

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



October 18, 2026

The Twenty First Sunday after Pentecost

Theme: "Face to Face"

Guest preacher Rev. David Ackerman

Pastor Joy L. Johnson

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

Prelude
Welcome and Announcements

"Savior, Redeemer of my Soul"

James Wallace & Cheryl Strecker

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: Holy and Loving God, you have made us in your image, and we belong to you alone.

All: Therefore, we offer ourselves to you in service, love, and praise.

One: Draw us closer to you and to one another. Across every difference, deepen the connections that sustain us and unite us in shared ministry.

All: Use us for the glory of your realm and the good of your people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Opening Hymn

"God of Grace and God of Glory" #569

God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your power;
Crown your ancient Church's story, bring us bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the facing of this hour,
For the facing of this hour.

Lo! The hosts of evil round us scorn your Christ, assail his ways!
Fears and doubts too long have bound us – free our hearts to work and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage for the facing of this hour,
For the facing of this hour.

Heal your children's warring madness, bend our pride to your control;
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage lest we miss your kingdom's goal,
Lest we miss your kingdom's goal.

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore;
Let the gift of your salvation be our glory evermore.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving you whom we adore,
Serving you whom we adore.



***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.

First Reading

Exodus 33:12-23

Moses said to the LORD, 'See, you have said to me, "Bring up this people"; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, "I know you by name, and you have also found favour in my sight."¹³ Now if I have found favour in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favour in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people.'¹⁴ He said, 'My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.'¹⁵ And he said to him, 'If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here. ¹⁶For how shall it be known that I have found favour in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth.'

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses, 'I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favour in my sight, and I know you by name.'¹⁸ Moses said, 'Show me your glory, I pray.'

¹⁹And he said, 'I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, "The LORD";* and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰But', he said, 'you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.'²¹ And the LORD continued, 'See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock; ²²and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; ²³then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen.'

Responsorial

Psalm 99

One: The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble! He sits enthroned upon the cherubim;
Let the earth quake!

All: The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted over all the peoples. Let them praise your great and awesome name. Holy is he!

One: Mighty King, lover of justice, you have established equity; you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

All: Extol the LORD our God; worship at his footstool. Holy is he!

One: Moses and Aaron were among his priests, Samuel also was among those who called on his name. They cried to the LORD, and he answered them.

All: He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud; they kept his decrees and statutes.

One: O LORD our God, you answered them; you were a forgiving God to them, but an avenger of their wrongdoings.

All: Extol the LORD our God, and worship at his holy mountain; for the LORD our God is holy. 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 22:15-22

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. ¹⁶So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, 'Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?' ¹⁸But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, 'Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show me the coin used for the tax.' And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰Then he said to them, 'Whose head is this, and whose title?' ²¹They answered, 'The emperor's.' Then he said to them, 'Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.' ²²When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

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

"Lord, I lift Your Name on High" #88

Lord, I lift your name on high,
Lord, I love to sing your praises.
I'm so glad you're in my life,
I'm so glad you came to save us.

You came from heaven to earth to show the way,
From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay,
From the cross to the grave,
From the grave to the sky;
Lord, I lift your name on high.

(repeat)



Hymn of Response

“The Gift of Love” #397

Though I may speak with bravest fire,
And have the gift to all inspire,
And have not love, my words are vain,
As sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess,
And striving so my love profess,
But not be given by love within,
The profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,
Our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
By this we worship, and are freed.

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

“Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer”

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 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

"Not Too Far From Here"

James Wallace

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: O God, whose presence goes with us, keep us near to you and attentive to your glory in one another. Strengthen our work of faith and labor of love, that our lives may bear witness to you.

All: Send us forth to honor your image in every person, to bridge what divides us, and to offer to you all that we are; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn “They’ll Know We Are Christians” #595

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord.
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord.
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.

Refrain

**And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love.
Yes, they’ll know we are Christians by our love.**

We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand.
We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand.
And together we’ll spread the news that God is in our land.
(Refrain)

We will work with each other; we will work side by side.
We will work with each other; we will work side by side.
And we’ll guard each one’s dignity and save each one’s pride.
(Refrain)

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come.
And all praise to Christ Jesus, his only Son.
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one.
(Refrain)



*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 25, 2026
11:00 AM – (Prelude at 10:50 AM)

DIVERSITY SUNDAY!

Readings:

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Psalm 139:1-14

Mark 10:13-16

Theme: A Wider Welcome: The Love We Pass Along

***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

communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com



Community United Church

**The flowers this morning are given to the glory of God
by Dina Johnson in memory of her mother, Dolores Doerfer.**

Honoring your mom with you today.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Sunday, October 18:** **Stick around after service to greet Rev. Ackerman today!**
- **Sunday, October 18:** **SERVICE SUNDAY today!**
- Monday, October 19: CUC Council @ 6:30 PM
- Tuesday, October 20: Women's Outreach Group meets at Church to car pool
- Sunday, October 25: **Diversity Sunday**
- Sunday, November 1: **All Saints Commemoration** during Sunday worship

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, Michelle and Melissa, 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, Patty Brogdan, Lynn Oliver, Rowan Oliver,
Katrina Strohmeier, Theodore, Bill and Marilyn.

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

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in our music and livestreaming:

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