



December 22, 2024
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

www.greenfieldcharge.org
greenfieldchargeucc@gmail.com

Facebook: Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

Pastor
Mrs. Wendy Farber

farberhome@atlanticbb.net

Pianist
Sylvia Olewinski (MH)

Audio Tech
Jeff Farber (Greenfield)

Organist
Gary McIntyre (Grace)

Advent Meditation

Think of what Christ did. He left his heavenly home, in obedience to His Father, came to this earth to live, and to be one of us. Remember, this was God in human form – Immanuel – God with us. His motives would be misunderstood. Jesus willingly suffered in order to identify with us. His whole purpose and reason for coming was to give everything for us – including His precious blood and life.

Franklin Graham
The Name (2002)

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
Fourth Sunday of Advent / Abolish to Establish

December 22, 2024
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Love deeply, creating the wells of kinship,

For in the Body of Christ we belong.

Love boldly, like the spirited colors of a rainbow,

For in the Body of Christ we find peace.

Love joyfully, like the blissful songs in the wind,

For in the Body of Christ we claim our connections.

* *Opening Hymn*

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Mt Hope VH #89

Greenfield CH #250

Grace VH #89

Advent Scripture

Micah 5:2-5a NRSV

The Ruler from Bethlehem

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth,

⁵ and he shall be the one of peace.

Advent Reading

When the people were looking for deliverance, the prophet Micah declared, “But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah...from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient day.” (Micah 5:2). But what if Micah is also talking to us, proclaiming, “But you, O Mt Hope, O Greenfield, and O Grace from you shall come forth for me...” What? What might God be calling forth from us?

God invites us to receive the promise of God’s salvation and the sustenance of God’s mercy and grace, enabling us to live the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God’s invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.

We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to live as people of God’s promise, a promise of salvation and flourishing for all people that springs forth from God’s love for all creation.

Lighting the Fourth Candle

* *Advent Candle Lighting Hymn* “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

Mt Hope VH #93
vs 1,3

Greenfield CH #245
vs 1-2

Grace VH #93
vs 1,3

* *Advent Prayer*

God of steadfast love,

You chose Bethlehem, a small and humble place, to bring forth the Savior of the world. In the same way, You call us to carry Your promise of peace and love into our world. Open our hearts to receive Your mercy and grace so that we might reflect Your love to all creation. Help us to live as bearers of Christ's light, sharing the hope of salvation wherever we go. Amen.

* *Advent Blessing*

May the love of Christ dwell deeply within you, filling your hearts with the peace and promise of God’s salvation. Go forth to be God-bearers in the world, bringing love, hope, and light wherever you are. Amen.

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Divine Light and Love,

We have been weighed down by the heaviness of the season, the sorrows carried from the past, and the expectations of the present and future. We hide in shadows instead of the light. We embrace individualism instead of basking in the joy of community love. Create a new path in our hearts so that we can find levity and grace. Reconnect us with the Body of Christ instead of the distressing comfort of spiritual solitude. Amen.

Words of Grace

The grace of God infinitely streams into our lives, drawing us from the shadows into the light, and reconnecting us again with our neighbors. May the mercy of our Creator help us rediscover the Spirit of Joy in our midst.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Luke 1:39-55 NRSV

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

TH #497

Mary Visits Elizabeth

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

Mary's Song of Praise

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

and holy is his name;

⁵⁰ indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him

from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;

⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* “*There's a Song in the Air!*”

Mt Hope VH #99

Greenfield FHP #85

Grace VH #99

Today's Message / Grace UCC Children's Christmas Pageant

“The Reason for the Season”

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 All Joy, Holy Hope,

We delight in living in your ways as we create your Realm here on earth. These offerings of talents, treasures, and time are not to appease you but to collaborate with you. As co-creators, we seek your intentions and celebrate your love for us and our neighbors. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn* *“What Child Is This?”*
Mt Hope VH #97 *Greenfield* CH #281 *Grace* VH #97

* *Benediction*

As we seek the ways of God and our Creator’s intentions for our lives,
 May the Spirit of God enliven us as we love boldly,
 May the Spirit of God strengthen us as we create paths of peace.
 May the Spirit of God awaken us as we love generously and widely.
 A season of birth is imminent, for God’s love is with us as we seek our renewal of life.

* *Three-Fold Amen* TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Abolish to Establish: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday of Advent Year C was written by the Rev. Michelle L. Torigian, senior pastor of St. Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville, Illinois.