



December 29, 2024
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Meditation

It is easy to gush over the baby Jesus; what a sweet picture the stable scene makes on a Christmas card with cute angels flying overhead. We must not forget that the baby whom everyone helps to adore, will grow up to be the man everyone helps to crucify.

Robert McAfee Brown

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ December 29, 2024
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am Grace 11:00am
1st Sunday after Christmas / Wisdom, Years, Favor

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Praise God from the heights! The Holy One is transcendent, radiant, and glorious.

Salvation, redemption, and liberation come from above and dwell among us.

Praise God from the earth! Emmanuel is humble, gracious, and near.

Past, present, and future rests in the work of our hands in God's hands.

Praise the name of God! I AM hears our cry, responds to our need, and still speaks to our spirits.

Blessing, honor, and power belong to our God. Praise God!

Invocation

Wise and Eternal God, You are sovereign over all the earth. Your works declare your greatness. Make your wisdom known to us as we gather in your holy name. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn*

“Good Christian Men, Rejoice”

Mt Hope PH #125

Greenfield CH #273

Grace TH #116

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Holy God, you hold wisdom and knowledge beyond our ability to imagine or comprehend. Yet, you reveal yourself and the wonders of your creation to us. Regrettably, we allow the busyness of our lives, the distraction of our days, and the influences of the world to pull us from your revelation, presence, and hopes for us. Hold us accountable

to your covenant so that as you are with us, we will be with you.

Make us a righteous branch in the vineyard. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Words of Grace

Beloved, trust that the grace of God has appeared, bringing new life to all. Receive the gifts of grace and mercy from the Compassionate One who recognizes your repentance, comes to you in your weakness, offers strength for transformation, provides encouragement for repair, and grants forgiveness for sin.

Psalm Reading

**Psalm 148 NIV
Grace - see insert**

- ¹ Praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord from the heavens;
 praise him in the heights above.
- ² Praise him, all his angels;
 praise him, all his heavenly hosts.
- ³ Praise him, sun and moon;
 praise him, all you shining stars.
- ⁴ Praise him, you highest heavens
 and you waters above the skies.
- ⁵ Let them praise the name of the Lord,
 for at his command they were created,
⁶ and he established them for ever and ever—
 he issued a decree that will never pass away.
- ⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth,
 you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,
⁸ lightning and hail, snow and clouds,
 stormy winds that do his bidding,
- ⁹ you mountains and all hills,
 fruit trees and all cedars,
¹⁰ wild animals and all cattle,
 small creatures and flying birds,
¹¹ kings of the earth and all nations,
 you princes and all rulers on earth,

¹² young men and women,
old men and children.

¹³ Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for his name alone is exalted;
his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.

¹⁴ And he has raised up for his people a horn,
the praise of all his faithful servants,
of Israel, the people close to his heart.

Praise the Lord.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Luke 2:41-52 NRSV

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

TH #497

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

⁴¹ Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. ⁴³ When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents were unaware of this. ⁴⁴ Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵ When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ When his parents saw him they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously looking for you." ⁴⁹ He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he said to them. ⁵¹ Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was obedient to them, and his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* “*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*”

Mt Hope VH #95

Greenfield CH #251

Grace VH #95

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

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

Offertory (MH)

* Doxology

TH # 551

* Offertory Prayer

Lavish God, collect these offerings so that the blessings and favor you have given to us may be shared among our neighbors with trust, hope, and love. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

“Sing We Now of Christmas”

Mt Hope Insert

Greenfield CH #275

Grace Insert

* *Benediction*

As you go, remember that you are a righteous branch

Blessed to be a blessing

Empowered to spread the good news of Jesus Christ

May a new life of joy be born as we share the warmth of God's love and peace in the world.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Wisdom, Years, Favor: Service Prayers for Christmas 1C was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.