



*January 31, 2021*  
*Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ*

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*Sunday Meditation*

Always pray to have eyes that see the best in people, a heart that forgives the worst, a mind that forgets the bad, and a soul that never loses faith in God.

- Unknown

*Community News*

*Prayer List and Prayers of the People*

*Prelude*

*Lighting of the Candles*

\* *Call to Worship*

Friends in Christ, what hopes do you bring to worship?

**We bring hope for health and wholeness.**

What afflictions do you bring to worship?

Physical pain?

**From illness and injury.**

Emotional pain?

**From sad and scary life situations.**

Mental pain?

**From disease of many kinds.**

With all of these afflictions, it's a miracle that any of us have made it to worship this morning!

**But where else would we be? We yearn to know God's powerful love and to know that wholeness is possible.**

In today's gospel, a person with an "*afflicting spirit*" interrupts Jesus

**And Jesus sets the person free.**

And where does the miracle of this story and our stories begin?

**When we bring all of who we are**

**-- Hopeful, afflicted, bold --**

**into relationship with the Divine.**

So come, let us enter this sanctuary with our whole selves

**-- Hopeful, afflicted and bold--**

Come, let us worship!

\* *Opening Hymn*

“*Majesty*”

*Greenfield CH #10*

*Gathering Prayer*

Loving God, love through us, as we worship your holy name.  
Love through us, as we listen for your holy world.  
Love through us, as we live your teachings and offer your love to  
our world.  
In your majestic name, we pray. Amen.

*Psalm Reading*

111 NIV

- <sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD.  
I will extol the LORD with all my heart  
in the council of the upright and in the assembly.
- <sup>2</sup> Great are the works of the LORD;  
they are pondered by all who delight in them.
- <sup>3</sup> Glorious and majestic are his deeds,  
and his righteousness endures forever.
- <sup>4</sup> He has caused his wonders to be remembered;  
the LORD is gracious and compassionate.
- <sup>5</sup> He provides food for those who fear him;  
he remembers his covenant forever.
- <sup>6</sup> He has shown his people the power of his works,  
giving them the lands of other nations.
- <sup>7</sup> The works of his hands are faithful and just;  
all his precepts are trustworthy.
- <sup>8</sup> They are established for ever and ever,  
enacted in faithfulness and uprightness.
- <sup>9</sup> He provided redemption for his people;  
he ordained his covenant forever—  
holy and awesome is his name.
- <sup>10</sup> The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;  
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.  
To him belongs eternal praise.

## *Prayer of Confession*

When we cry out with words that hurt, silence our cries and speak gently through our words. When we act in ways that hurt, even when help is intended, transform our hurtful actions with your grace. When we forget that we are loved and called to love, love us back into your likeness, that your love might flow freely through us and bring your love to the world. In your holy presence of love, we pray. Amen.

## *Words of Assurance*

In the midst of struggle, disease and affliction,  
know that you are made in God's image  
and God sees you as whole and good.  
So may you celebrate God in your midst  
through opportunities of wholeness and justice.

## *Epistle Lesson*

### **1 Corinthians 8:1-13 NIV**

#### ***Concerning Food Sacrificed to Idols***

**8** Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. <sup>2</sup>Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. <sup>3</sup>But whoever loves God is known by God.

<sup>4</sup>So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” <sup>5</sup>For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), <sup>6</sup>yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

<sup>7</sup>But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. <sup>8</sup>But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

<sup>9</sup>Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup>For if someone with a

weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol's temple, won't that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? <sup>11</sup> So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. <sup>12</sup> When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.

\* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Mark 1:21-28 NIV

*Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.)*

TH #497

*Jesus Drives Out an Impure Spirit*

<sup>21</sup> They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. <sup>22</sup> The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. <sup>23</sup> Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, <sup>24</sup> "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

<sup>25</sup> "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" <sup>26</sup> The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

<sup>27</sup> The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him." <sup>28</sup> News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

\* *Gloria Patri*

*Children's Message*

\* *Meditation Hymn* "Blessed Jesus, At Thy Word"

Mt Hope PH #212

Grace TH #26

*Today's Message*

\* *The Apostle's Creed*

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hades; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic/Christian church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**

*The Lord's Prayer*

**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, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

\* *Sung Response*                      “*Hear Our Prayer, O Lord*”                      TH # 501

\* *Closing Hymn*                      “*He Leadeth Me*”  
*Mt Hope PH #370*                      *Greenfield CH #690*                      *Grace TH #466*

\* *Benediction*

And now in the wholeness and the goodness of God, go forth.  
Go and laugh with your friends,  
reconcile with those who have hurt you,  
be kind to strangers and feel the Divine smile upon us.  
Now and forevermore.

In the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forevermore. **Hallelujah! Amen!**

\* *Three-Fold Amen*

\* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

\* *Postlude 2/Exiting the Church*

**TH # 558**