

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



September 15, 2024

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 "Sanctuary" #482

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary,
Pure and holy, tired and true;
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living
Sanctuary for you.
(Repeat all)

Invocation:

One: In the name of God the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer; God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; God the Source, Word, and Presence—we gather in worship.

All: Amen!

One: Holy and loving God, you created us to be in communion with you, with one another, and in respectful co-existence with all of nature. Yet we know, O God, that all manner of brokenness has interrupted such grace-filled-living.

All: Through Christ Jesus, the redemption of the world has come and is coming. In this time of worship, we ask that you infuse us with your grace to help bring healing to the world. This we pray through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God forever and ever. Amen!

*Hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy" #136

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea.
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
Which wert and art, and evermore shall be.

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
Though the eye made blind by sin thy glory may not see,
Only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
Perfect in power, in love and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth, and sky, and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

***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 3:1-12

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, for you know that we who teach will face stricter judgment. ² For all of us make many mistakes. Anyone who makes no mistakes in speaking is mature, able to keep the whole body in check with a bridle. ³ If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we guide their whole bodies. ⁴ Or look at ships: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, yet they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵ So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits.

How great a forest is set ablaze by a such a small fire! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire. The tongue is placed among our members as a world of iniquity; it stains the whole body, sets on fire the cycle of life, and is itself set on fire by Gehenna. ⁷ For every species of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by the human species, ⁸ but no one can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse people, made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰ From the same mouth comes a blessing and a curse. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. ¹¹ Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and brackish water? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brothers and sisters, yield olives or a grapevine figs? No more can salt water yield fresh.

Responsorial

Psalm 116:1-9

One: I love the LORD because God has heard my voice and my supplications. Because God inclined to hear me, therefore I will call on God as long as I live.

All: Gracious is the LORD and righteous; our God is merciful. The LORD protects the simple; when I was brought low, God saved me.

One: Return, O my soul, to your rest, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.

All: For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I walk before the LORD in the land of the living. 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 8:27-38

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi, and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" ²⁸ And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." ²⁹ He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah." ³⁰ And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

³¹ Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes and be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples and said to them, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

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

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

Children's Message

Song

"Surely the Presence" #131

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place;
I can feel his mighty power and his grace.
I can hear the brush of angels' wings, I see glory on each face;
Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.
(Repeat)

Message

Our Words, Our Course

Pastor Rich



Hymn

“We’ve a Story to Tell the Nations” #562

We’ve a story to tell the nations,
That shall turn their hearts to the right,
A story of truth and mercy, a story of peace and light,
A story of peace and light.

Chorus:

*For the darkness shall turn to dawning,
And the dawning to noonday bright;
And Christ’s great kingdom shall come on earth,
The kingdom of love and light.*

We’ve a song to be sung to the nations,
That shall lift their hearts to the Lord,
A song that shall conquer evil and shatter the spear and sword,
And shatter spear and sword.

(Chorus)

We’ve a message to give to the nations,
That the Lord who reigns high above,
Has sent us his Son to save us, and to show us that God is love,
And show us that God is love.

(Chorus)

We’ve a Savior to show to the nations,
Who the path of sorrow has trod,
That all of the world’s great peoples might come to the truth of God,
Might come to the truth of God.

(Chorus)



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

“Hear, O Lord”

Dina Johnson & Kelly McLaughlin

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

“All the People Say Amen”

Dina Johnson & Kelly McLaughlin

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, like the Apostle Peter, let us recognize Jesus as the Christ; *and* let us also dare to follow the way of the cross—believing that with every cross, the promise and power of resurrection awaits.

All: If we must face the crosses of life, let us do so to transform pain into healing and injustice into wholeness and love. Amen!

*Blessing



*Closing Hymn

“Lift High the Cross” #287

Chorus:

*Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
Till all the world—adore his sacred name.*

Come, Christians, follow where our Savior trod,
Our King victorious, Christ,
The Son of God.

(Chorus)

All newborn servants of the Crucified
Bear on their brow the
Seal of Christ who died.

(Chorus)

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
Your death has brought us
Life eternally.

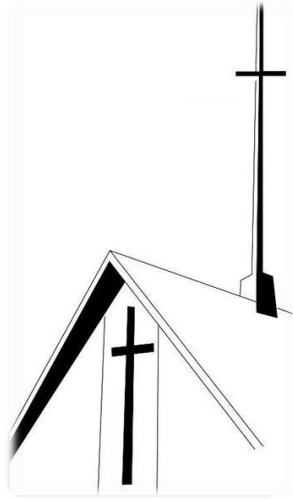
(Chorus)

So shall our song of triumph ever be:
Praise to the Crucified
For victory.

(Chorus)



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



**Next Week – September 22, 2024:
The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Assigned Scriptures:

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

Psalm 1

Mark 9:30-37

Theme:

Checking our Ambitions

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 18: Resonate 7:00 PM (see next page)
September 25: Ladies Lunch
September 29: Praise & Prayer 9:00 AM
September 29: Worship Service 11:00 AM

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY:

Beginning this weekend, the Ladies Outreach Group will be collecting FULL SIZED bottles of shampoo, conditioner, and body wash, as well as new or GENTLY USED bath towels. We will be donating the items to the Church of the Covenant where they have a women's shower ministry. We will collect the items through September and October. Thank you for your support!

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

Resonate

Wednesday, September 18th, 2024

6:30 p.m. pre-service gathering.

Service begins at 7 p.m.

Bring a snack to share!

The Long & Winding Road of Change

Prayerfully imagined by Shelly Conrad, Dina Johnson & Cheryl Strecker



Join us as we explore the struggle that each changing season brings. We will acknowledge the storms, uncertainty and fear that change creates and how faith and patience reveal the plan for us to experience peace, love, and joy.