



March 10, 2024
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Lenten Meditation

Lent is a time of going very deeply into ourselves... What is it that stands between us and God? Between us and our brothers and sisters? Between us and life, the life of the Spirit? Whatever it is, let us relentlessly tear it out, without a moment's hesitation.

– Catherine Doherty

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
4th Sunday in Lent / Say No Lenten Series ‘Condemnation’

March 10, 2024
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

God’s love is for all of creation.

The vastness of God is for human, animal, soil, and sun, all together as God’s beloved.

God has not come into the world in Jesus to condemn us.

Jesus has come to live God’s love in the flesh.

While the world is dim with injustice and the feeling of loneliness,

it is in Jesus that the light of love illumines our path of friendship. Come, let us join our lives with the Friend, whose love is for the whole world. Let us worship God!

* *Invocation*

O God who is Friend, the vastness of your love flows through all of creation, and this is cause for rejoicing. For all the harshness and condemnation that we see in the world, you have come to us out of love, compassion, and to save us from ourselves. We acknowledge our belief that you have come to redeem, to heal, to restore, and forgive, not just some of the world, but all of the world. May our worship embody the love and light you bring in Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn*

“Beneath the cross of Jesus”

Mt Hope VH #363

Greenfield CH #320

Grace VH #363

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Holy One, we confess that there are moments when we desire to see you bring condemnation on others or wish that your love was not for the whole world, but just a few. Like us, your love is bigger than our limited lenses, broader than our small scope of vision of all that love embodies. Help us to see the world as you do. Help us to love as you do. Release us from our need to condemn and set us free for love. For, it is what you came enfleshed to show us. Amen.

Words of Grace

Jesus has come into the world not to condemn it, but to set us free by love. Know the grace of God surrounds you and keeps you in love now and forever. Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Numbers 21:4-9 NRSV

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom, but the people became discouraged on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze and put it upon a pole, and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Psalm Reading

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 NRSV

- ¹ O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
- ² Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,
those he redeemed from trouble
- ³ and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.
- ¹⁷ Some were sick through their sinful ways
and because of their iniquities endured affliction;
- ¹⁸ they loathed any kind of food,
and they drew near to the gates of death.
- ¹⁹ Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he saved them from their distress;
- ²⁰ he sent out his word and healed them
and delivered them from destruction.
- ²¹ Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.
- ²² And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices
and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

John 3:14-21 NRSV

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

TH #497

- ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.
- ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.
- ¹⁷ “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Those who believe in him are not condemned, but those who do not believe are condemned already because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹ But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn*

“Rock of Ages”

Mt Hope VH #275

Greenfield CH #342

Grace VH #275

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

Thank you, God, for loving us to the very ends of the earth and back. Your willingness to say yes to coming in the flesh to redeem our world through love and no to the powers of oppression has led us to give of ourselves generously this day. Take these gifts and multiply them across this world that you love so extravagantly. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

“To God Be the Glory”

Mt Hope VH #4

Greenfield CH #56

Grace VH #4

* *Benediction*

Go, dear ones, in the hope of the one who does not condemn, but brings life, light, and compassion to all. Step into this world in the assurance that God’s love is enough for our lives. In fact, it is more than enough. In the name of the Friend, the Companion, and the Comforter, go forth in peace. Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Condemnation: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday in Lent Year B was written by The Rev. Dr. Chad Abbot, Conference Minister in the Indiana-Kentucky Conference.