

# Community United Church

**An Open and Affirming Congregation**

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



November 24, 2024

**Sundays of Gratitude, Part IV:**

Grateful for Traditions and New Ways

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!*

Welcome, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

Centering Music

“I Sing Praises” #660

I sing praises to your name, O Lord, praises to your name, O Lord,  
for your name is great and greatly to be praised.

*repeat*

I give glory to your name, O Lord, glory to your name, O Lord,  
for your name is great and greatly to be praised.

*repeat*

Invocation:

One: Holy and loving God, accept our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us.  
We thank you for the splendor of Your whole creation, for the beauty of this world,  
for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

**All: We thank you for our Church and our people. We thank you for our history  
and our traditions, our memories, and our relationships, and may we embrace  
new ways of doing things that honor who we are. Please open our hearts and  
minds to the possibilities of growth and renewal. Be with us, we pray, and  
strengthen us by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Amen!**

\*Hymn

“Sing a New Church” #577 v. 1,4,5

Summoned by the God who made us rich in our diversity,  
gathered in the name of Jesus, richer still in unity;

Refrain

Let us bring the gifts that differ and, in splendid, varied ways,  
sing a new church into being, one in faith and love and praise.

Bring the hopes of every nation; bring the art of every race.  
Weave a song of peace and justice; let it sound through time and space.

*(Refrain)*

Draw together at one table all the human family;  
Shape a circle every wider and a people every free.

*(Refrain)*

**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**

**Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

“Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the LORD your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy, <sup>2</sup> so that you and your children and your children’s children may fear the LORD your God all the days of your life and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long. <sup>3</sup> Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.

<sup>4</sup> “Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. <sup>6</sup> Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. <sup>7</sup> Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. <sup>8</sup> Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem<sup>[b]</sup> on your forehead, <sup>9</sup> and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

**Responsorial**

**Psalms 96**

One: O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD; bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

**All: Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. <sup>4</sup> For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.**

One: For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

**All: Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts.**

One: Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth. Say among the nations, “The LORD is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity.”

**All: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar and all that fills it; let the field exult and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy before the LORD, for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth.**

**\*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 5:38-48**

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’<sup>39</sup> But I say to you: Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also,<sup>40</sup> and if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, give your coat as well,<sup>41</sup> and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile.<sup>42</sup> Give to the one who asks of you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you. “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’<sup>44</sup> But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,<sup>45</sup> so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.<sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?<sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the gentiles do the same?<sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

One: This is the Gospel of Christ for the People of God!

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

**Children’s Message**

**Song**

“Praise and Thanksgiving” #722 v.1,3,4

Praise and thanksgiving, God, we would offer for all things living, you have made good:  
harvest of sown fields, fruits of the orchard, hay from the mown fields, blossom and wood.

You are providing food for your children, your wisdom guiding teaches us share  
one with another so that rejoicing, others may know you and praise your care.

Then will your blessing reach every people, all lands confessing your gracious hand.  
Where you are reigning no one will hunger, your love sustaining, fruitful the land.

**Message**

“Grateful for Traditions and New Ways”

Pastor Joy

## Hymn

“In the Lord I’ll Be Ever Thankful” #448

In the Lord I’ll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice!  
Look to God, do not be afraid. Lift up your voices, the Lord is near;  
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

*repeat*



## 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] .... 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**

*God is inviting us to serve in response to God's great love for us, so that the whole world may know the fullness of God's peace.*

How is God calling you this week to give of your time, talent, and resources?

**Community United Church has the following ministries opportunities and needs:**

House and Grounds Team  
Hospitality for socials and services  
Prayer ministries  
Food ministries: Liberty House & Service Sunday  
Children's Church leaders  
Financial gifts to cover monthly needs (every contribution helps so much)  
Sanctuary decorating team

*Every gift is great. Let us all give 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

Ministry of Music

“God Will Find a Way”

Don Cameron (Clarinet)

## **Offertory Prayer of Thanksgiving**



\*Congregational Response (BLUE) #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 gracious God, the one who binds us to our values as followers of Christ, and the one who meets us as we grow and explore new avenues for our lives and for our Spiritual growth, we ask for your unfailing love to guide us in our walk toward light, love, and reconciliation in all forms.

**All: Instill in us the resolve, the understanding, and the stamina to progress in all things through the wisdom of your Presence and the grace of your goodness.  
Amen!**

\*Blessing

\*Closing Hymn

“Grace Alone” #436

Every promise we can make, every prayer and step of faith;  
Every difference we will make is only by his grace.  
Every mountain we will climb, every ray of hope we shine;  
Every blessing left behind is only by his grace.

Refrain

Grace alone, which God supplies; strength unknown he will provide,  
Christ in us, our cornerstone, we will go forth in grace alone.

Every soul we long to reach, every heart we hope to teach;  
Everywhere we share his peace is only by his grace.  
Every loving word we say, every tear we wipe away;  
Every sorrow turned to praise is only by his grace.

(Refrain)

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



**Next Week –December 1, 2024**  
**First Sunday of Advent!**

**Theme for Advent I: Zechariah and Elizabeth – John the Baptist**  
*11:00 AM – Announcements at 10:55 AM*

***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  
Carol Rodgers in memory of her Mother, Florence Kurty.**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- December 4: Bible Study will NOT be held in December  
December 10: Liberty House Thanksgiving Dinner...contributions are welcome and dinner will be at 5:00 PM  
December 11: Spirits & Spirituality – Fellowship Hall (details to follow)  
December 15: Service Sunday  
December 17: Ladies Lunch – Brown Bag and Gift Exchange

***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), Samantha McHenry (Army), Brittany Duncan (Army), Matt Duncan (Army), Tyler Anderson (Army National Guard), Shelby Wescott (Army), Matthew Anderson (Army), Jaden O'Hara (Army), Toby Charlton (Marines), Cole Poshett (Army) & Hunter Miaczynski (Army)

### **PRAYERS FOR:**

Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Diane Walker, Ralph Kester, John M., Todd Carrier, Teddy Long, Tammy McIntyre, Laura Stone, Debra Doerfer & David Magid, Annette Minich, Dave Pakulski, Ethel Davis, Chelsea Brown, Celeste Eller & Family, Shirley Carrier, Dave Woledge, Ev Smith, Karis Fenton, Ruth Schmidt, Carol & Doug Rodgers, Jane Moran, Sharon Cooper, Josh Cook & Danny Kaeberlein, The Vadzemnieks Family, Reverend Susan Strouse & Reverend Barbara Peronteau.

### **Council Members:**

Debbie Anderson (President), Angel Conrad (VP), Nancy Alberico (Secretary), Janice Skelly, Mike Pruzinsky, Michele Vahey, Patti Rogers, Carol Rodgers, and Bob Martin