

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



September 1, 2024

The Fifteenth 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!*

Litany for Labor Day

One: As our nation commemorates Labor Day this year, let us remember that the call for labor justice is not only a civic value, but a spiritual value.

All: We remember the words of Moses to the people Israel, “You shall not defraud your neighbor; you shall not steal, and you shall not keep for yourself wages of a laborer until morning.”

One: We remember the words of Jesus, as he sent his disciples out to minister, “the laborer deserves to be paid.”

All: Let us always remember that there is dignity in our work. God created us to be co-creators who innovate, build, and grow. Believing that this is true, let us continue to advocate for justice in labor, here and everywhere. Amen.

Song for Justice

“Make Me a Channel of Your Peace” #587

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring your love.
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord,
And where there’s doubt truth faith in you.

Chorus:

*O Master grant that I may never seek—
So much to be consoled as to console,
To be understood, as to understand,
To be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there’s despair in life let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness—only light,
And where there’s sadness, ever joy. *(Chorus)*

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
In giving of ourselves that we receive,
And in dying that we’re born to eternal life.



Invocation:

One: Holy and loving God, you call us to live by faith, and in the assurance of your grace.
You also call us to be '*doers of your Word*'—turning faith into action.

All: Following in the ways of Jesus, we ask the Spirit to inspire us to be people of faith, grace, and action, so that the Body of Christ may come alive in this place. Amen!

*Hymn

“Sing a New Church” #577

Summoned by the God who made us
Rich in our diversity,
Gathered in the name of Jesus,
Richer still in unity:

Chorus:

*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.*

Radiant risen from the water;
Robed in holiness and light,
Many genders in God's image,
Many genders God's delight:
(Chorus)

Trust the goodness of creation;
Trust the Spirit strong within.
Dare to dream the vision promised—
Sprung from seed of what has been.
(Chorus)

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.
(Chorus)

Draw together at one table
All the human family;
Shape a circle ever wider
And a people ever free.
(Chorus)

*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.



Reading

The Letter of James 1:17-27

¹⁷ Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave birth to us by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. ¹⁹ You must understand this, my beloved brothers and sisters: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger, ²⁰ for human anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹ Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

²² But be doers of the word and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³ For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴ for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵ But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. ²⁶ If any think they are religious and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Responsorial

Psalm 15

One: O LORD, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?

All: Those who walk blamelessly and do what is right and speak the truth from their heart; who do not slander with their tongue and do no evil to their friends nor heap shame upon their neighbors.

One: In whose eyes wickedness is despised; and who honor people who revere the LORD.

All: It is those who stand by their oath even to their hurt; who do not lend money at interest, and do not take a bribe against the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be moved. 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**

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, ² they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³ (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders, ⁴ and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash, and there are also many other traditions that they observe: the washing of cups and pots and bronze kettles and beds.) ⁵ So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders but eat with defiled hands?” ⁶ He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; ⁷ in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.’ ⁸ “You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

¹⁴ Then [Jesus] called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵ there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

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

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

Children’s Message

Song

“Holy, Holy, Holy” #737

Holy, holy, holy,
My heart, my heart adores you.
My heart is glad to say the words:
You are Holy, Lord
(Sing 3x)

Message

From Heart to Action

Pastor Rich

Hymn

“I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me” #574

I’m gonna live so—God can use me
Anytime, and anywhere.

I’m gonna live so—God can use me
Anytime, and anywhere.

I’m gonna work so—God can use me
Anytime, and anywhere.

I’m gonna work so—God can use me
Anytime, and anywhere.

I’m gonna pray so—God can use me
Anytime, and anywhere

I’m gonna pray so—God can use me
Anytime, and anywhere

I’m gonna sing so—God can use me
Anytime, and anywhere

I’m gonna sing so—God can use me
Anytime, and anywhere.



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!

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

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 offerings can also take the form of financial contributions to the church to support our ministries.

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

"His Strength is Perfect"

Cheryl 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, you show us a pattern for how to be people of Spirit and Wisdom. You bring spiritual truths to us, so that we might go out into the world to embody the Reign of God.

All: Grant us, now, the inspiration to go out and be your loving presence. Move us from worship and prayer to action and dedication. Move us from lamenting the troubles of the world to being part of the solution. This we ask, in the name of Jesus—who shows us how to live as people who are doers of the Word. Amen!

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn

“We Are Called to Be God’s People” #580

We are called to be God’s people,
Showing by our lives his grace,
One in heart and one in spirit,
Sign of hope for all the race.

Let us show how God has changed us,
And remade us as his own,
Let us share our life together—
As we shall around God’s throne.

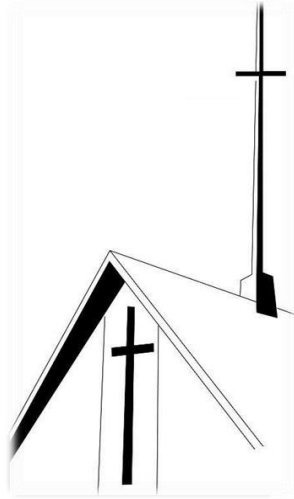
We are called to be God’s servants,
Working in the world today;
Taking his own task upon us,
All God’s sacred words obey.

Let us rise, then, to God’s summons,
Dedicate to God our all.
That we may be faithful servants,
Quick to answer now God’s call.

We are called to be God’s prophets,
Speaking for the truth and right,
Standing firm for godly justice,
Bringing evil things to light.

Let us seek the courage needed,
Our high calling to fulfill,
That the world may know the blessing
Of the doing of God’s will.

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



**Next Week – September 8, 2024:
The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Assigned Scriptures:

James 2:1-10, 14-17

Psalm 146

Mark 7:24-37

Theme:

No Prejudice in the Reign of God

***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 memory of her Mom's birthday

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 4: Supper & Study 6:30 PM
September 9: Council Meeting 6:30 PM
September 10: Liberty House
September 11: Spirits & Spirituality – Calamari's 7:00 PM
September 13: **CUC Art Show 5:30 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)

PRAYERS FOR:

Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Dew Johnson,
Harry Lamb, Diane Walker, Ralph Kester,
John M., Todd Carrier, Teddy Long, Jimmyo, Sandy Gool, Tammy McIntyre, Laura Stone,
Jan & Tim Crowe and Family, Debra Doerfer & David Magid, Annette Minich,
Dave Pakulski, Randi Johnson, Ethel Davis,
Jim Haglund, Chelsea Brown, John Waid, Celeste Eller & Family, Shirley Carrier,
Dave Woledge, Ev Smith, Karis Fenton, Ruth Schmidt, Jerry Koziol, Uncle Charlie,
Carol & Doug Rodgers, Jane Moran, Ed Mumau, Sharon Cooper,
Mary Ann Schmeisser, Josh Cook & Danny Kaeberlein,
The Doerfer-DePoorter Family & Jeremiah, & Linda Foll-Johnson.

Council Members:

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