

Do not be afraid, little
flock, for your Father has
been pleased to give you
the kingdom

LUKE 12:32



August 7, 2022
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

“The mind can go in a thousand directions, but on this beautiful path, I walk in peace. With each step, the wind blows. With each step, a flower blooms.”

– Thich Nhat Hanh

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Creator resides in the midst of creation...calling us to this community.

Our world waits for the Holy One, our help and shield.

God our Righteousness gazes upon the beloved with delight and concern.

Our bodies wait for the Holy One, our help and shield.

The Spirit of the Living God greets us with fresh winds and new mercies.

Our souls wait for the Holy One, our help and shield.

* *Invocation*

Abundant God, we wait for you with longing, hope, and anticipation. May your kingdom be realized in this community.

May your people be your ambassadors. May your love be our propeller in the world and our beacon to direct us home. Fill us with the bread of life and nourish our spirits to be your good news in the world. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn*

“*Faith of Our Fathers*”

VH #246

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Gracious God, you have created a world of abundance and flourishing. Every resource, every gift, every product originates from the generosity of your creation and the creativity you have bestowed upon us. Forgive us for misuse and overuse of your gifts. Reveal our miserly attitudes toward the plentiful trove of resources you have entrusted to our care. Sow generosity in us, reveal abundance to us, and enable flourishing through us. Amen.

Assurance of Grace

Every good and perfect gift comes from above. Grace is such a gift; mercy is another. Transformation and new life descend freely from the Most High to all who will receive it. Receive the assurance of God's grace and compassion as precious treasure made available to all.

First Reading

Genesis 15:1-6 NIV

The Lord's Covenant With Abram

After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision:

“Do not be afraid, Abram.

I am your shield,
your very great reward.”

² But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit^[c] my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”

⁴ Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” ⁵ He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring^[d] be.”

⁶ Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

Faith in Action

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. ² This is what the ancients were commended for.

³ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

⁸ By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹ By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. ¹² And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

¹³ All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. ¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Luke 12:32-40 NIV

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

TH #497

³² “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near

and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Watchfulness

³⁵ “Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶ like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. ³⁷ It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. ³⁸ It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. ³⁹ But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁰ You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message

* *Meditation Hymn* “*It Is Well With My Soul*” VH #270

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

**Generous One, receive the gifts we bring as we return a
portion of your treasure for the use of your kingdom. May
your will be manifested, and your creation restored
through sharing these offerings. Amen.**

* *Closing Hymn*

“Let the Lower Lights Be Burning”

VH #298

* *Benediction*

Live in the abundance of God's treasure, spreading the love and
peace of Christ in the world to the glory of God. Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Treasures in Heaven: Service Prayers for the Ninth Sunday after Pentecost were written by Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ.

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