



*December 20, 2020*  
*Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ*

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### *Advent Meditation*

All the world rejoices at the news of Jesus' coming. To those who believe the infant born in Bethlehem is truly Immanuel - God With Us - the news brings us not only joy, but a sense of awesome responsibility.

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

*Community News*

*Prayer List and Prayers of the People*

*Prelude/Lighting of the Candles*

*Message: Penn West Conference Minister David Ackerman and Marsha*

\* *Call to Worship*

Sing out, my soul!

Sing of the holiness of God:

**Who has delighted in humanity;  
lifted up the poor, satisfied the hungry,  
given voice to the silent,  
and grounded the oppressor.**

God has blessed the full-bellied with emptiness,

And given the gift of tears

To those who have never wept;

**God has desired the darkness of the womb,  
and inhabited our flesh--**

Sing of the longing of God:

**Sing out, my soul!**

\* *Opening Hymn*      *“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”*      vs. 1-2

*Mt Hope PH #111*

*Greenfield CH #240*

*Grace TH #13*

## *Lighting the Advent Candle - The Candle of Love*

O Holy One, we light this fourth candle, and marvel at your desire to be one with us. Let its flame summon hearts grown cold into the warmth of a people living in the Light of Love. Fill our lives with Love, making room there for friends and strangers, all who desire to know you, God with us, as we work for justice and peace in the service of Hope.

**God be with us in this Light of Love.**

### *Lighting of the Candle*

## *Gathering Prayer*

O Wondrous God,  
send your Messenger to us today with a word of grace  
if we are fearful, move us to Confidence.  
If we are weary, offer us Rest.  
If we are empty, fill us with Hope.  
We have been searching for you far away;  
Let us find you at home in our midst,  
Changing hearts and minds  
Urging us to join your work of Love.  
We pray in the name of the One who is coming,  
Jesus, the Christ.

**Amen.**

## *Prayer of Confession*

Do not be afraid, said Gabriel,  
surprising Mary  
and confronting her with the decision of her life.  
Do not be afraid, God is with you.  
2020 has confronted many of us  
with life-changing circumstances and decisions.  
We know fear from the inside out.

In this moment, ponder that fear. Name it, if you can, at least to yourself.

### *Silent Reflection*

Continue to ponder, and if you can,  
try to name where you may hear God calling:  
Do not be afraid.

## *Assurance of Grace*

Our God, who has been with the people since the beginning, is with us now offering grace that is more than we can ask or imagine. God's love frees us from the past, and helps us move forward into a new future. Let us thank God-with-Us, Emmanuel, for faithful love.

## *Epistle Lesson*

**Romans 16:25-27 NRSV**

### *Final Doxology*

<sup>25</sup> Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup> but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith - <sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

## \* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

**Luke 1:26-38 NRSV**

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

**TH #497**

### *The Birth of Jesus Foretold*

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of

God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.” <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

\* *Gloria Patri*

*Children's Message*     *"Twelve Days of Christmas"*

\* *Meditation Hymn*     *"In the Bleak Midwinter"*  
*Mt Hope PH #128*

*The Grace & Greenfield Children's Christmas Program*  
*A Pageant Like No Other 2020*

\* *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*    *“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”*  
*Greenfield CH #244*

\* *Benediction*

Let us go forth without fear, creating in our lives a space for the One who longs to dwell with us, to share our lives, and bless our world, and lead us into the Kingdom of Justice and Peace.

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*                      TH # 558