

"If anyone would come after me,
let him deny himself
and take up his cross and follow me."

- Matthew 16:24



August 30, 2020
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Pastor

Mrs. Wendy F.

Pianist

Sylvia O. (MH)

Centering Words

It doesn't take much effort to do what everyone else is doing. A dead fish can float downstream, it takes a live one to swim upstream. It's easy to be common. The pressure comes when you decide to be uncommon.

- Joel Osteen

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

August 30, 2020
Grace 11:00am

13th Sunday after Pentecost

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude

Lighting of the Candles

*** Call to Worship**

We who dwell in the shelter of the Most High

Seek God here.

We who come to be inspired and changed

Seek God's Spirit here.

We who know how little we know

Seek God's Word here.

*** Opening Hymn "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"**

Mt Hope VH #273

Greenfield CH #682

Grace VH #273

Gathering Prayer

God, you are made known to us in the rustling wind that blows, in the blazing fire that does not consume, in the face of the good, in the deep of the unknown. We meet you here. We accept your greeting. We welcome your inspiration. We await the change you have in store for us. Draw us in to you. Inhabit our spirits. Focus our attention. Bring us to you – you who are already with us. Help us to be as you would have us be. Through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, here and everywhere, now and always. Amen.

Prayer of Confession

As we prepare for confession, let us consider questions inspired by the apostle Paul.

Is our love always genuine? *Silence*
Do we resist the evil we see? *Silence*
Do we consistently seek to serve God? *Silence*
Are we hospitable to strangers? *Silence*
Do we offer blessings to our enemies? Do we even know what this means? *Silence*
Do we have close relationships with people who are really different from us? *Silence*
Do we seek revenge on those who have wronged us? *Silence*

Good friends, we do these things. We do them often – maybe not all at once. But they are actions that are part of the human condition. They are also actions that turn us away from the love God always offers us.

In this time of confession, God invites us to examine all this, and to repent – which really just means to turn back. Let us confess our sins and, as we do, let us turn back.

God of mercy and forgiveness, we confess that:

Our love isn't always genuine. We see evil and wring our hands instead of resisting it. We forget to consider more ways to serve you. We turn our back on strangers who could benefit from our hospitality. We do not pray enough for our enemies. We associate with our own kind, fearing the “other”. We relish in fantasies of revenge.

For all this, and for all that burdens our heart today, O God, we seek your forgiveness. Have mercy on us and hear our prayers...

Silence

Words of Assurance

God's mercy extends beyond the bounds of even our collective imagination.

God's love seeps through any wall we could ever put up.
God's goodness holds more power than the sum of all sin.

It is because of that extensive, seeping, powerful and bold love
I declare to you in the name of the blessed and holy Trinity:
That God forgives us all our sins.

Thanks be to God.

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

* Doxology

* Offertory Prayer

TH # 551

In your Creation, O God, we stand on the holiest of ground. May these gifts be a blessing to all that you have made. May the church, organizations and people that receive them act as your hands. May needs be seen and met, and may the giving fit the need. Through Christ, who models infinite giving. Amen.

Epistle Reading

Romans 12:9-21 NRSV

Marks of the True Christian

⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their

heads.”²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Matthew 16:21-28 NRSV

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

TH #497

Jesus Foretells His Death and Resurrection

²¹ From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. ²² And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” ²³ But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; for you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

The Cross and Self-Denial

²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

²⁷ “For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done. ²⁸ Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message

Meditation Hymn

Mt Hope VH #77
all verses

“Amazing Grace”

Greenfield CH #343
vs 1,2,4,5

Grace VH #77
all verses

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* “*Jesus, I Come*”
Mt Hope VH #427 Greenfield CH #491 Grace VH #427

* *Benediction*

The blessing of Almighty God: Source, Word, and Spirit, be with us now and always. Amen.

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