December 21, 2025
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

www.greenfieldcharge.org
greenfieldchargeucc@gmail.com
Facebook: Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

Pastor
Wendy Farber

farberhome@atlanticbb.net

Pianist
Anneka Gribbin /
Sylvia Olewinski (MH)

Audio Tech
Jeff Farber (Greenfield)

Organist
Gary McIntyre (Grace)

Advent Thought

"At this Christmas when Christ comes, will He find a warm heart? Mark the season of Advent by loving and serving the others with God's own love and concern."

- Mother Teresa,
Love: A Fruit Always in Season

Welcome

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ **December 21, 2025**
Mt Hope 8:30am **Greenfield 9:50am** **Grace 11:00am**
4th Sunday of Advent / Let It Be Deep

Community News
Prayer List and Prayers of the People
Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* Call to Worship

To love is the greatest gift bestowed upon us. It is a surrender to God's holy power.

God loves us, despite all our mistakes, so we pray for the patience of hope!

To be loved by God is the right of every living thing. This love is the sun and the rain, it is the beginning and end of all.

God loves us even when we neglect our neighbors, so we pray for the strength to bring peace.

God's love is always a promise and a responsibility, and we are given this love freely. God demands nothing from us yet knows we are capable of greatness.

God loves us in the midst of destruction and despair, so we pray to share a vision of joy.

Love is a sacred vow God has made to us, a rainbow in the sky, a baby in the manger.

God loves us just as we are, and we give thank and whisper amen.

* Invocation

Emmanuel, we come today with arms wide open, ready to meet your precious son. Your love for us is so full that you sent a fragile babe to share your holy word, knowing that he would face human pain. Open us, God! Prepare us for his coming, that we may be messengers of your abundant love, and act to ease the suffering of all.

* *Opening Hymn* ***"O Little Town of Bethlehem"***

Mt Hope VH #89 *Greenfield* CH #250 *Grace* VH #89

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Majestic Redeemer, in these last days before the birth of your son, we admit that we ask often for a sign. We put you to the test, beg for miracles, for mercy, for proof of your holy word.

We doubt, even as we retell the old stories. We are like Joseph – shamed, questioning, fearful of the truth of Mary's dream – not wanting to be taken as fools for believing in something that seems too precious to be true. We are as afraid as the shepherds in their fields, sometimes as cowardly and cruel as Herod. You have given us the most sacred gift, yet we often lack the faith to accept it. Amen.

Words of Grace

God's love for us encompasses every doubt and disaster we will imagine. God did not turn from our ancestors when they fell short, and God will not turn from us. Our humanity is not a flaw. It is the gift of the divine, sealed in Emmanuel's humanity.

Praise be to God!

Christmas Special Music ***"Ode to Joy"***

Trumpet - Hannah Bowmaster Baritone – Callum Furry

Percussion – Alec Furry Baritone – James Bowmaster

Advent Candle Lighting Litany

Advent Scripture **Isaiah 7:10-16 NRSV**

Isaiah Gives Ahaz the Sign of Immanuel

10 Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, **11** "Ask a sign of
the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as
heaven." **12** But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put
the Lord to the test." **13** Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of
David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my
God also? **14** Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look,

the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. **15** He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. **16** For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

Lighting the Candle of Hope

Today we ***light the Candle of Love***.

Over the past few weeks, we have sparked the light of hope, peace, and joy. Now, we come to love, which binds all of these together.

Each strand is braided gently into an image of God who protects, encourages, and endures.

We cannot look upon the face of God, but we can experience this love every time we experience hope, peace, and joy.

We are not above suffering, but God promises, even in the midst of despair, love will pour down upon us.

Just as we await the birth of our savior in the manger, God waits on us, watches over us, and sends us out into the world to do as Jesus did – to care for our neighbors, to give freely to those in need, to call out tyranny, to face down injustice – knowing that God is with us.

We are loved.
We are love.

* Advent Candle Lighting Hymn **Insert vs #4**

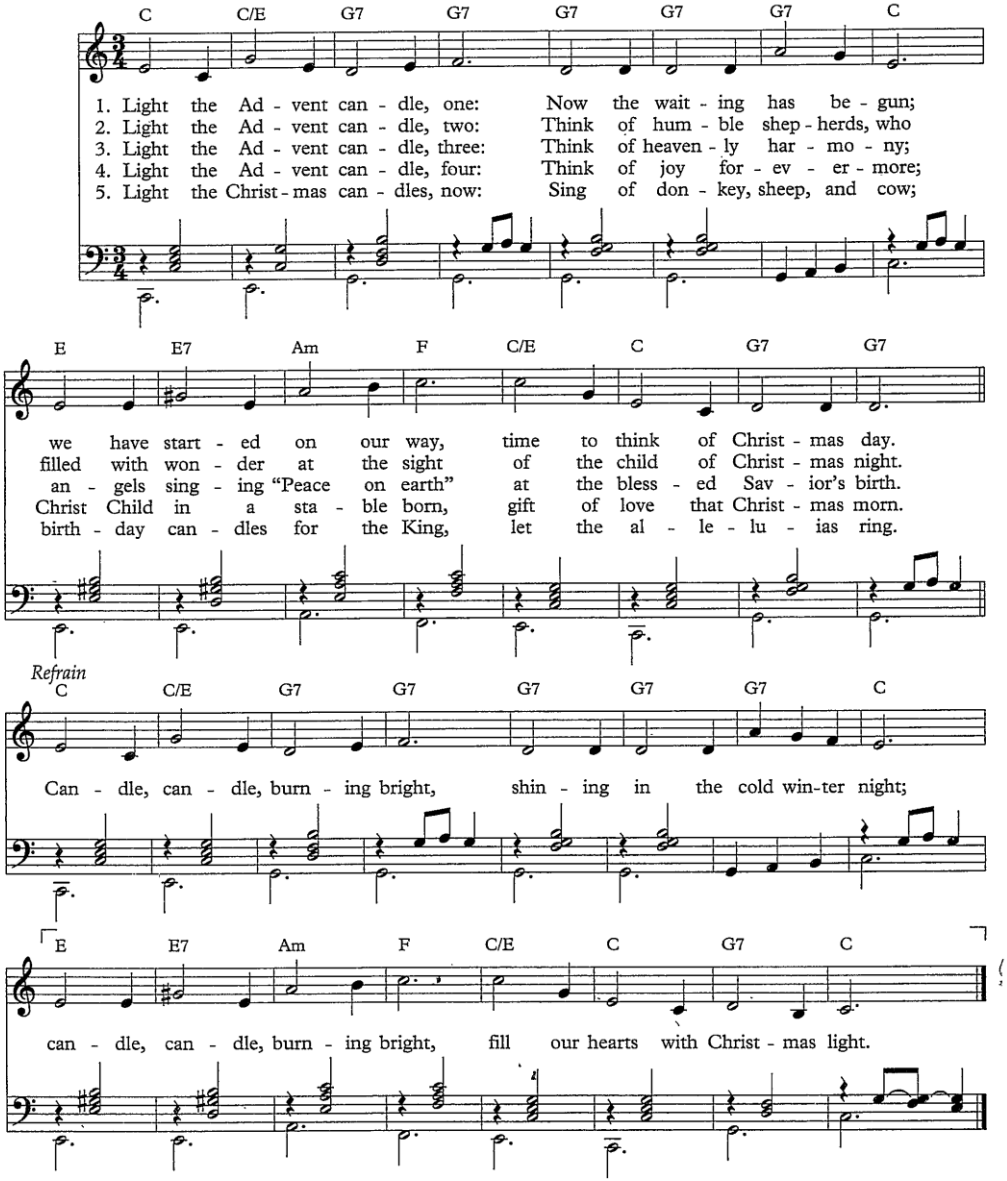
*"**Light the Advent Candle**"*

* Advent Prayer

God of Love, as this candle burns, remind us that your love is not distant or fragile. It is present, persistent, and poured out for the world. Prepare our hearts to receive Emmanuel, that we may live as people shaped by hope, peace, joy, and love. Amen.

Advent Song

(Light the Advent Candle)

2090

Congregation: Unison

WORDS: Mary Lu Walker (Luke 2:1-20)
MUSIC: Mary Lu Walker

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ADVENT CANDLE SONG
77.77 with Refrain

Epistle Reading — **Romans 1:1-7 NRSV**

Salutation

1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart
for the gospel of God, 2 which he promised beforehand through his
prophets in the holy scriptures, 3 the gospel concerning his Son,
who was descended from David according to the flesh 4 and was
declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of
holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our
Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to
bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the
sake of his name, 6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus
Christ,
7 To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

* The Reading of the Holy Gospel — **Matthew 1:18-25 NRSV**

Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.) — **TH #497**

The Birth of Jesus the Messiah

18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When
his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived
together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. 19 Her
husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose
her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. 20 But just
when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to
him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to
take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the
Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus,
for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to
fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

23 "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." 24 When Joseph awoke from sleep,
he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his
wife 25 but had no marital relations with her until she had given
birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

* Gloria Patri

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* Meditation Hymn

"Silent Night"

Mt Hope VH #90 *Greenfield* CH #253 *Grace* VH #90

Today's Message / Grace UCC Children's Christmas Pageant

"*God's Christmas Love Story For Us*"

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

Loving God, Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude and trust. Bless them, and bless us, that all we offer may reflect your love made known in Jesus Christ. Amen.

* Closing Hymn *"Joy to the World"*

Mt Hope VH #88 *Greenfield* CH #270 *Grace* VH #88

* Benediction

Let us go out into the world with the extravagance of God's love in our hearts! Let us savor the moments of joy, whether from the excitement of the season or the peace of a deeply feeling spirit. We are messengers of hope in a waiting world.
Amen

* Three-Fold Amen **TH # 558**

* Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle

Let It Be Deep: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday of Advent Year A was written by Maria Mankin.

God's Christmas Love Story For Us 2025

Cast Members

Colby Bowmaster
Hannah Bowmaster
Avery Claar
Bryson Corrigan
Alec Furry
Hudson Corrigan
Hayden Corrigan
Evey Barnes
Reece Corrigan
Callum Furry
Chase Mock
James Bowmaster