



*September 29, 2024*  
*Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ*

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*Sunday Morning Meditation*

Regardless of the source of our pain, we must accept that God knows, God loves and God is at work.

*Charles Stanley*  
*The Blessing of Brokenness (1997)*

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ      September 29, 2024  
Mt Hope 8:30am      Greenfield 9:50am      Grace 11:00am  
19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost / Belonging

*Community News*

*Prayer List and Prayers of the People*

*Prelude/Lighting of the Candles*

\* *Call to Worship*

**Inspired by Psalm 19**

Let the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable to you, Holy One, our rock and redeemer.

**For we seek your presence, the company of this community, and the renewal of our minds and spirits.**

Let the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable to you, Holy One, our rock and redeemer.

**For you impart wisdom, inspire joy, and instill hope as we reflect on the past, live in the present, and consider the future.**

Let the words of our mouths and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable to you, Holy One, our rock and redeemer.

**For wherever we gather in your name, we find holy ground; whenever we call you, we find a fresh encounter; however we know you, we find belonging. Praise God!**

\* *Invocation*

Triune God, make us one as you are one. As we enter worship, may our harmony extend beyond our songs. May our distinctiveness be welcomed, our identities be celebrated, and our differences be a source of delight. May your church serve as a beacon for belonging and demonstrate the beloved community of the kingdom in your name this day and every day. Amen.

\* *Opening Hymn*      “*When Morning Gilds the Skies*”

*Mt Hope* VH #41

*Greenfield* CH #215

*Grace* VH #41

## *Prayer for Transformation and New Life*

**Righteous God, we acknowledge the need for repentance and repair. We have confused seeking the common good with controlling our neighbor. We have conflated unity with uniformity. We have cosigned on societal norms that divide, segregate, and exclude rather than becoming agents of cultural change to bridge, welcome, and belong. Transform our hearts and stir our souls. Foster a spirit of curiosity, hospitality, and reconciliation to make things right with our neighbors, foes, and friends. Lead us on the path of belonging. Amen.**

## *Words of Grace*

Wonderfully and fearfully made humans, you are not bound by the pressures of culture or the attitudes of your past. Even our embedded biases may be broken, our isolationist tendencies shattered, and our fearful reactions unlearned. You belong to the kingdom and the kingdom belongs to you. Press forward with the grace to transform and create a world reflecting the reign of God, with peace, justice, and righteousness for all. Amen.

## *Epistles Reading*

**James 5:13-20 NRSV**

### *The Prayer of Faith*

<sup>13</sup> Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. <sup>14</sup> Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up, and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. <sup>17</sup> Elijah was a human like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. <sup>18</sup> Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth yielded its harvest.

<sup>19</sup> My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, <sup>20</sup> you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

\* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Mark 9:38-50 NRSV

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

TH #497

*Another Exorcist*

<sup>38</sup> John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us." <sup>39</sup> But Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. <sup>40</sup> Whoever is not against us is for us. <sup>41</sup> For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

*Temptations to Sin*

<sup>42</sup> "If any of you cause one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. <sup>43</sup> If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. <sup>45</sup> And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. <sup>47</sup> And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, <sup>48</sup> where their worm never dies and the fire is never quenched.

<sup>49</sup> "For everyone will be salted with fire. <sup>50</sup> Salt is good, but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

\* *Gloria Patri*

*Children's Message / Congregation Conversation*

\* *Meditation Hymn*      “*It Is Well With My Soul*”

*Mt Hope* VH #270

*Greenfield* CH #705

*Grace* 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