. This position is temporary with the possibility of becoming permanent after a 90-day probationary period. The time commitment would be between 5-10 hours a month, however that could either increase or decrease with the exploration and execution of the position. Interested persons should submit an email or letter of interest to Thea Hyatt (Council President), Chuck Becker, Becky Pomeroy, and Cheryl Sealy (Hiring Committee Members). If you have any questions about what the position will entail, please contact Tracy Applebee-Davis.

Please direct your information to the church's email: communityunited.church@yahoo.com

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