



April 14, 2024
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

Believing prayer ushers in God's peace. Not a random, nebulous, earthly peace, but his peace. Imported from heaven. The same tranquility that marks the throne room, God offers to you.

Max Lucado
Come Thirsty (2004)

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

April 14, 2024

Mt Hope 8:30am

Greenfield 9:50am

Grace 11:00am

3rd Sunday of Easter/‘Waiting for the Feast Lenten Series:

Witnesses of These Things’

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Let us fill our hearts and minds with hope as we hear the Words of Jesus Christ.

“Peace be with you.”

When peace and justice seem uncertain, let us hear anew the Words of Jesus Christ.

“Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?”

Let us be comforted by the presence of Christ, whose love, and light dwells within us.

Let our lives be witnesses of these things.

Help us to be instruments of Christ’s peace to all in need of God’s healing love.

* *Invocation*

Risen Christ, create in us a clean heart so that we can meditate in your peace; abide in your mercy; be filled with your justice; and be made new by your love. In your name, we pray. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn*

“Thine is the Glory”

Mt Hope VH #134

Greenfield NCH #253

Grace VH #134

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Loving God, in your infinite wisdom, we are glad that you make all things new. Where there is hate, show your love. Where there is war, bring your peace. Where there is despair, bring your hope. Where there is fear, bring your understanding. Where there is scarcity, bring your abundance. Where there is systemic oppression, bring equal justice for all. By your perfect grace and mercy, make us new. May it be so. Amen.

Words of Grace

Loving God, thank you for the assurance of your grace. You grant us all your peace. Help us to trust in your peace, especially in times of conflict. Believing you will bring peace in our hearts, and to all the earth. Guiding us, so that all may come to know Jesus Christ, who is our Prince of Peace. In his name, we pray. Amen.

Psalm Reading

Psalm 4 NRSV

Confident Plea for Deliverance from Enemies

- ¹ Answer me when I call, O God of my right!
You gave me room when I was in distress.
Be gracious to me, and hear my prayer.
- ² How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame?
How long will you love vain words and seek after lies? *Selah*
- ³ But know that the LORD has set apart the faithful for himself;
the LORD hears when I call to him.
- ⁴ When you are disturbed,^[a] do not sin;
ponder it on your beds, and be silent. *Selah*
- ⁵ Offer right sacrifices,
and put your trust in the LORD.
- ⁶ There are many who say, “O that we might see some good!
Let the light of your face shine on us, O LORD!”
- ⁷ You have put gladness in my heart
more than when their grain and wine abound.
- ⁸ I will both lie down and sleep in peace,
for you alone, O LORD, make me lie down in safety.

Epistle Reading

1 John 3:1-7 NRSV

¹ See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. ³ And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

⁴ Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. ⁵ You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ⁶ No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him. ⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

* The Reading of the Holy Gospel

Luke 24:36b-48 NRSV

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

TH #497

³⁶ While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." ³⁷ They were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself.

Touch me and see, for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." ⁴⁰ And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. ⁴¹ Yet for all their joy they were still disbelieving and wondering, and he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate in their presence.

⁴⁴ Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn*

“Lord, Speak to Me”

Mt Hope VH #215

Greenfield CH #667

Grace VH #215

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

Let us remember that weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes early in the morning. May these gifts of blessing be a sign of the love, light, and glory of our redeeming God who has created a world of abundance with all that we need. May we remain thankful witnesses to your generosity, O God, as we dedicate these offerings to you and your beloved creation. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn* “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

Mt Hope VH #25

Greenfield CH #648

Grace VH #25

* *Benediction*

Living God, we are witnesses to your love and light. Your peace is seen in the dawning of each new day. Your equal justice bears witness in the interconnected universe that you have created. Faithful God, help us to feel the warmth of your loving light in the cooler moments of life. As we leave this worship service, let us go back into the world renewed as instruments of your loving peace and justice for all. May it be so. Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Witnesses of These Things: Service Prayers for the Second Sunday of Easter was written by The Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey, Pastor of Union Congregational United Church of Christ.