



*December 5, 2021*  
*Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ*

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### *Advent Thought*

The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of that moment.

*Frederick Buechner*

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ  
Mt Hope 8:30am                      Greenfield 9:50am  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

December 5, 2021  
Grace 11:00am

*Community News*

*Prayer List and Prayers of the People*

*Prelude/Lighting of the Candles*

\* *Call to Worship*

Righteous one! Equitable one!

**Refining one! Delightful one!**

Blessed one! Redeeming one!

**One-of-flesh to save all flesh!**

Emmanuel, One of Us – praise be your coming!

\* *Opening Hymn*    “*Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*”

*Mt Hope PH #104*

*Greenfield NCH #101*

*Grace TH #90*

*Prayer of Confession*

O God,

You have promised to make pathways straight

So, your people may walk in joyful safety.

But in our arrogance, we create

Dangerous roads, secret ways

Based on privilege, which suit human standards, not yours.

**Forgive us.**

You promise a way of justice and equity so that all may dwell in peace.

But the valley between rich and poor has become an impassible chasm:

We punish the poor. We make them sicker. We make them hungrier.

**Forgive us.**

God, you rescued your children from the hands of their oppressors  
And called all of them to delight in your glory on the level path  
which leads home.

But we oppress our siblings,  
Claiming “crooked” means not straight, not white, not male.  
**Forgive us for these corruptions of your good Word.**  
**Come again! Make our hearts alive with your truth!**

### *Words of Assurance*

Hear this gracious promise:  
I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among  
you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. Thanks  
be to God, who sees our flaws and loves us into doing better.  
**Amen.**

### *Advent Candle Hymn – The Candle of Peace*

Tune of “*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*”

O come and be the hope in all our lives  
Though chaos and confusion still survive  
We know the path of hate all too well  
We need our God with us, Emmanuel!  
Rejoice, rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to us  
And all things shall be well

O come and bring your peace upon the earth  
That even now still longs for its rebirth  
We seek to live and move in your ways  
Guide us to peace and justice all our days  
Rejoice, rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to us  
And all things shall be well

### *Candle Lighting Ritual (Luke 3:1-6)*

When conflict seems never-ending, relationships rocky,  
When we want to deny and pretend,  
The Holy invites us to make space for truth-telling  
That we may find Peace

*Lighting of the Peace Candle*

**Where in the world do we find Peace these days?**

***Thanksgiving and Prayer***

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God every time I remember you. <sup>4</sup> In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup> because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup> being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

<sup>7</sup> It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. <sup>8</sup> God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

<sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup> so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

\* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

**Luke 3:1-6 NIV**

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

**TH #497**

***John the Baptist Prepares the Way***

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar—when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Traconitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene—<sup>2</sup> during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>4</sup> As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,

‘Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him.

<sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled in,  
every mountain and hill made low.

The crooked roads shall become straight,

the rough ways smooth.

<sup>6</sup> And all people will see God's salvation.”

\* *Gloria Patri*

*Children's Message*

\* *Meditation Hymn*      “On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry”

*Mt Hope PH #115*

*Greenfield Insert*

*Grace TH #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

**Covenantal God, we live into your promise to make our  
rough ways smooth**

**With each gift we grind.**

**With each talent we sand.**

**With each act we polish.**

**We have not smoothed our ways yet,**

**Hopeful One, but with your indefatigable guidance,**

**we will yet, O God. We will yet.**

\* *Closing Hymn*    “*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*”

*Mt Hope* VH #25

*Greenfield* CH #648

*Grace* VH #25

\* *Benediction*

Righteous one! Equitable one!

Refining one! Delightful one!

Send us forth with tools we need

to make your path straight with Hope and Peace

So that all may find a home on your glorious Way.

In the name of the triune God: the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

\* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

\* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*