Welcome

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ **December 28, 2025**
Mt Hope 8:30am **Greenfield 9:50am** **Grace 11:00am**
1st Sunday after Christmas / In God's Love

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

* *Call to Worship* *Inspired by Psalm 148*

Praise the Holy One! Praise God from the sanctuary and across the screen. Praise God in the morning and the evening…in the afternoon and at night!

Praise God all people, all nations, all generations! Praise the Holy One who forms and shapes us!

Let our adoration join with the angels! May our songs join with the saints!

Let us worship the Holy One with gladness! Let us worship our God in truth!

Praise the Holy One for their abiding presence! Praise God for their wondrous works!

Let the name of the Holy One be exalted forever and ever! Praise the Holy One!

* *Invocation*

Holy Love, we delight in your presence among us. We anticipate your wisdom, assurance, and challenge. Soften our hearts, enliven our spirits, and expand our minds so that we may reflect your heart, spirit, and mind. Through our remembering, give us courage to face these times and hope to seek your kingdom. In the name of the One who came to us and lives and reigns with you, we pray. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* **"Good Christian Men, Rejoice"**

Mt Hope PH #125 *Greenfield* CH #273 *Grace* TH #116

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Righteous One, you make all things new, and yet, we often cling to those things, actions, and attitudes that do not serve your purposes. We refuse to confront ourselves and examine our feelings and reasoning out of fear. We may be more concerned about being wrong and needing to change than being faithful to your way and confident of your grace. Meet us in our fears with the assurance that you go with us and welcome us when we turn back to the path you have laid. Transform us, renew us, and redeem us for your glory and in your love. Amen.

Words of Grace

Precious and beloved creation of God, you have been made for God's companionship. The One who will never leave you nor forsake you is faithful to forgive, revive, and empower you. Receive the grace that God gives and the opportunity to live into the person that the Holy One has created you to be and the world needs.

Old Testament Reading **Isaiah 63:7-9 NRSV**

God's Mercy Remembered

7 I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,
the praiseworthy acts of the Lord,
because of all that the Lord has done for us
and the great favor to the house of Israel
that he has shown them according to his mercy,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.
8 For he said, "Surely they are my people,
children who will not act deceitfully,"
and he became their savior
9 in all their distress.
It was no messenger or angel
but his presence that saved them;
in his love and pity it was he who redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Epistle Reading **Hebrews 2:10-18 NRSV**

10 It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things
exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer
of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For the one who
sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this
reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and
sisters, 12 saying,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

13 And again,

"I will put my trust in him."

And again,

"Here am I and the children whom God has given me."

14 Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself
likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might
destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the
devil, 15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by
the fear of death. 16 For it is clear that he did not come to help
angels but the descendants of Abraham. 17 Therefore he had to
become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he
might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of
God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the
people. 18 Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is
able to help those who are being tested.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel* **Matthew 2:13-23 NRSV**

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

The Escape to Egypt

13 Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a
dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt,
and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the
child, to destroy him." 14 Then Joseph got up, took the child and his
mother by night, and went to Egypt 15 and remained there until the death
of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through
the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

The Massacre of the Infants

16 When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was
infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around

Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. [17] Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

[18] "A voice was heard in Ramah,
wailing and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be consoled, because they are no more."

The Return from Egypt

[19] When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, [20] "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." [21] Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. [22] But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. [23] There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazarene."

* Gloria Patri

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* Meditation Hymn **"*Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella*"**

Mt Hope PH #124 *Greenfield* Insert *Grace* Insert

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

Wise God, we present these offerings to you and dedicate our time, talents, and treasures for your kingdom. May your will be done, may our siblings' needs be met, and may your name be made known through what we share, in praise and thanksgiving for all you have given us in time, talent, and treasure. Amen.

* Closing Hymn ***"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"***

Mt Hope VH #28 *Greenfield* CH #139 *Grace* VH #28

*Benediction

When we leave this place, may we keep our connection to one another. When we leave this time, may we keep our focus on the God we trust. When we leave this service, may we keep our worship going in service in the world. May our commitments bloom, our hope flourish, and our ministry prosper as we go forth in God's love.

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

* Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle

In God's Love: Service Prayers for the First Sunday of Christmas Year A was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.