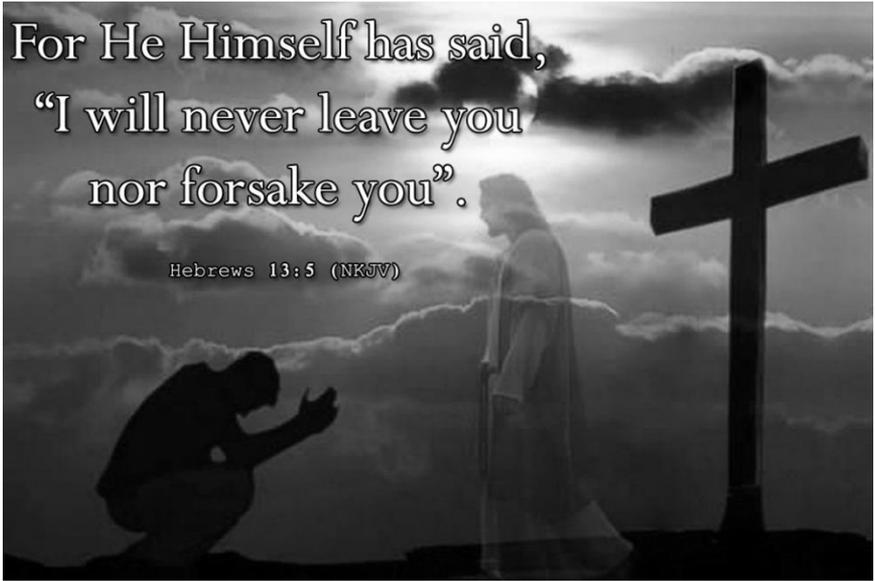


For He Himself has said,  
“I will never leave you  
nor forsake you”.

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV)



*August 28, 2022*  
*Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ*

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### *Sunday Morning Meditation*

“To share your weakness is to make yourself vulnerable; to make yourself vulnerable is to show your strength.”

– Criss Jami

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ  
Mt Hope 8:30am                      Greenfield 9:50am  
12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost / 'Receive the Invitation'

August 28, 2022  
Grace 11:00am

*Community News*

*Prayer List and Prayers of the People*

*Prelude/Lighting of the Candles*

\* *Call to Worship*

Welcome to the banquet of hope,  
the open bar of prayer,  
the "anonymous" circle of acceptance.

**We come because we are invited.**

Welcome to a fiesta of joy  
or a mercy meal of tenderness,  
where every seat is a place of honor.

**We come because we are invited.**

Welcome to a party for God's love-revealed,  
where all seating is a circle,  
and karaoke is never necessary  
because we sing our own stories.

**We come because we have an invitation,  
not on paper, simply our names.**

\* *Invocation*

God, we come to this gathering of community where there are no barriers, and all our abilities are celebrated as gifts. We come to receive your hospitality of caring for each one of us and to learn from you how to offer such a celebration to strangers, friends, chosen family, those whose faces are unfamiliar to us, and the face who meets us in the mirror. Amen.

\* *Opening Hymn*

**"No, Not One!"**

*Mt Hope VH #208*

*Greenfield CH #609*

*Grace VH #208*

## *Prayer for Transformation and New Life*

God, sometimes we say, “I’m too busy,” to invitations to kindness, friendship, or activism, or pretend to be “too busy,” and avoid being indebted, pitied, or rubbing elbows with those who make us uncomfortable.

Sometimes we accept an invitation to be involved, celebrate with someone, or just have coffee, but back out or “no-show.”

### **Forgive us when we skip your parties.**

God, sometimes we are “imperfect guests,” wanting to be the center of attention, and other times we insist on always being host, giver, one in control, receiver of praise and gratefulness.

### **Forgive us when we fail in gratitude or generosity. Amen.**

## *Words of Grace*

God loves, invites, nudges, embraces us in all our resistance to simply hold a balloon of joy and clap at the candles of another’s cake. We are forgiven; a plate is set for us.

## *Psalm Reading*

### **Psalm 81:1, 10-16 NIV**

<sup>1</sup> Sing for joy to God our strength;  
shout aloud to the God of Jacob!

<sup>10</sup> I am the LORD your God,  
who brought you up out of Egypt.

Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.

<sup>11</sup> “But my people would not listen to me;  
Israel would not submit to me.

<sup>12</sup> So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts  
to follow their own devices.

<sup>13</sup> “If my people would only listen to me,  
if Israel would only follow my ways,

<sup>14</sup> how quickly I would subdue their enemies  
and turn my hand against their foes!

<sup>15</sup> Those who hate the LORD would cringe before him,  
and their punishment would last forever.

<sup>16</sup> But you would be fed with the finest of wheat;  
with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.”

***Concluding Exhortations***

<sup>1</sup> Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. <sup>2</sup> Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. <sup>3</sup> Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

<sup>4</sup> Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. <sup>5</sup> Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said,

“Never will I leave you;  
never will I forsake you.”

<sup>6</sup> So we say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.  
What can mere mortals do to me?”

<sup>7</sup> Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

<sup>15</sup> Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. <sup>16</sup> And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

\* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

**Luke 14:1, 7-14 NIV**

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

**TH #497**

***Jesus at a Pharisee's House***

<sup>1</sup> One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched.

<sup>7</sup> When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: <sup>8</sup> “When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. <sup>9</sup> If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person

your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. <sup>10</sup> But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. <sup>11</sup> For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

<sup>12</sup> Then Jesus said to his host, “When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. <sup>13</sup> But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, <sup>14</sup> and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

\* *Gloria Patri*

*Children's Message*

\* *Meditation Hymn*     “Yesterday, Today, Forever”

*Mt Hope* VH #257

*Greenfield* CH #584

*Grace* VH #257

*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

**God, we bring these gifts, our response to your invitation. In  
this giving, we find ourselves not lessened, but newly joyful,  
truly honored, and deeply fed by your blessing. Amen.**

\* *Closing Hymn*

*“Sweet By and By”*

*Mt Hope VH #453*

*Greenfield CH #778*

*Grace VH #453*

\* *Benediction*

May you be blessed when you sit at fine tables of welcome  
and when you spread the picnic blanket of peace.

May you be blessed in giving and receiving,  
not repaid, but your hearts repaired. Amen.

\* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

\* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

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Receive the Invitation: Service Prayers for the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost were written by Maren C. Tirabassi, a UCC pastor, author of fiction and non-fiction, and also lover of summer, the company of dogs, mystery novels and science fiction conventions.