



*December 27, 2020*  
*Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ*

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*Sunday Meditation*

"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.  
I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all  
Three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that  
they teach!"

**Charles Dickens**

**Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ  
Joint Virtual Service (Recorded at Grace)  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas Day**

**December 27, 2020**

*Community News*

*Prayer List and Prayers of the People*

*Prelude*

*Lighting of the Candles*

*\* Call to Worship*

When Jesus is born to Mary and Joseph,  
**God is there.**

When they present Jesus at the temple,  
**God is there.**

When Simeon holds Jesus in his arms,  
**God is there.**

When Anna recognizes Jesus as the answer to prayer,  
**God is there.**

This very morning,  
**God is here.**

In the future we cannot see,  
**God is there.**  
**Let us worship God!**

*\* Opening Hymn*

*“Away in a Manger”*

*Mt Hope PH #137*

*Greenfield CH #262*

*Grace TH #109*

*Gathering Prayer*

O God, in the sweetness of the story we tell today,  
the encounter of old and young--  
Mary and Joseph presenting Jesus to the elders--  
We feel the movement of your Spirit making all things new.  
Awake us to your presence in this moment  
As we seek Christ in our midst:

Let us recognize God-with-us,  
A light to the nations, your glory revealed.  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### *Prayer of Confession*

**Holy God, we know that you have been present to us throughout all of history, even throughout our own histories. We know you will be with us in our future. Yet often we don't live as if we know that.**

As Simeon recognized in Jesus the salvation of his people, we recognize in Jesus' Way our own wholeness and health, yet we often fail to follow.

As Anna recognized in Jesus the redemption of her people, we recognize in Jesus God's saving grace for us, yet we often fail to rejoice and to share this good news.

**Forgive us, make us wise and joyful and strong so that we live in the understanding of your never-ending love. Amen.**

### *Words of Assurance*

The scriptures promise that God will make all things new. As God makes the year new, may we also be made new by God's love and forgiveness in Jesus. **Amen.**

### *Epistle Lesson*

**Galatians 4:4-7 NIV**

<sup>4</sup> But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. <sup>6</sup> Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

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

**Luke 2:22-40 NIV**

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

**TH #497**

### *Jesus Presented in the Temple*

<sup>22</sup> When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present

him to the Lord <sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), <sup>24</sup> and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. <sup>27</sup> Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

<sup>29</sup> “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.  
<sup>30</sup> For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:  
<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of your people Israel.”

<sup>33</sup> The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, <sup>35</sup> so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup> and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. <sup>38</sup> Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup> And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

\* *Gloria Patri*

*Children's Message*

\* *Meditation Hymn*      “*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*”

*Greenfield CH #279*

*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*      “*Joy to the World!*”

*Mt Hope VH #88*

*Greenfield CH #270*

*Grace VH #88*

\* *Benediction*

Send us into the world refreshed in hope,  
Awake, alert,  
attuned to your presence  
ready to join your work of blessing for all.

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**

\* *Postlude 2/Exiting the Church*