



September 1, 2024
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

www.greenfieldcharge.org
greenfieldchargeucc@gmail.com

Facebook: Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

Pastor
Mrs. Wendy Farber

Audio Tech
Jeff Farber (Greenfield)

farberhome@atlanticbb.net

Sunday Meditation

We are bold enough to challenge history, but wise enough to abide by its lessons... whenever we discover places where human or church traditions choke simplicity, we examine those practices in the Word, with much prayer.

Jack Hayford
Glory on Your House (1991)

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Inspired by Psalm 15

O Holy One, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?

Those who want to journey with you, who may have missed a turn, and who may struggle with rocky patches and rough terrain.

O Holy One, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?

Those who seek and search for you and for community with doubts and hopes, joys and fears, smiles and tears.

O Holy One, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?

Those who try and those who sometimes give up. Those who are beautifully, wonderfully, and imperfectly human—all of us! Thanks be to God!

* *Invocation*

Loving God, we rejoice to be with you and with one another. You are the God who makes all things new and who redeems our past. In life, we find the fullness of life—from joy beyond measure to despair that consumes. Your presence sustains us through the depths and the plateaus. We acknowledge your sovereignty and express our bold trust that hope is our portion and assigned position in your everlasting and incomparable realm. Amen.

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Opening Children's Hymn*

See Church News page

“Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam”

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Eternal God, may we break from the bonds of unaltered, unexamined, and unimaginative traditions. At the same time, may we be released from the compulsion to discount everything that has been a source of life and faithful formation across generations. Help us to discern what needs to be left in our past with honor, recognition, and gratitude, what needs to be eradicated with lament, repentance, and repair, and what needs to be envisioned, imagined, and created for the future. Amen.

Words of Grace

Beloved, the Holy One renews, redeems, and restores through continuing creative acts. God has not concluded the good work begun in you or in our faith communities. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we receive courage, counsel, and conviction to do the new thing God is calling us to do while holding fast to those things that build, sustain, and encourage. Amen.

Epistle Reading

James 1:17-27 NRSV

¹⁷ Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave birth to us by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

Hearing and Doing the Word

¹⁹ You must understand this, my beloved brothers and sisters: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger, ²⁰ for human anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹ Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

²² But be doers of the word and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³ For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴ for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what

they were like. ²⁵ But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

²⁶ If any think they are religious and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel* Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 NRSV
Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.) TH #497
The Tradition of the Elders

⁷ Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, ² they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³ (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders, ⁴ and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash, and there are also many other traditions that they observe: the washing of cups and pots and bronze kettles and beds.) ⁵ So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders but eat with defiled hands?” ⁶ He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
⁷ in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

⁸ “You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

¹⁴ Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵ there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

²¹ For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, debauchery, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

* *Gloria Patri*

* *Meditation Hymn* “O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee” VH #403

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 God, bless these gifts that we share for the flourishing of the kingdom. Prosper the work of our hands, order the steps in our days, and align the balance of our resources. In our time, talent, and treasure, may you be glorified. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

“For the Beauty of the Earth”

TH #12

* *Benediction*

May the everlasting love of God give you peace,
The surprising grace of God give you courage,
And the creative will of God give you joy,
As you release the traditions that have served their time,
Hold the traditions that inspire new life,
And create traditions for a future promising and unknown. Amen.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

For Tradition: Service Prayers for the Fifteenth 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.