



August 23, 2020
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Pastor
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Centering Words

Seek the living God, who rescues and saves us in times of trial. Seek the living God, who renews, transforms, and strengthens us in our hour of need.

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am

August 23, 2020
Grace 11:00am

12th Sunday after Pentecost

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude

Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

We step off the streets, away from places of work, shopping malls, billboards, and news broadcasts, to stand before the living God.

Our help is in the name of the living God, maker of heaven and earth.

We turn away from the world and the patterns of power that too often hurt, trap, and swallow us up.

We stand before our helper, the God of mercy, who rescues and renews us.

We come to this sanctuary seeking the living God, maker of heaven and earth.

We present ourselves to the living God, who is compassionate and merciful, as a living and pleasing sacrifice.

* *Opening Hymn* “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Mt Hope VH #12

Greenfield CH #11

Grace VH #12

Gathering Prayer

Maker of heaven and earth, we come from different places with our own place on the journey. Some of us have succeeded and found favor. Some of us have failed and seek reassurance. Some of us feel trapped and helpless. Some of us have escaped peril and feel great relief. But no matter what our experience has been, we come here today to meet you in worship. Remind us of your power and mercy. Replenish our courage and vision. Renew our identity as your people. Reinvigorate our holy work in this world, for our help is in your name alone, Holy God, maker of heaven and earth. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

God of mercy and grace,

it is hard to hold onto hope.

We see people handed over as food for the enemies' teeth,

or as prey for the hunters' traps.

Sometimes we are the food and the prey.

Sometimes we are the enemy and the hunter.

Sometimes we are merely bystanders,

too afraid or powerless to act as we should.

Forgive us, O God, when we accept things as they are.

Maker of heaven and earth, giver of hope, savior of the distressed,

**fill our imaginations and our hearts with your splendid vision
for our world.**

Transform and renew our minds,

**that we may discern what is good and pleasing to you in
this world you love so deeply. Amen.**

Words of Assurance

Jesus promised that the gates of the underworld
would not be able to stand against the Church.

Each of us is part of this Church, this body of Christ.

Each of us has unique gifts and our own unique calling.

Know that through God's mercies, you are forgiven.

Know that God will bless you with new imaginings,

new thoughts, new hopes, and new courage,

that we too may stand against the gates of the underworld.

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

* Doxology

* Offertory Prayer

TH # 551

**O God, maker of heaven and earth, you are our help in the
midst of need and danger. Bless our gifts this day, that
they may find their way to those who feel hopeless and
without resource. May our gifts be a sign of your hope and
love, and may the people we help find their way to safety.
Amen.**

The New Life in Christ

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Matthew 16:13-20 NRSV

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

TH #497

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever

you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message

Meditation Hymn

Mt Hope PH #77

“Be Still, My Soul”

Greenfield CH #712

Grace TH #87

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

* *Closing Hymn* “*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*”
Mt Hope VH #28 *Greenfield* CH #139 *Grace* VH #28

* *Benediction*

No matter how the world has treated us, whether we are powerful or powerless, God renews our vision and energy, calling us to works of transformation by reflecting God’s love and justice.

With God’s power, we will stand against the powers of destruction in our world.

With God’s wisdom, let us resist the seductive forces that lead us to shut down and give in.

With God’s eye on the powerless, we will cry out on behalf of those caught in the teeth of their enemies.

With God’s mercy, let us pull to safety those caught in the raging waters.

With God’s justice, we will stand with those who are enslaved and beaten down.

For it is none other than Jesus, the Messiah, Son of the Living God, who has built the Church, and the gates of the underworld will never conquer God and God’s Church.

In the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forevermore. **Hallelujah! Amen!**

* *Three-Fold Amen*

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

TH # 558

* *Postlude 2/Exiting the Church*