

Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

Luke 13:6-9



March 23, 2025

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Lent Meditation

You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you flinch before it makes you free.

Dr. Carlyle Marney
Southern Baptist Pastor

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
3rd Sunday in Lent / *Cut Down*

March 23, 2025
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

** Call to Worship*

You who are thirsty:

Come to receive living water.

You who are hungry:

Taste the bread that satisfies.

You who long for connection:

**Receive the fellowship of this community, and the fellowship
of the Holy Spirit.**

You who search for love:

**Experience the love of Jesus expressed in music, prayer,
community, word and action.**

May this time of worship fill and refresh you.

Let us worship God together!

** Invocation*

Holy One, draw us into community and connection. Let us receive you and our companions in worship. Keep us open to the unexpected, so that we may perceive your work in the world, and your work in us. Amen.

** Opening Hymn "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy"*

Mt Hope VH #207

Greenfield CH #355

Grace VH #207

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Gracious God, sometimes we are disappointed by other people, too ready to dismiss or discard them. Help us to see in others what you see in them: their growth, the fruits that they offer. Forgive us when we too quickly judge others.

Forgive us also, when we doubt that we can be worthy followers of you. May we be inspired to nurture your people and ourselves. Amen.

Words of Grace

God's ways are not our ways. Where we would condemn ourselves or others, God forgives. In the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 55:1-9 NRSV

An Invitation to Abundant Life

55 Hear, everyone who thirsts;

come to the waters;

and you who have no money,

come, buy and eat!

Come, buy wine and milk

without money and without price.

² Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread

and your earnings for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,

and delight yourselves in rich food.

³ Incline your ear, and come to me;

listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant,

my steadfast, sure love for David.

⁴ See, I made him a witness to the peoples,

a leader and commander for the peoples.

⁵ Now you shall call nations that you do not know,

and nations that do not know you shall run to you,

because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,

for he has glorified you.

⁶ Seek the Lord while he may be found;
call upon him while he is near;
⁷ let the wicked forsake their way
and the unrighteous their thoughts;
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.
⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Luke 13:1-9 NRSV

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

TH #497

Repent or Perish

13 At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ² He asked them, “Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way, they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? ³ No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. ⁴ Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the other people living in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish just as they did.”

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

⁶ Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the man working the vineyard, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’ ⁸ He replied, ‘Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it. ⁹ If it bears fruit next year, well and good, but if not, you can cut it down.’ ”

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn*

“Amazing Grace”

Mt Hope VH #77

Greenfield CH #343

Grace VH #77

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

Dear God, take these offerings of treasure, and our lives, to use for your purposes in the world. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

“Whosoever Will”

Mt Hope VH #198

Greenfield CH #302

Grace VH #198

* *Benediction*

Seek God, who is near. Be ready to hear God’s word and live, May you trust in the mercy of God, and the blessings of God, today and always. Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Cut Down: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday in Lent was written by the Rev. Ruth Garwood, a transitional pastor in the Heartland Conference, a certified facilitator of Sacred Conversations to End Racism, and a certified InterPlay leader.