



March 7, 2021

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Pastor

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Sunday Meditation

Someone once asked Billy Graham, "If Christianity is valid, why is there so much evil in the world?" To which he replied, "With so much soap, why are there so many dirty people in the world. Christianity, like soap, must be personally applied if it to make a difference in our lives."

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
3rd Sunday of Lent

March 7, 2021
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

* Doxology

* Offertory Prayer

TH # 551

Receive these gifts, Holy One, sanctify them by your Spirit.

Drive away any ill motives and accept, we pray, our humble offering. Amen.

* *Call to Worship*

Our lips sing praise and our whole selves rejoice in the God who makes us free.

We gather, recognizing that not all human beings have known this freedom.

The divine will was made known in Eden and in Egypt;
in Gettysburg and in Cape Town.

**Born in freedom, redeemed from slavery,
our destiny in Christ is liberty.**

* *Opening Hymn*

“Face to Face”

Mt Hope VH #447

Greenfield CH #781

Grace VH #447

Gathering Prayer

Thankful are we for all the blessings of this life; love, freedom, bounty and beauty. The joy we know is beyond our words to speak. We can only imagine the suffering and pain of human slaves, past and present, which yearn from the depths of their souls to know the freedom we enjoy. We celebrate this day the heritage we have in the cause of human freedom. We celebrate this day our spiritual ancestors who worked for the freedom of the Mendi

people on the slave ship, Amistad. May that ship, like the cross, remind us of the ever-present possibility of human evil. And may that ship, like the cross, remind us of the power of divine love. May we, through divine love, shed the false, un-neighborly, covetous and dishonorable desires of the lives we sometimes live and keep the commandments and walk in the way that brings life.

Amen.

First Reading

Exodus 20:1-17 NIV

The Ten Commandments

¹ And God spoke all these words:

² “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

³ “You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹² “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³ “You shall not murder.

¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ “You shall not steal.

¹⁶ “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

Prayer of Confession

In this season of Lent we reflect on those things that lead us away from the life we desire. We focus on whatever we do that oppresses and enslaves others who, like us, are created in the image of the divine. And now we seek the grace that frees us to live in faithfulness to holy love. **Amen**

Words of Assurance

The God who brought the Israelites out of Egypt, is the power that frees us from our sin. Live in the grace of God’s love as you walk in the way of Jesus and surely you shall find mercy at the end of that road. **Amen.**

Epistle Lesson

1 Corinthians 1:18-25 NIV

Christ Crucified Is God’s Power and Wisdom

¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”

²⁰ Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. ²² Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³ but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴ but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

John 2:13-22 NIV

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

TH #497

Jesus Clears the Temple Courts

¹³ When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. ¹⁵ So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!” ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it is written: “Zeal for your house will consume me.”^[a]

¹⁸ The Jews then responded to him, “What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?”

¹⁹ Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.”

²⁰ They replied, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?” ²¹ But the temple he had spoken of was his body. ²² After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message

* *Meditation Hymn* “*Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee*”

Mt Hope VH #459

Greenfield CH #89

Grace VH #459

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

