



*February 21, 2021*  
*Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ*

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*Sunday Meditation*

God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy.

**- Pope Francis**

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

**February 21, 2021**

*Community News*

*Prayer List and Prayers of the People*

*Prelude/Lighting of the Candles*

\* *Call to Worship*

*adapted from Psalm 25:1-3*

To you, O GOD, we lift up the spirit of our whole selves.

**O God, we trust unashamedly in you;  
seeking that you be not ashamed of us;**

May we begin our Lenten journey together in right relationships;

**Teach us. Show us. Guide us in your paths.**

**Grow us to know your ways more clearly.**

You are the God of our salvation and the Sustainer of good relations.

**For you we wait.**

May integrity, a clean conscience, and upright living preserve us.

**Amen.**

\* *Opening Hymn*

*“O Lord of Heaven and Earth and Sea”*

*Grace TH #257*

*Gathering Prayer*

As in days of old, Creator God,

we come to look for your signs of covenant promises.

Like the rainbow days of Noah,

we see and know your signs

and hear your voice again

directing us to places

of preparation and transformation

in our lives and in our world.

Thank you God,

for your covenant signs

in this season of Lent. Amen.

## *First Reading*

## **Genesis 9:8-17 NIV**

<sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: <sup>9</sup> “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

<sup>12</sup> And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: <sup>13</sup> I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup> Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. <sup>16</sup> Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth.”

<sup>17</sup> So God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth.”

## *Prayer of Confession*

### **CALL:**

Sisters and Brothers, in our daily lives  
we need the gift of the season of Lent.  
These 40 days can help us restore right relationships  
with God and with others.  
This is a fine time to focus,  
clear our hearts and minds of distractions,  
and re-orient and restore our whole selves.  
May God be with us. Let us pray:

### **PRAYER:**

Creating and Renewing God.  
In this Lenten season we each need the opportunity  
to clear our eyes of the glaze of indifference and apathy.

Help us get our minds off distractions, obsessions and self-pity  
so that we don't feel helpless.

Help us to start over.

Re-orient head and heart

so that we may fill our whole selves

with life-affirming activities and thoughts.

*(Silence)*

**May I be in right relationship with you and all your creation  
and join the United Church of Christ  
in over-coming violence, hunger, and injustice.  
May I find courage and clarity to assist me  
in works of justice and compassion  
which make daily life bearable for many.  
In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.**

### *Words of Assurance*

Brothers and Sisters,

God hears our prayers and, even in our human frailty,  
promises to be with us in the wilderness times.

Observe, find comfort, and offer with courage

to restore and build relationships among God's people.

Experience a new and renewed sense of hope. Amen.

### *Epistle Lesson*

#### **1 Peter 3:18-22 NIV**

<sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. <sup>19</sup> After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— <sup>20</sup> to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, <sup>21</sup> and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, <sup>22</sup> who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

\* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Mark 1:9-15 NIV

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

TH #497

*The Baptism and Testing of Jesus*

<sup>9</sup> At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup> Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. <sup>11</sup> And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

<sup>12</sup> At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, <sup>13</sup> and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.

*Jesus Announces the Good News*

<sup>14</sup> After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. <sup>15</sup> “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

\* *Gloria Patri*

*Children's Message*

\* *Meditation Hymn*    “*O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go*”

*Mt Hope* VH #181

*Greenfield* CH #606

*Grace* VH #181

*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*      “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”  
Mt Hope VH #503      Greenfield CH #630      Grace VH #503

\* *Benediction*

Mindful of your mercy, forgiveness, and instruction, O God,  
we go into the world renewed, refreshed,  
and full of courage to be your people.  
We go in peace to work for justice.

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*