

# Community United Church

**An Open and Affirming Congregation**

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



October 5, 2025

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

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

"We Exalt Thee" #47

For thou, O Lord, art high above all the earth; thou art exalted far above all gods.  
For thou, O Lord, art high above all the earth; thou art exalted far above all gods.

We exalt thee, we exalt thee, we exalt thee, O Lord.

We exalt thee, we exalt thee, we exalt thee, O Lord.

*(Repeat All)*

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, your Spirit lavishly gifts us with faith, hope, and love. The gift of faith to apprehend what eyes cannot see. The gift of hope to endure in times of challenge. The gift of love to seek the healing, reconciliation, and restoration of all things.

**All: Though our faith sometimes feels as small as a mustard seed, you promise us, O God, that even such small faith can manifest into great things. In this time of worship, remind us that you are the God who enters into small faith in order to build a kingdom without end. Amen!**

\*Opening Hymn

"Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above" #56

Sing praise to God who reigns above, the God of all creation,  
The God of power, the God of love, the God of our salvation.  
My soul with comfort rich God fills, and every grief God gently stills:  
*To God all praise and glory!*

What God's almighty power has made, in mercy God is keeping;  
By morning glow or evening shade, God's eye is never sleeping.  
And where God rules in kingly might, there all is just and all is right:  
*To God all praise and glory!*

We sought the Lord in our distress; O God, in mercy hear us,  
Our Savior saw our helplessness and came with peace to cheer us.  
For this we thank and praise the Lord, who is by one and all adored:  
*To God all praise and glory!*

Let all who name Christ's holy name give God the praise and glory.  
Let all who know his power proclaim aloud the wondrous story.  
Cast every idol from its throne; the Lord is God, and God alone:  
*To God all praise and glory!*

**\* 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

## The Second Letter to Timothy 1:1-14

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup>I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. <sup>4</sup>Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. <sup>5</sup>I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. <sup>6</sup>For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands, <sup>7</sup>for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

<sup>8</sup>Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, in the power of God, <sup>9</sup>who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace, and this grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, <sup>10</sup>but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

<sup>11</sup>For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, <sup>12</sup>and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day the deposit I have entrusted to him. <sup>13</sup>Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup>Guard the good deposit entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.



## Responsorial

## Psalm 37:1-9

One: Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers, for [their ways] will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb.

**All: Trust in the LORD and do good; live in the land and enjoy security. Take delight in the LORD, and God will give you the desires of your heart.**

One: Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for God; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.

**All: Refrain from anger and forsake wrath. Do not fret—it only leads to evil; those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land. 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 17:5-6**

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" <sup>6</sup> The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

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**

**"Seek Ye First" #349**

Seek ye first the kingdom of God  
And its righteousness,  
And all these things shall be added unto you;  
*Allelu, alleluia!*

Ask, and it shall be given unto you,  
Seek and ye shall find,  
Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you;  
*Allelu, alleluia!*

**Message**

**Small Faith, Big Outcomes**

Pastor Rich

**Hymn**

**"O Lord, Hear My Prayer" #484**

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: When I call, answer me.  
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer, come and listen to me.

The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: all my hope comes from God.  
The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

## 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

"Lord, Have Mercy"

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 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

*Your 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](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

**Offertory/Ministry of Music**

**“Come, Jesus, Come”**

**Dina Johnson**

## 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, grant us the spiritual discernment we need to celebrate where you are breaking into the world, especially in what seems small and weak.

**All:** **We dare to believe that your strength meets our weakness; your grace meets our doubts, and your love empowers us to build with you a kingdom that will have no end. This is our vision and this is our faith! Amen!**

\*Blessing

\*Closing Hymn

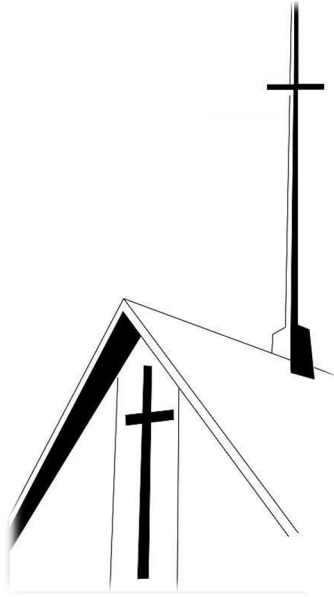
**“Be Thou My Vision” #502**

Be thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art—  
Thou my best thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my Wisdom, and thou my true Word,  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;  
Thou and thou only, first in my heart,  
High King of heaven, my Treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heaven’s Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

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



**Next Week:**

**The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

*Readings:*

2 Timothy 2:8-15

Psalm 111

Luke 17:11-19

**Theme: The Gift and Power of Gratitude**

***Need to contact us for prayer, conversation, or to connect  
online 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  
and in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month for October**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:** *(See also the "Love Wins" Calendar)*

- October 8: Spirits & Spirituality. This month at Calamari's at 7 PM
- October 11: Fall Fest at CUC 1-4 PM
- October 14: Liberty House – Veterans' Ministry
- October 15: Documentary, *Hellbound?* 7 PM at CUC
- October 19: Dixieland Sunday Worship at CUC

*(see also the Love Wins calendar insert in this bulletin)*

Reminders:

- ***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:**

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)

**PRAYERS FOR:**

Anna Silvia, Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Ralph Kester, Ethel Davis,  
Celeste Eller & Family, Michele Serafin, Toni Stevenson, Dave Woledge, Dorothy Moyer,  
The Vadzemnieks Family, Sharon Cooper, Sandra Ganley, Celeste Peck,  
Linda Foll Johnson, Todd Carrier, The Kuzma Family, Debra Jackman, Lori Tripp

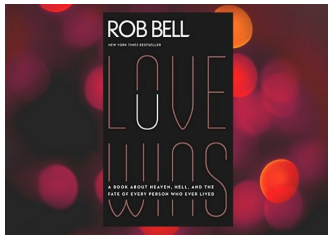
**Current Council Members:**

Mike Pruzinsky (President), Debbie Anderson (Vice President), Al Tilley (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](mailto:mpruzinsky@icloud.com)

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## Love Wins Study & Series at Community United Church

Join us on a multi-month exploration of Christian concepts about the afterlife, including the ancient sacred hope that all people will be redeemed by the love of God in Christ.

### October 2025

October 1:	Bible Study (Chapters 1-3 of <i>Love Wins</i> )
October 8:	Spirits & Spirituality: On the Afterlife
October 15:	Documentary & Discussion: <i>Hellbound?</i>
October 16-30:	Small Groups as Requested
October 22:	Art Show V: Does Love Win? Opening Night
October 29:	Evening Small Group Discussion
October 30:	Morning Small Group Discussion

### November 2025

November 2:	Church & the Paranormal: Angels, Demons, and the Afterlife
November 5:	Bible Study (Chapters 4-6 of <i>Love Wins</i> )
November 12:	Spirits & Spirituality: Scare Tactics or Love Tactics? How what we say matters.
November 13-30:	Small Groups as Requested
November 19:	Resonate: Friendsgiving
November 22:	Afternoon Small Group

### December 2025

December 3:	Bible Study (Chapters 7-8 of <i>Love Wins</i> )
December 4-19:	Small Groups as Requested
December 10:	Spirits & Spirituality: Advent, Christmas, and Eternal Hope
December 17:	Resonate: Living in Waiting

