



September 8, 2024
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

“There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.”

Dr. Albert Einstein

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
16th Sunday after Pentecost / For Confirmation

September 8, 2024
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Inspired by Psalm 125

Those who trust in the Holy One are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved but abides forever.

Surround us, O God, like the atmosphere around the earth.

We stretch out our hands and our hearts reaching for your goodness and righteousness.

Surround us, O God, like the atmosphere around the earth.

Lead us on good paths and make us agents of peace.

Surround us, O God, like the atmosphere around the earth.

* *Invocation*

Holy One, our Maker, we gather to worship you, to renew our spirits, and to connect as a community. Some of us crave a joyful noise, some flourish in quiet contemplation, others desire movement, while others need to ponder our thoughts. However, we worship, we gather here. In this place, we find you in the midst of us. In this connectivity, we know that your covenant remains in effect. May your Spirit guide, empower, and speak. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn*

“Jesus, Lover of My Soul”

Mt Hope PH #210

Greenfield CH #710

Grace TH #316

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Holy One, we confess our tendency to exclude rather than to include, to form closed groups rather than open communities, and to prioritize comfort rather than embrace curiosity. Help us to truly love our neighbor, whether family, friend, stranger, or foe, as ourselves and with the love you demonstrate toward us.

Words of Grace

Beloved, God's grace is sufficient to meet you in weakness. And yet, faith without works lacks power, conviction, and life. Let our commitment to the gospel and a life with Christ be reflected in our attitude and actions toward those with different life experiences, identities, and cultures. Be opened to the possibilities, wonders, and joy that the diversity of God's creation presents to us. Amen.

First Reading

Isaiah 35:4-7a NRSV

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart,

‘Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.’

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;

The Syrophenician Woman's Faith

²⁴ From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵ but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ He said to her, 'Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' ²⁸ But she answered him, 'Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.' ²⁹ Then he said to her, 'For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.' ³⁰ So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Jesus Cures a Deaf Man

³¹ Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. ³² They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³ He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' ³⁵ And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷ They were astounded beyond measure, saying, 'He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.'

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* “Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life”

Mt Hope PH #423

Greenfield FHP #180

Grace TH #394

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

Sovereign God, receive our offerings for the nurture and expansion of your kingdom. May they be magnified and the spirit of generosity among your people amplified so that all may do well. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn* *“Open My Eyes, That I May See”*

Mt Hope VH #156

Greenfield CH #563

Grace VH #156

* *Benediction*

Go into the world as agents of healing
Appreciating the wonder of creation
In all forms, expressions, and ways
Boldly embracing the fullness of humanity
Welcoming the stranger
And considering the other as friend.
Go in peace.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Inclusion: Service Prayers for the Sixteenth 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.