



March 27, 2022
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Lenten Meditation

Historically, this was "Rejoicing" Sunday; it meant that the faithful pilgrims, who were keeping Lent, were halfway to their goal, the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord. Let us rejoice!

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March 27, 2022

Mt Hope 8:30am
4th Sunday in Lent

Greenfield 9:50am

Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

(Inspired by Psalm 32)

Happy are those who experience the grace of God

Who find forgiveness and mercy from the Holy One.

Happy are those who experience the steadfast love of God

Who find peace even in times of trial.

Happy are those who experience rest in God

Who find sabbath to renew their spirit.

* *Invocation*

Holy God, Holy Renewal,

After times of broken relationships, painful injustices, and feeling

deserted, we enter this season yearning for restoration and your

comforting grace. In this time of wilderness and reflection, we

evaluate the relationships between us and our neighbors. Fill our

weary souls with hope. Lead us on roads of renewal and focus our

minds as we ponder our callings in your realm. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn*

“Softly and Tenderly”

Mt Hope VH #420

Greenfield CH #479

Grace VH #420

Prayer of Yearning

In your love, O God, we are never lost. In your care, O Christ, we
are ever found. Help us feel this truth in our very bones, for we are

often far from home, unsure of how to return. Teach our shut-up
hearts to embrace your hope. Teach our shriveled souls to cry out

to you. For we long to taste the glory of your heavenly banquet,

and we yearn to be held in your arms as beloved children. Amen.

Assurance of Grace

God, our Divine Parent, runs towards us with infinite love and grace. May the mercy we experience transform our minds, hearts, and souls. May we extend God's grace as we run towards our Divine Parent. Amen.

Epistle Reading

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 NIV

¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32 NIV

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

TH #497

¹ Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. ² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³ Then Jesus told them this parable:

The Parable of the Lost Son

¹¹ "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

¹³ "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

¹⁷ “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

²¹ “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

²² “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

²⁸ “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’

³¹ “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message

* *Meditation Hymn*

“No, Not One!”

Mt Hope VH #208

Greenfield CH #609

Grace VH #208

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

Loving God, Holy Fountain of Blessings,

With gratitude, we celebrate the offerings we share with you and this community today. May they enliven our spirits, building excitement around us, and creating a culture of giving. Open us to new possibilities for using our gifts to build the dignity of all and to strengthen our neighborhoods. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

“In the Bulb”

Mt Hope Insert

Greenfield NCH #433

Grace Insert

* *Benediction*

May our spirits come alive in this season of Lent. When we run to God, our Divine Parent, with the hopes of strengthening our bonds, When we embrace the Christ, our Divine Neighbor, with the hopes of reconciliation, When we breathe with the Spirit, our Divine Encourager, in the hopes of peace.
Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*