

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



The Third Sunday of Lent

March 3, 2024:

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy L. Johnson

*Whoever you are, are wherever you are on life's
journey, you are welcome here!*

Centering Music

“Cares Chorus” #493

I cast all my cares upon you, I lay all of my burdens down at your feet.
And anytime that I don't know what to do, I will cast all my cares upon you. *(Repeat)*

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, throughout the ages you have called your people to live in the ways of holiness. Through Moses, you called your people to be set apart by laws of food, dress, and ritual. Through the Jewish prophets, you called your people to be set apart by justice, kindness, and mercy. Now, through Jesus Christ, you call us to find the fulfillment of holiness in the practice of heavenly love.

All: Grant, O God, that we will walk in the holiness of 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 us 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 bones.

***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.

(You may choose to shake hands, hug, or simply acknowledge one another without physical touch based on your comfort and/or health needs.)

Confession

One: *Let us pray:* for those times that we have rushed to anger, persisted in stubbornness, and held unnecessary grudges:

All: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

One: For the times that we have judged others for the very things we do ourselves:

All: Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

One: For the times that we have turned from the ways of divine love:

All: Lord, have mercy. Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy. May Almighty God have mercy upon us, and may we grow in the assurance of God's eternal love. Amen.

Lenten Meditation & Candles

Song of Reflection

“Jesus Remember Me” #285

(Sing Three Times)

Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.



First Reading

Exodus 20:1-17

Then God spoke all these words, ²“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me. ⁴“You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above or that is on the earth beneath or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me ⁶but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. ⁷“You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. ⁸“Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female servant, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it. ¹²“Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ¹³“You shall not murder. ¹⁴“You shall not commit adultery. ¹⁵“You shall not steal. ¹⁶“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. ¹⁷“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female slave, ox, donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

Responsorial

Psalm 19

One: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims God's handiwork.

All: Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

One: The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart.

All: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Amen!

*Lenten Acclamation

“Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights” #250 V. 1

Throughout these Lenten days and nights

We turn to walk the inward way,

Where meeting Christ, our guide and light,

We live in hope till Easter Day.

*Gospel

John 2:13-22

¹³ The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves and the money changers seated at their tables. ¹⁵ Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, with the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ He told those who were selling the doves, “Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!” ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” ¹⁸ The [people] then said to him, “What sign can you show us for doing this?” ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” ²⁰ The [people] then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” ²¹ But he was speaking of the temple of his body. ²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

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

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Message

To be Holy, to Be Set Apart

Pastor Rich

Song of Response

“I Love You, Lord” #85

I love you, Lord, and I lift my voice—to worship you, O my soul, rejoice!
Take joy, my King, in what you hear: may it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

(Repeat)

COMMUNION LITURGY

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

“Revelation Song”

Cheryl Strecker

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer

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]*...We pray for everyone who has asked their name to be on the prayer list *[see the last page of the bulletin]*. And as we pray for our own church we pray for our Church Council leaders—we ask for blessings upon them of wisdom and servant leadership. 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.

Your offerings make this inclusive ministry possible. Thank you! Because of you, our church reaches through and beyond Erie: providing worship, community, and service. As you can give generously, it is well received.

**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

“Already All I Need”

Lizdel Collado-Monahan

Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Lenten Congregational Response #576

***Make me a servant, humble and meek.
Lord, let me lift up those who are weak!
And may the prayer of my heart always be:
Make me a servant! Make me a servant!
Make me a servant today!***

*Departing Prayer

One: Holy and loving God, we have been reminded today that to be holy is to be set apart by your divine decrees.

All: We celebrate the good news of Christ: that your decree is the practice of unconditional love. May we go, now, with such love guiding us and informing all that we do. Amen!

* Blessing

*Closing Hymn

“Rejoice, the Lord is King!” #342

Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore!
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing, and triumph ever-more:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Our Savior, Jesus, reigns, the God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains, he took his seat above:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

His Kingdom cannot fail, he rules both earth and heaven;
The keys of death and hell are to our Jesus given:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Rejoice in glorious hope—for Christ the Lord shall come
To gather all his saints to their eternal home:
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!



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



Next Sunday:

11:00 AM

Readings:

Ephesians 2:1-10

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

John 3:14-21

**The Fourth Sunday of Lent:
Redemption by Grace**

***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



Community United Church

The altar flowers this morning are given to the glory of God by Ginnie Burger for her sister Alice's Birthday.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- March 6: Supper & Study 6:30 PM
- March 11: Council Meeting 6:30 PM
- March 12: Liberty House
- March 13: Lenten Soup & Simplicity Meal Share & Connection, 6:30 PM
- March 17: Service Sunday
- March 26: Ladies Lunch

Need hearing assistance? We have four available units. Please talk to our tech crew in the back of the sanctuary.

Please submit any bulletin requests by **Tuesday** to ensure there is time to get them in.

WE REMEMBER THOSE IN OUR ARMED FORCES:

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), DJ Miaczynski (Marines), Jaden O'Hara (Army)
& Toby Charlton (Marines)

PRAYERS FOR:

Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Kevin Bennett & family & friends, Rod & Dew Johnson,
Harry Lamb, Diane Walker, Robin Adams, Ralph Kester,
John M., Todd Carrier, Teddy Long, Jimmyo, Sandy Gool, Tammy McIntyre, Laura Stone,
Ron Celeski, Jan & Tim Crowe and Family, Debra Doerfer & David Magid, Annette Minich,
Dave Pikulski, Randi Johnson, Lillian Hendrickson, Ethel Davis,
Jim Haglund, Chelsea Brown, John Waid, Patti Rogers, Celeste Eller & Family, Shirley Carrier,
Dave Wooledge, Ev Smith, Karis Fenton, Ruth Schmidt, Gary Peck, Jerry Koziol, Uncle Charlie,
Carol & Doug Rodgers, Jane Moran, Ed Mumau, Renee Gullekson & Sharon Cooper.

Council Members:

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

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