



January 1, 2023
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

“New Year’s Day is a good time to fix one’s eyes on the only One who knows what the year is to hold.”

Elisabeth Elliot
Secure in the Everlasting Arms

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Let all of creation praise the name of the Holy One!

The rhythms of life praise the Everlasting God through the markings of time.

Let all of creation praise the name of the Holy One!

The flowers, land, and trees praise the Divine Gardener through rest and renewal.

Let all of creation praise the name of the Holy One!

Living creatures praise the Spirit of God through our breathing, living and being. Praise God!

* *Invocation*

Holy Love, you make us a community. You gather us as your offspring and knit us together with grace and mercy. In your presence, there is fullness of love, joy, hope, and peace. Thank you for being among us this day and with us in every moment of our being. Receive our praise, dwell in our midst, and create in us a heart that yearns for you and your kingdom. In the name of Emmanuel, we pray. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* “When Morning Guilds the Skies” CH #215

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Eternal God, the dawn of a new year prompts us to reflect on our past and hope for our future. Help us live every day seeking your way and moving on your path. Help us commit to love and resolve to extend the grace and mercy we need from you and our neighbor. Make us new. Amen.

Words of Grace

The God who counts our days, knows us intimately, loves us abundantly, and abides with us relentlessly. Receive the brand-new mercies of this day. Hold the love of God closely, firmly, and freely. Transformation, grace, and new life is assured this day. Amen.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Matthew 2:13-23 NIV

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

TH #497

The Escape to Egypt

¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ “A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more.”

The Return to Nazareth

¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰ and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³ and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* "*Silent Night! Holy Night!*"

CH #253

Today's Message



Call to Communion

Friends, what we are about to do is to celebrate the Joyful Feast of the people of God.

When we are able, with the Holy Spirit, to experience the vision of love for God's World here on earth – then all of creation will come as equal companions to sit at this table.

In the meantime, you and I are invited to eat and drink, to be nourished and renewed for the ongoing work of justice, embracing mercy, and walking humbly with God.

* *Communion Hymn* "*Let Us Break Bread Together*"

CH #460

Holy Communion Litany

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Responsive Communion Praise

Blessed are you, O Lord, our God, king of the universe. Blessed are you, and blessed is your will.

Before time began, your love brought all things into being and all things were created for your glory.

Blessed are you, gracious Father, for at the appointed **time** you sent your Son, who sat at a table with his disciples, gave thanks to you and took a loaf of bread, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Before time began, your love brought all things into being and all things were created for your glory.

Again, after supper, he took the cup and giving thanks to you, he gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and drink. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you and for all people, for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Before time began, your love brought all things into being and all things were created for your glory.

Come to us now, O Holy Spirit, that, partaking in this meal, you would breathe life into us again. Come to us now, O Holy Spirit, that, partaking in this meal, you would make us one.

Before time began, your love brought all things into being. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, may all things be created anew for your glory ...

** 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.

Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Blessed are those who are called to his table.

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you.

But only speak the Word and I shall be healed.

These are the gifts of God for the People of God.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

Sharing of the Elements

Pew Communion

Prayer

This has been no ordinary meal. We have been fed and nourished with the life of our Risen Lord Jesus.

We go from here, refreshed and eager, to share that life with others. In the name of our Risen Lord, we pray. Amen.



* *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.**

* *Sung Response*

“Hear Our Prayer, O Lord”

TH # 501

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

Offertory (MH)

* Doxology

TH # 551

* Offertory Prayer

**Generous Love, bless these offerings. Stir up the gifts within for
your glory, show your provision through the sharing of our
resources, and empower us to steward our days as precious and
holy. Amen.**

* *Closing Hymn*

“The First Noel”

CH #265

* *Benediction*

May we remember the magnificent acts of the Holy One. May we
proclaim the wondrous ways of our God. May love be our compass and
mercy our guide.

Go into the world as kinfolk of the Christ who trust in the faithfulness of
the One who calls, who comes, and who companions with us. Go in
peace. Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*