

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



November 10, 2024

Sundays of Gratitude, Part II:

Grateful for Those Who Serve

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

Cheryl and Sarah Strecker

Welcome, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

Centering Music

“Ubi Caritas et Amor” #399

Where true charity and love abide.

God is dwelling there;

God is dwelling there.

(Sing 3x)

Invocation:

One: Holy and loving God, we gather today to worship and adore you as the Holy One of love, mercy, and restorative justice.

All: You have made us to be in community with one another, and so we give thanks for all who serve in our society: to keep the peace, to govern justly, and to care for all who are in need. These are the tasks you entrust to us, O God, and we pray that our servant leaders do so with wisdom and grace. Amen.

*Hymn

“Alleluia, Sing to Jesus!” #320

Alleluia, sing to Jesus! His the scepter, his the throne:

Alleluia! His the triumph, his the victory alone.

Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion, thunder like a mighty flood.

Jesus, out of every nation, has redeemed us by his love.

Alleluia! Not as orphans are we left in sorrow now;

Alleluia! He is near us; faith believes nor questions how.

Though the cloud from sight received him, when the forty days were o'er,
Shall our hearts forget his promise? “I am with you ever-more!”

Alleluia! Heavenly High Priest, here on earth our help, our stay;

Alleluia! Hear the sinful cry to you from day to day.

Intercessor, Friend of sinners, earth's Redeemer, hear our plea,

Where the songs of all the sinless sweep across the crystal sea.



***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.

Veterans' Day Commemoration

(Adapted from the Rev. John Gundlach, Retired Navy Chaplain, and the UCC's minister for government chaplaincies)

One: In commemoration of Veterans' Day in the United States, we honor all of those among us who have served in the military. Today we hear words that have not always been offered, "*Thank you for your service.*"

All: Though these words will never go far enough to bring healing for some wounds, it is one small but important way to acknowledge what veterans have given, especially to the nation they serve.

One: Though we hate war—and we may disagree about the justifications for particular wars—it is important to recognize the sacrifices of those who have served on our behalf, and to care for them in return.

All: As people of faith, we acknowledge that we are not yet on the Mountain of the LORD—the place where swords will be transformed into tools of peace.

One: We still live in the "already" and "not yet" world, where we must strive for peace, with hope to guide us. And so we pray:

All: God of All Nations, where pain persists, we ask you to heal the wounds of our veterans. Give them peace so they may enjoy the fullness of their lives. We offer thanks for our veterans. Help us to care enough to give them the respect and honor they are due, and strengthen our resolve to build a world modeled on your realm, where war will be pursued no more. This we ask of you, God of Peace. Amen

Recognition of our Veterans

Song of Reflection "God of the Ages, Whose Almighty Hand" #728

God of the ages, whose almighty hand
Leads forth in beauty all the starry band
Of shining worlds in splendor through the skies
Our grateful songs before your throne arise.

Your love divine has led us in the past,
In this free land by you our lot is cast;
Be now our ruler, guardian, guide and stay,
Your Word our law, your paths our chosen way.

From war's alarms, from deadly pestilence,
Be your strong arm our ever-sure defense;
Your true religion in our hearts increase,
Your bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.

Refresh your people on their toilsome way,
Lead us from night to never-ending day;
Fill all our lives with heaven-born love and grace,
And songs of praise we'll lift before your face.

First Reading

The Apostle Paul's Letter to the Romans 12:9-21

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



Responsorial

Psalms 82

One: God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods the Holy One holds judgment:

All: **[God declares:] "How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute..."**

One: "Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."

All: **Rise up, O God, arbiter of the earth, for all the nations belong to you. 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 15:12-17

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing, but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷ I am giving you these commands so that you may love 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

“Goodness is Stronger than Evil” #296

Goodness is stronger than evil; love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness; life is stronger than death.
Victory is ours, victory is ours, through him who loved us.
Victory is ours, victory is ours, through him who loved us.
(Repeat)

Message

“Grateful for Those Who Serve”

Pastor Rich

Hymn

“Will You Let Me Be Your Servant” #391

Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I might have the grace to let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey, here together on the road;
We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you, in the nighttime of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping, when you laugh I’ll laugh with you,
I will share your joy and sorrow till we’ve seen this journey through.

When we sing to God and heaven, we shall find such harmony,
Born of all we’ve known together—of Christ’s love and agony.



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

“My Redeemer is Faithful and True”

Dina Johnson

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

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

“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”

Sarah Strecker

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 loving God, we have received your command to love all others—and to heal the world through acts of justice, kindness, and mercy.

All: This love is what it means to serve in the name of Jesus. This same love can fill our service to society. Spirit of God, give us the wisdom and grace to be such servant leaders. By your mercy, inspire such servant leadership in all those who lead, in any role. Amen!

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn

“Spirit, Working in Creation” #128

Spirit, working in creation, bringing order out of strife:
Come around God’s gathered people, giving harmony and life.
Spirit, speaking through the prophets so the voice of God was heard:
Come, inspire, alert your people to this day’s prophetic word.

Spirit, overshadowing Mary as the Christ-child in her grew:
Come, so that the Christ within us may today be born anew.
Spirit, coming from the Father as a dove upon our Lord:
Come upon your favored people, and your blessings be outpoured.

Spirit, driving to the desert even God’s Anointed One:
Come to us in trial and testing that God’s will in us be done.
Spirit, breathed on the disciples, giving peace where there was fear:
Come among us, touch us, send us, making Jesus’ presence near.

Spirit, wind and flame, empowering fearless witness to the lost:
Come, unite, renew your wonders as of a new Pentecost!
Praise and glory, Holy Spirit, for your love on us outpoured,
Giving honor to the Father and proclaiming Jesus “Lord!”



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



Next Week – November 10, 2024:

11:00 AM

**Sundays of Gratitude, Part III:
Grateful for our Church**

1 Corinthians 12:27-31

Psalm 106:1-5

Matthew 16:13-20

***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 by
Ginnie Burger in appreciation of all veterans**

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 12: Ladies Lunch – Thanksgiving Tureen

November 13: Spirits & Spirituality – Calamari's 6:30 PM

November 17: New Members Sunday

**Any CUC friends who want to become CUC members, please see one of the
Pastors or speak to or leave a message for Lisa in the office.**

November 18: Council Meeting 6:30 PM

***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.

Council Members:

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