

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



Transfiguration Sunday

March 2, 2025

11:00 AM

Pastoral Team:

Rev. Dr. Rich McCarty & Pastor Joy Johnson

Centering Music

“Jesus Your Name” #361

Jesus Your name is power; Jesus, your name is might
Jesus, your name will break every stronghold; Jesus, your name is life

Jesus, your name is healing; Jesus, your name gives sight
Jesus, your name will free every captive; Jesus, your name is life

Jesus, your name is holy; Jesus, your name brings light
Jesus, your name above every other; Jesus, your name is life

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, throughout time, and in all places, your presence has been revealed in quiet moments of inspiration, and sometimes in grand manifestations too wonderful to fully explain.

All: As your Spirit gathers us to worship today, help us to be a people who find you in the stillness and in the miraculous—especially as we journey with Jesus, once more, to his transfiguration. This we pray, through Christ our Redeemer, Amen!

* Opening Hymn

“Open the Eyes of my Heart” #656

Open the eyes of my heart Lord, Open the eyes of my heart
I want to see you, I want to see you
Open the eyes of my heart Lord, Open the eyes of my heart
I want to see you, I want to see you

To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory
Pour out your power and love as we sing holy, holy, holy
To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory
Pour out your power and love as we sing holy, holy, holy
(repeat all)

Holy, Holy, Holy; Holy, Holy, Holy,
Holy, Holy, Holy, I want to see you
Holy, Holy, Holy; Holy, Holy, Holy,
Holy, Holy, Holy, I want to see you

***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.



First Reading

The Book of Exodus 34:29-35

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. ³⁰ When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. ³¹ But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. ³² Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. ³³ When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face, ³⁴ but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off until he came out, and when he came out and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, ³⁵ the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining, and Moses would put the veil on his face again until he went in to speak with him.

Second Reading

Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 3:12-4:2

¹² Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with complete frankness, ¹³ not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. ¹⁴ But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, the same veil is still there; it is not unveiled since in Christ it is set aside. ¹⁵ Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds, ¹⁶ but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

⁴ Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. ² We have renounced the shameful, underhanded ways; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.

Responsorial

Psalm 99

One: The LORD is sovereign; let the peoples tremble! God sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

All: The LORD is great in Zion, the Holy One is exalted over all the peoples. Let them praise your great and awesome name.

One: Holy is God! Mighty Sovereign, lover of justice, you have established equity; you have provided justice and righteousness.

All: Extol the LORD our God, and worship at God's holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy. 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 Lesson

Luke 9:28-36

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹ And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. ³⁰ Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. ³¹ They appeared in glory and were speaking about his exodus, which he was about to fulfill in Jerusalem. ³² Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep, but as they awoke they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³ Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us set up three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah," not realizing what he was saying. ³⁴ While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. ³⁵ Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" ³⁶ When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and, in those days, told no one any of the things they had seen.

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

"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 all)

Message

Christ Transfigured, the Church Transfigured:
For the Ministries Ahead

Pastor Joy

Prayer and Song of Response

One: Holy and loving God, as you transfigured Christ on the mountaintop, transform us so that we can always perceive you, everywhere and in all places.

All: **God you are here! You are present: In moments of miraculous glory. In the burning of our hearts as we hear the living Word. At the table where our lives are nourished by your grace. And in every human relationship that embodies unconditional love. In all these moments, we stand on holy ground. Amen!**

"Holy Ground #654

We are standing on holy ground,
And I know there are angels all around.
Let us praise Jesus now;
We are standing in his presence
On holy ground.
(Repeat all)



Communion

Pastor: People of God, come to the table! All who hunger and thirst are fed here by the Servant of servants, Jesus Christ. Here, all are loved, all are welcomed, all is forgiven.

All: 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 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!

Communion Music

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 the continued growth of our church, for our shared discernment of who Spirit is calling us to be; and 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?

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Liberty House
- Service Sunday
- Ladies Outreach Ministry
- Prayer Ministries
- Children's Church
- Instrumental or vocal music offerings
- Lector and worship assistance
- House & Grounds team

Financial Opportunities:

- Planned weekly or monthly financial gifts (see the last page of the bulletin for ideas)
- Donating altar flowers, candles, and other church supplies

Church Growth Opportunities:

- Invite a family, friend, or neighbor to church
- Share our website or social media posts on your preferred pages
- Share a story about what you love about Community United with people who don't know us yet.
- Put a church logo bumper-sticker on your car.

*Many church growth leaders say that just 1% giving can be transformational.
Please see the last page of the bulletin for planned giving ideas.*



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*

Offering & Offertory

*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, you bring us to the height of heaven so that we might be inspired and empowered to go into every valley of shadow.

All: Spirit of God, help us now to be the Body of Christ in poignant and empowered ways. Renew us! Revive us! As you do, we pray that you will help us to grow in spirit and numbers for the sake of your reign. Amen!

*Blessing

*Closing Hymn

“Shine, Jesus, Shine” #319

Lord, the light of your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us,
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,
Shine on me, shine on me.

Chorus:

*Shine, Jesus shine, fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light.*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
From the shadows into your radiance;
By the blood I may enter your brightness,
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness,
Shine on me, shine on me. *(Chorus)*

As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
So our faces display your likeness;
Ever changing from glory to glory,
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story,
Shine on me, shine on me. *(Chorus)*

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



Next Week:

Ash Wednesday

March 5

6:30 PM

The First Sunday of Lent

March 9, 2025

Readings to Study:

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Romans 10:8b-13

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

Luke 4:1-13

Theme:

Christ in the Desert

***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 and in honor of the birthday of Alice Edwards from her sister, Ginnie Burger

UPCOMING EVENTS IN MARCH:

March 5, 2025:	Ash Wednesday, 6:30 PM
March 9, 2025:	First Sunday in Lent
March 12, 2025:	Soup & Simplicity (our Lenten replacement for Spirits & Spirituality)
March 19, 2025:	Resonate
March 25, 2025:	Ladies Outreach Ministry

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)

PRAYERS FOR:

Pat Czytuck, Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Dew Johnson, Harry Lamb, Ralph Kester, John M., Todd Carrier, Teddy Long, Tammy McIntyre, Debra Doerfer & David Magid, Annette Minich, Dave Pakulski, Ethel Davis, Chelsea Brown, Celeste Eller & Family, Michele Serafin, Linda Foll-Johnson, Toni Stevenson, Dave Woledge, Ev Smith, Karis Fenton, Ruth Schmidt, Carol & Doug Rodgers, Jane Moran, Josh Cook & Danny Kaeberlein, The Vadzemnieks Family, Doug Moore, Reverend Susan Strouse & Reverend Barbara Peronteau, and John & Tina Schnarrs

Current Council Members:

Mike Pruzinsky (President)*, Debbie Anderson (Vice President), Melanie Vadzemnieks (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

Community United: Month of February in Review

Dear Members and Friends of Community United Church,

As we begin the month of March, this is a time to reflect on February's time of discernment and growth here at Community United Church. As you heard at the beginning of last month this "*month in review*" has been launched to enhance communication about the activities, ministries, and business of the church. We will continue to publish this in your bulletin throughout 2025—on the first or second week of the month. Your feedback as to how this might be helping you stay connected is truly welcome! Let us know!

Worship

- In the month of February, our focus for Sunday worship, in the Season of Epiphany, directed us to "Imagine Together":
 - On February 2, we dreamed about what we could be here at CUC *and did it without limitations* on our dreams! The Dream Board has been a source of our interest and planning and provides us all with a glimpse of what our dreams are and what we hope to accomplish, together, as a community of faith! If you feel led, please continue to add to the board.
 - On February 9th, we continued to "Imagine Together" by looking at the results of the Dream Board activity and began to understand what it means to discern (consider, ponder, decide) as to what actions we might take to expand our ministries, grow our outreach, and work harder for our Church and each other in the process. We are learning to always be discerning our best steps forward, together.
 - On February 16th, we continued with our theme and actually named the spiritual gifts that we know each of us have been blessed with and we are now asked to search ourselves to explore how else we can uncover those gifts and use them for the upbuilding of Christ's Church.
 - Then on February 23, we had an inspirational 9:00 AM Praise & Prayer service led by Shelly Conrad, followed by our 11:00 AM service in which we explored what planning and action we are initiating in order to live into our future here at Community United Church.
- Children's Church remains a wonderful success! We are always happy to see our youth in service, and then watch them go to their own space to learn, to enjoy each other, and to hear the ongoing message simply that *they are loved!* **We are in need more volunteers for Children's Church, so please do let us know if you'd like to help so that this precious ministry can continue.**

- February Budget Update (*As of 2/26/2025)
 - Offerings & revenue: \$9,436.91
 - Expenses: \$7,667.13
 - *Thank you for your generosity!* We spent much of February relearning that every gift is a meaningful one at this church. Every gift opens doors for sharing the unconditional and inclusive love of God in word and deed!
 - **If you would like to consider planned giving, look at the next page for some ideas that might be useful for you.**

Service:

- Giving back to the community:
 - Liberty House:
 - Monthly meal preparation and sharing; benefitting U.S. Veterans between homes and often jobs.
 - Service Sunday:
 - Monthly bagged lunches, benefitting our neighbors in need through the Upper Room (in coordination with our sibling congregation: St. Paul's UCC).
 - Ladies Outreach Ministry:
 - Continuous service to children and adults in need in the Erie area.
- **Education:**
 - Our mid-week and special quarterly educational sessions were able to take a much-needed rest (*the cold and snow forced us to do so, as well*).
- **House & Grounds:**
 - Thank you to everyone who has helped us with the occasional maintenance need, as well as all who have helped to keep the facility looking beautiful. We are especially grateful for all those who actively look after our building, inside and out, and make it possible for us all to have access even with multiple feet of snow!
 - You don't have to know about electricity, plumbing, or architecture to help! We always need those with an eye for decorating; those who have a hand at cleaning; and grounds crew who know how to keep our property well-maintained. Pray about joining, based on your skills!

Thank you, All,
Pastors Rich & Joy



Curious about planned-giving?

As we consider our gifts of *time, talents, and resources*, the “resources” part has often been a difficult subject in churches. It goes without saying that some churches have approached finances from a place of shame or demand. We don’t do that. At Community United Church, we approach financial gifts as an invitation to help build the reign of God through our church. God doesn’t need money, but the world we live in requires us to work with it. So, following in the way of Christ, we invite people to give offerings of their own choosing—and from a place of faith and joy. Consider the guide below, prepared by the United Church of Christ, as you pray and think about planned giving for the year.

CONSIDER YOUR PLEDGE AS A PERCENT OF YOUR MONTHLY INCOME.

Annual Income	Monthly Income	2%	3%	4%	5%	10%
20,000	1,667	33	50	67	83	167
25,000	2,083	42	63	83	104	208
30,000	2,500	50	75	100	125	250
35,000	2,917	58	88	117	146	292
40,000	3,333	67	100	133	167	333
45,000	3,750	75	113	150	188	375
50,000	4,167	83	125	167	208	417
60,000	5,000	100	150	200	250	500
75,000	6,250	125	188	250	313	625
100,000	8,333	167	250	333	417	833
125,000	10,417	208	313	417	521	1042
150,000	12,500	250	375	500	625	1250
200,000	16,667	333	500	667	833	1667

On average, Americans give 2% of their income to charity. Giving even 1% more of annual income to charity would be transformative for our congregation and other organizations doing good in our community.



Imagine
Together