



January 11, 2026
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Meditation

“The Savior, though without sin, was baptized for our sake, that we might learn humility and obedience.”

— **St. Augustine of Hippo**

Welcome

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
Baptism of the Lord

January 11, 2026
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

You who created the heavens and stretched them out above us,
You who spread out the earth beneath our feet and summoned
sprouts and shoots,

Breathe life into us, God Who Creates!

You who came to the river,

You who sought the Baptizer and the Jordan waters,

Welcome us to the waters of life, Jesus the Christ!

You who soared through the heavens,

You who hovered and rested upon Jesus,

Alight upon us today, Spirit of God, Heaven's Dove.

* *Invocation*

You Who Call Us, we come before you in answer to your call in our life. You created the heavens and the earth and placed us here for life and hope. We know your dream for a world that is righteous and just, a world you promise will come to pass. Breathe your Spirit upon us again and again and bring our passion for your bold vision. Make us lights to those who sit in darkness! In the name of Jesus, who descended into the water of baptism to show us the way to righteousness, and of the Soaring Spirit, who alights upon those who arise from these life-giving waters. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* “*On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry*”
Mt Hope PH #115 Greenfield NCH #115 Grace TH #95

Prayer for Yearning

God of Holy Expectation, when we read about those who serve you, like John, those whom you love and delight in, we yearn to feel your delight in us as well. Our voices can seem weak, our efforts in vain. Sometimes we feel like dimly burning wicks, just about to go out. Sometimes we are the ones sitting in darkness, even though you call us to help others find their way out of the darkness. Holy One, take us by the hand. Strengthen us in our weakness, that your holy work may be accomplished through us and that we may know your delight in the core of who we are. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Isaiah assures us that our weakness and limitation do not stand in the way of God’s plans for the world or God’s pleasure in us. We are God’s beloved children, God’s partners in the work of world-renewing. We are God’s chosen in whom the Creator delights.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 42:1-9 NRSV

The Servant, a Light to the Nations

42 Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.
2 He will not cry out or lift up his voice
or make it heard in the street;
3 a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.
4 He will not grow faint or be crushed
until he has established justice in the earth,
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

⁵ Thus says God, the Lord,
who created the heavens and stretched them out,
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
who gives breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it:

⁶ I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness;
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,

⁷ to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.

⁸ I am the Lord; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to idols.

⁹ See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

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

Matthew 3:13-17 NRSV

TH #497

The Baptism of Jesus

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” ¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

** Meditation Hymn*

“Blessed Quietness”

Mt Hope VH #152

Greenfield FHP #108

Grace VH #152

Today's Message



Baptismal Renewal

A basin or font of water is placed where all can come to it. Water is poured so the sound is heard.

Invitation

Beloved of God, today we remember that we are a people formed in water and Spirit. We remember that Jesus stepped into the waters of the Jordan, not because he needed to be cleansed, but to show us what it means to be fully human - to say yes to God, yes to belovedness, yes to the work of gentle justice.

Today we step into that yes again.

Acknowledging Our Need for Renewal

We have known bruising.

We have known moments we wish we could live again.

We have known times when our flame burned low.

We long to begin again.

The One who *stretches out the heavens* is still stretching us - stretching our courage, stretching our compassion, stretching our capacity to love and to be loved.

We open ourselves to be stretched into new life.

Hear the good news:
Nothing is sealed.
Nothing is beyond mending.
The story is not over.
It has only just begun.

All is forgiven. All is being made new.

Can we begin again?

Yes. By the grace of God, we will begin again.

Silence.

Blessing the Water

Holy One, you moved over the waters at creation.
You carried your people through the sea and into freedom.
Your Spirit descended upon Jesus in the river.
Bless this water now.

Let it awaken memory.
Let it carry mercy.
Let it stir our hearts toward your dream.

Amen.

The Renewal

*Each person dips a hand into the water,
touches their own forehead.*

“Rejoice and be glad. Remember your baptism.”

“Nothing separates us from the love of God.”

Affirmation of Calling

We are the Body of Christ—
not alone, but together.

We are God’s beloved.

The Spirit that was in Christ is in us.

We are called to bring gentle justice.

We will not break the bruised reed.

We will not extinguish the smoldering flame.

We will walk in compassion, courage, and joy.

This is our covenant.

This is our life together.

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.**

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

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

Offertory (MH)

* Doxology

TH # 551

* Offertory Prayer

God of Bold Visions for our World, you love all peoples and nations, seeking a world where everyone flourishes in just and righteous lives. Use us and our gifts for the newness you declare possible. Make this newness spring forth in and through us. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

“Blessed Assurance”

Mt Hope VH #200

Greenfield CH #572

Grace VH #200

* *Benediction (responsive)*

A surprised John asked Jesus,

“...and do you come to me?”

Jesus came to him with a surprising request.

Jesus comes to each of us, inviting us to bold and hopeful action.

So, when God calls, when Jesus arrives,

We will answer the call and step forward.

We will bring hope to those suffering injustice,

And light to those in darkness,

Through the power of the Spirit,

We go to live our lives to the fullest. Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*