



April 20, 2025

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Easter Sunday Meditation

"Jesus of Nazareth was a brilliant community organizer who built collective power. He began at the margins, tending to those most impacted by the toxic power of the occupying Roman empire. He transgressed boundaries that were racial, geographical, religious and class-based, and formed a coalition across difference, even including some who were complicit in upholding the status quo. After building relationships *with the people*, hearing their stories, tending to their pain, and preaching a vision of liberation, he turned to face the center of toxic imperial power to challenge the roots of oppression *alongside the people*"

Ayanna Johnson Watkins and Lucy Waechter Webb
Power Analysis for Powerful Congregations

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
Easter Sunday / *At Early Dawn*

April 20, 2025
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

** Call to Worship*

Christ the Lord is risen today.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Earth and heaven in chorus say:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Love's redeeming work is done

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Christ has opened paradise

Alleluia! Alleluia!

** Invocation*

God of life and love, we are eager to hear the good news of new life. Enter our lives and cast our fears aside. Lead us on a journey from grief and despair to hope and joy. We are ready to celebrate and give thanks for your transforming love. We are eager to rejoice in the glory of this day! Give us Easter spirits and open hearts. Amen.

** Opening Hymn*

“Christ the Lord is Risen Today”

Mt Hope VH #132

Greenfield CH #367

Grace VH #132

Prayer of Yearning

Come, O God, and bring new life to the dead places in our hearts. When we are weary and afraid, help us trust your never-failing love. May this love banish our fears, nourish our spirits, and deepen our joy. Amen.

Words of Assurance

God's love is faithful and everlasting. This is the day that God has made. It is filled with new life and hope.

Old Testament Reading

Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21 NRSV

¹⁰ As Pharaoh drew near, the Israelites looked back, and there were the Egyptians advancing on them. In great fear the Israelites cried out to the Lord. ¹¹ They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us, bringing us out of Egypt? ¹² Is this not the very thing we told you in Egypt, 'Let us alone so that we can serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." ¹³ But Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid, stand firm, and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you today, for the Egyptians whom you see today you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to keep still."

¹⁵ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry out to me? Tell the Israelites to go forward. ¹⁶ But you lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the Israelites may go into the sea on dry ground. ¹⁷ Then I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them, and so I will gain glory for myself over Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots, and his chariot drivers. ¹⁸ Then the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I have gained glory for myself over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his chariot drivers."

¹⁹ The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. ²⁰ It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. ²² The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their

right and on their left. ²³ The Egyptians pursued and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. ²⁴ At the morning watch the Lord, in the pillar of fire and cloud, looked down on the Egyptian army and threw the Egyptian army into a panic. ²⁵ He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

The Pursuers Drowned

²⁶ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. ²⁹ But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

³⁰ Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

15 ²⁰ Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. ²¹ And Miriam sang to them:

"Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously;
horse and rider he has thrown into the sea."

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Luke 24:1-12 NRSV

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

TH #497

The Resurrection of Jesus

24 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in they did not find the body. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. ⁵ The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen. ⁶ Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be handed over to the hands of sinners and be crucified and on the third day rise again.” ⁸ Then they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. ¹¹ But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn*

“In the Garden”

Mt Hope VH #228

Greenfield CH #635

Grace VH #228

Today's Message



Communion Litany

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Christ is Risen!

He is Risen indeed!

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

**Easter Hymn*

“Christ Arose”

Mt Hope VH #133

Greenfield CH #357

Grace VH #133

Invitation to Communion

Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, and I will praise the LORD.

This is the gate of the LORD, through which the righteous shall enter.

I will praise You, for You have answered me, and have become my salvation.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

This was the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

All - This is the day the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

God of the Resurrection, this is the day of all days! Today, we celebrate the empty tomb. Death could not hold your son! You raised him! The hopes and dreams of your people are joyfully bursting forth in song.

We know and believe that because Jesus lives, we shall live. Forever! We do not want our joy to ever fade! Cause the truth of the resurrection to transform us into bold witnesses for you. Enable us to make the most of the time that we have in order to reach every creature on earth with the good news of the kingdom.

We remember as Jesus and his disciples were eating the Passover Feast in the Upper Room, Jesus took a loaf of bread and blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body, broken for you."

After the meal, Jesus took the cup and gave it to his disciples saying, "This cup is my blood, the blood of the new covenant, poured out for you. As often as you drink it, do so in remembrance of me."

God of the Resurrection, send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts, so that the bread we break may be for us communion in the body of Christ, and the cup of blessing which we drink may be for us communion in the blood of Christ; and that being built up in love, we may be strengthened in the unity of the faith and come to full maturity in Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray together ...

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.

Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

We see him in his Glory! We see him in his Mercy! We see him in his Ministry to the world, a ministry to which he calls us to complete.

May his example inspire us; may his presence empower us until all the world knows that the victory has been won.

Worthy is the Lamb of God, the Lamb that was slain, to receive all power and wealth, wisdom and might, honor and glory and praise. Amen.

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Come for all are welcome

Prayer

This has been no ordinary meal. We have been fed and nourished with the life of our Risen Lord Jesus.

We go from here, refreshed and eager, to share that life with others. In the name of our Risen Lord, we pray. Amen.



The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

Offertory (MH)

* Doxology

TH # 551

* Offertory Prayer

God of life and love, we are grateful for your promise of resurrection and new life. Your love is stronger than the powers of evil and injustice. With joy, we bring our gifts to you this day. Use our gifts and our lives to proclaim Christ's triumph over death. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

"He Lives"

Mt Hope VH #137

Greenfield CH #357

Grace VH #137

* *Benediction*

We have heard the story. Life triumphed over death. Grief became joy. Go now and tell the good news: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Easter Sunday: The Abingdon Worship Annual 2025 written by Mary Petrina Boyd