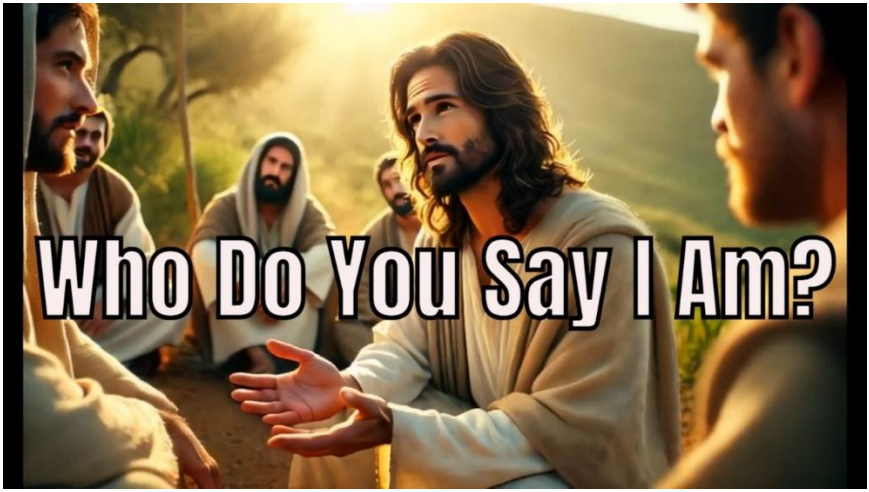

August 23, 2026
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Jeff Farber (Greenfield)

Organist
Gary McIntyre (Grace)

Sunday Morning Meditation

"I find it best to make 'my own words' the staple but introduce a modicum of the ready-made."

C. S. Lewis,
Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer

Welcome

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ **August 23, 2026**
Mt Hope 8:30am **Greenfield 9:50am** **Grace 11:00am**
13th Sunday after Pentecost | Out of the Water

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

* *Call to Worship* *inspired by Psalms 124*

Blessed be the Holy One. If it had not been God on our side—the people proclaim!

With God on our side, we find our help in the name of the Holy One!

Blessed be the Holy One, who draws us from aimlessness, despair, and bitterness.

With God on our side, we find purpose, hope, and peace.

Blessed be the Holy One, who calls us to love one another—neighbors, enemies, family and friends.

With God on our side, we find compassion, grace, and mercy for one another. Blessed be the Holy One!

* *Invocation*

Living God, you draw us from the waters that offer both life and death, nourishment and destruction, peace and power. We gather as your people to remember your timely and tangible works. We call upon your many names as we have known you to be Redeemer, Counselor, Shepherd, and Friend. We worship you for who you are, and we draw near to become who you have crafted us to be. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* ***"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"***

Mt Hope VH #12 *Greenfield* CH #11 *Grace* VH #12

Prayer for Transformation of New Life

Sovereign God, we often forget important truths and lessons the past offers us, devalue the relationships brought to us, and misuse the power given to us. Help us to live in truth, with integrity, and for peace. May love and compassion guide us in all our actions and interactions. Amen.

Words of Grace

Body of Christ, in the words of Romans 12:2, "Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God--what is good and acceptable and perfect." Receive the grace of God and the power of being in community to proceed in the newness of life as the One who loves us draws us from the threat of the depths into the hope of a blessed future.

Psalm Reading **Psalm 124 NRSV**

Thanksgiving for Israel's Deliverance

1 If it had not been the Lord who was on our side
—let Israel now say—
2 if it had not been the Lord who was on our side,
when our enemies attacked us,
3 then they would have swallowed us up alive,
when their anger was kindled against us;
4 then the flood would have swept us away;
the torrent would have gone over us;
5 then over us would have gone
the raging waters.

6 Blessed be the Lord,
who has not given us
as prey to their teeth.
7 We have escaped like a bird
from the snare of the hunters;
the snare is broken,
and we have escaped.

8 Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

Epistle Reading **Romans 12:1-8 NRSV**

The New Life in Christ

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of
God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and
acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. **2** Do
not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing
of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what
is good and acceptable and perfect.
3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to
think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think
with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that
God has assigned. **4** For as in one body we have many members
and not all the members have the same function, **5** so we, who are
many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members
one of another. **6** We have gifts that differ according to the grace
given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; **7** ministry, in
ministering; the teacher, in teaching; **8** the encourager, in
encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the
compassionate, in cheerfulness.

* *The Gospel Reading* **Matthew 16:13-20 NRSV**

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

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he
asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man
is?" **14** And they said, "Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah
and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." **15** He said to
them, "But who do you say that I am?" **16** Simon Peter answered,
"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." **17** And Jesus
answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh
and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in
heaven. **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will
build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against
it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and
whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever
you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." **20** Then he sternly
ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

* Gloria Patri

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* Meditation Hymn **"*All for Jesus*"**

Mt Hope Insert *Greenfield* CH #588 *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.

* Personal Prayer

Today, let us silently pray to God in our own words.

* 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

Wonderful God, please sanctify these gifts for your glory, amplify them for your people, and replicate them for your kingdom. May they meet the needs and hopes of the world and community in which we belong. Amen.

* Closing Hymn *"The Solid Rock"*

Mt Hope VH #232 *Greenfield* CH #526 *Grace* VH #232

* Benediction

With keys to the kingdom,
Given by the Creator of all,
Draw from the water of salvation and redemption.
Live in the purpose and promise of God.
Proclaim the power of heaven on earth.
Be the body of Christ wherever you go,
And know that Holy one goes before you.

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

* Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle

Out of the Water: ***Service Prayers for the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost Year A was written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.***