

Community United Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation

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



May 5, 2024

The Sixth Sunday of Easter

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!*

Prelude
Welcome, Prayer Requests, and Announcements

Cheryl Strecker

Centering Music

“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 all)

Invocation

One: Holy and loving God, we gather in worship believing that you are the Holy One who loves us *always* and in *all ways*. In turn, you command us to love one another.

**All: In this time of worship, renew our hearts by the power of your love. Then send us out with the faith that this same love has the power to heal the world.
Amen!**

*Hymn

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” #59

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea.
Chanting bird and flowing fountain call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our Brother—all who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the happy chorus which the morning stars began;
Love divine is reigning o'er us, joining all within its span.
Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife;
Joyful music leads us sunward in the triumph song of life.



* 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.

First Reading

The First Letter of John 5:1-6

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³ For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, ⁴ for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. ⁵ Who is it who conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ⁶ This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

Responsorial

Psalm 98

One: O sing to the LORD a new song, for God has done marvelous things.

All: God has remembered steadfast love and faithfulness to the People of God. All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

One: Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises.

All: Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the world and those who live in it. 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

John 15:9-17

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing, but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷ I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

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

All: Come Holy Spirit! Thanks be to God!

Message

The Commandment & Commission of Love

Pastor Rich

Hymn

"The Gift of Love" #397

Though I may speak with bravest fire,
And have the gift to all inspire,
And have not love, my words are vain,
As sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess,
And striving so my love profess,
But not be given by love within,
The profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,
Our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
By this we worship, and are freed.



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

Instrumental

Cheryl Strecker



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

“Heart of Worship”

Rich & Cheryl

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.

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, make our hearts bold with love for one another!

All: Pour out your Spirit upon all people, that we may live your justice and sing in praise the new song of your marvelous victory. Amen!

*Blessing



*Closing Hymn

“Here I am, Lord” #559

I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin—my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Chorus:

*Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
Give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my Word to them. Whom shall I send?

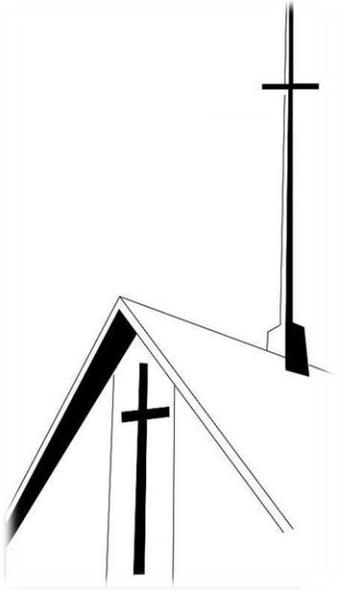
(Chorus)

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them, my hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide—
Till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

(Chorus)



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



**Next Week:
Ascension Sunday**

11:00 AM

Readings:

Acts 1:1-11

Ephesians 1:15-23

Psalm 47

Luke 24:44-53

Theme: The Risen & Reigning Ascended Christ

***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 Dave Woledge in memory of his Grandmother.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- May 8: Spirits & Spirituality 7:00 PM
- May 13: Council Meeting 6:30 PM
- May 14: Liberty House
- May 14: Fundraising Committee 6:30 PM
- May 15: Resonate 6:30 PM (tentative)
- May 19: Service Sunday
- May 26: Praise & Prayer 9:00 AM
- May 28: Ladies Lunch

SAVE THE DATE: June 1: Craft & Bake Sale at CUC

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

Please submit any announcement requests by **Tuesday** for the Sunday bulletin.

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

PRAYERS FOR:

Dorothy Moyer, Anna Silvia, Kevin Bennett & family & friends, Rod & 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, Lillian Hendrickson, 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, Renee Gullekson, Sharon Cooper,
Mary Ann Schmeisser, Saundra Carlson, Josh Cook & Danny Kaeberlein, & Jenny Jacob

Council Members:

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