

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

January 25, 2026

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy Johnson

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Music

“Blessed Be the Lord God Almighty” #19

Blessed be the Lord God almighty, who was, and is, and is to come;

Blessed be the Lord God almighty, who reigns forevermore.

(Repeat)

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, your Spirit gathers us to worship you as the Holy One of heaven and earth. You are the light in our darkness.

All: For your unending love, we praise you, O God! As we tune our hearts to worship you, help us to be the Body of Christ—so that the whole world may know the gift and comfort of your love. Amen!

* Opening Hymn

“Gather Us In” #649

Here in this place, the new light is streaming, shadows of doubt are vanished away.

See in this space our fears and our dreamings, brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken; gather us in; our spirits inflame.

Call to us now, and we shall awaken; we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young, our lives are a mystery; we are the old, who yearn for your face.

We have been sung throughout all of history, called to be light to the whole human race.

Gather us in, the rich and the haughty; gather us in, the proud and the strong;

Give us a heart so meek and so lowly; give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we receive new life in the waters; here we receive the bread of new birth;

Here you shall call your sons and your daughters, call us anew to be salt for the earth.

Give us to drink the wine of compassion; give us to eat the bread that is you;

Nourish us well, and teach us to fashion—lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not just in buildings, small and confining, not in some heaven light years away,

Here in this place the new light is shining; now is God present, and now is the day.

Gather us in and hold us forever; gather us in and make us your own;

Gather us in, all peoples together, fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

***Opening Prayer**

***Sign of Peace**

One: The peace of Christ be with all of you.

All: And also with you.

One: Let us share with one another a sign of peace.

Reception of New Members

Song of Celebration

“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:
*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:
*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.*

Trust the goodness of creation; trust the Spirit strong within.
Dare to dream the vision promised, sprung from seed of what has been.
*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.
*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.*

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



First Reading

The Book of the Prophet Isaiah 9:1-4

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³ You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴ For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

Responsorial

Psalm 27:1, 4-9

One: The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

All: One thing I asked of the LORD; this I seek: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in God's temple.

One: For the Holy One will hide me in God's shelter in the day of trouble; God will conceal me under the cover of the Holy One's tent; God will set me high on a rock.

All: Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in God's tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the LORD. 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

Matthew 4:12-23

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

¹⁵ "Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned."

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." ¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. ²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

One: This the Gospel of Christ for the people of God.

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Children's Message

Song of Preparation "Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus" #472

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face;
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of his glory and grace.

(Repeat)

Message *From the Light of God: Turning, Following, Fishing* Pastor Rich

Song of Response "Glory to God" #240

Gloria, gloria—in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, gloria, alleluia, alleluia!

Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!
Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!

COMMUNION LITURGY

Pastor: People of God, as we journey through the season of Epiphany, we come each week to discover how Christ was revealed to the world. Christ came for us, and for our salvation into wholeness and holiness.

All: Our altar table is another place to encounter the living Christ—who meets us once again in the bread and in the cup. Here at this table, food for the body also becomes food for the spirit.

Pastor: This is a table of grace. There is room around it for every soul that was, and is, and is to come.

All: We come to the table as 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 we ask the Holy Spirit to make it for us communion with the living Christ, body and blood, love poured out, forever!

All: Here at this Table we remember that Christ indeed 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 and find the Light of Heaven as true light for our lives.

Communion Music

"Trust & Obey"

Bob, Chris, Julie & Cheryl

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 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 everyone who has asked their name to be on the prayer list [*see last page of the bulletin*]. 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.

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

Offertory "For the Lord is my Saving Light" Bob, Chris, Julie & Cheryl

Refrain

The Lord is my Saving Light,

Oh what should I fear.

(Repeats)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Congregational Response #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, in this time of worship we can say with the Prophet Isaiah, "*the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the shadow of death light has dawned.*" With the psalmist we sing, "*The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?*" For you have come near to us in Christ, and you remain with us by your Spirit.

All: **Now, lead us, we pray, that we may embrace Christ's invitation to turn and cast wide the net of the good news. Through our lives, may the world know that your love brings wholeness, and your paths lead to transformation and peace. *This is the salvation of the world:* that you redeem what you have made through the refining power of your love and grace. Amen!**

***Blessing**

***Closing Hymn**

"Surely It is God Who Saves Me" #423

Surely it is God who saves me;
I shall trust and have no fear.
For the Lord defends and shields me
And his saving help is near.
So rejoice as you draw water
From salvation's living spring;
In the day of your deliverance
Thank the Lord, God's mercies sing.

Make God's deeds known to the peoples;
Tell out God's exalted Name.
Praise the Lord, who has done great things;
All his works God's might proclaim.
Zion, lift your voice in singing;
For with you has come to dwell,
In your very midst the great and
Holy One of Israel.



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



Next Week:

The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Readings to Study:

Micah 6:1-8

Psalm 15

Matthew 5:1-12

Theme:

What God Desires of Us: Justice, Kindness, Mercy

***Need to contact us for prayer, conversation, or to connect with a
small group or church ministry?***

1011 West 38th Street – Erie, PA 16508

(814) – 864 – 4429

www.communityunited.church



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The altar flowers this morning are given to the glory of God and in celebration of Lauryne Rae's 23rd birthday, from Mark, Tracy and Alysa Davis

UPCOMING EVENTS

- February 4: Bible Study, "How Did the Bible Come Together, Part 2" with Pastor Rich, 6:30 PM Fellowship Hall
February 10: Liberty House Meal Preparation and Share with U.S. Veterans
February 11: Spirits & Spirituality, 7:00 PM, Calamari's Squid Row
February 18: Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30 PM
(February Council Meeting will be set upon the selection of new CUC Council)

Please Bring Cans of Soup!

The CUC Ladies' Group is sponsoring the Jean Reidel Memorial Superbowl Soup Drive going on now and up to February 8th. **Please bring in cans of "hearty" soups** to be collected and given to the Bethany Outreach Center which directly helps families in the City of Erie.

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:

Linda Hilbert, 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, Rose Goss,
Zoey Cathie Witmire, Laura Will, Michael, Paul Dietz, Ruth Schmidt, Wendy Wilcox

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

You may call the church office at 814-864-4429 for pastoral and administrative matters or use email:
communityunitedchurch@yahoo.com

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