



You were marked in him
with a seal, the promised
Holy Spirit, who is a
deposit guaranteeing our
inheritance until the
redemption of those who
are God's possession --
to the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:13-14

July 14, 2024
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Meditation

God wants you to enjoy His blessings – and to use them to make a difference in the world around you.

Bruce Wilkinson
Beyond Jabez (2005)

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
8th Sunday after Pentecost / Lawful, Righteous, Holy

July 14, 2024
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Inspired from Psalm 85:8-13

Let us turn our hearts to hear from the Holy One!

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will embrace.

Let us turn our hearts to gain insight from the Holy One!

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

Let us turn our hearts to receive from the Holy One!

Righteousness will go before them, and will make a path for their steps.

* *Invocation*

God Among Us, your ways are perfect, and your laws are just. We gather today in your name and for your kingdom. May it come wherever and whenever two or more gather in your name. May our hearts open and our understanding expand with the vision of righteousness. May our worship please you, transform us, and bear witness to your love. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn*

“Blessed Assurance”

Mt Hope VH #200

Greenfield CH #572

Grace VH #200

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Righteous God, you have created us in your image to reflect your holiness. You have affirmed the goodness within us. We struggle to be the people you call us to be. You have given us the guidance of the Law and the wisdom of the Prophets and the gift of your Presence. Still, we struggle

against the pull to go our own direction without your counsel. We fail to extend the grace and compassion you give to us. Be merciful in your judgment while holding us accountable for your justice as we strive to live the fullness of life in you. Amen.

Words of Grace

Beloved, you were not made to be perfect; you were created to be good. In hope, we affirm that God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. Lean into the power of God to do the work that we cannot, to meet us at our point of need, and to lead us into the path of new life. Amen.

Psalm Reading

Psalm 85:8-13 NRSV

⁸ Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.^[a]

⁹ Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰ Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

¹¹ Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.

¹² The LORD will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.

¹³ Righteousness will go before him
and will make a path for his steps.

Epistle Reading

Ephesians 1:3-14 NRSV

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have

redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Mark 6:14-29 NRSV

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

TH #497

The Death of John the Baptist

¹⁴ King Herod heard of it, for Jesus's name had become known. Some were saying, "John the baptizer has been raised from the dead, and for this reason these powers are at work in him." ¹⁵ But others said, "It is Elijah." And others said, "It is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old." ¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised."

¹⁷ For Herod himself had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, because Herod had married her. ¹⁸ For John had been telling Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." ¹⁹ And Herodias had a grudge against him and wanted to kill him. But she could not, ²⁰ for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed, and yet he liked to listen to him. ²¹ But an opportunity came when Herod on his birthday gave a banquet for his courtiers and officers and for the leaders of Galilee. ²² When his daughter Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests, and the king said to the girl, "Ask me for whatever you wish, and I will give it." ²³ And he swore to

her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, even half of my kingdom.”²⁴ She went out and said to her mother, “What should I ask for?” She replied, “The head of John the baptizer.”²⁵ Immediately she rushed back to the king and requested, “I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.”²⁶ The king was deeply grieved, yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her.²⁷ Immediately the king sent a soldier of the guard with orders to bring John’s head. He went and beheaded him in the prison,²⁸ brought his head on a platter, and gave it to the girl. Then the girl gave it to her mother.²⁹ When his disciples heard about it, they came and took his body and laid it in a tomb.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* **“I Love thy Kingdom, Lord”**

Mt Hope VH #160

Greenfield CH #405

Grace VH #160

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

**Holy One, we thank you for the gifts of life and living. We
give thanks by bringing our resources to community, to be
shared and used for your kingdom, in our ministry, and for
the world we inhabit. Bless and facilitate our generosity
beyond our imagination. Amen.**

* *Closing Hymn*

“To God Be The Glory”

Mt Hope VH #4

Greenfield CH #56

Grace VH #4

* *Benediction*

Be assured of the Holy One's abiding love for you and all creation.
Hold fast to hope and share the blessing of the Spirit's direction,
Christ's presence, and the Sustainer's peace. Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Lawful, Righteous, Holy: Service Prayers for the Eighth Sunday after Pentecost Year B was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay who serves as Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.