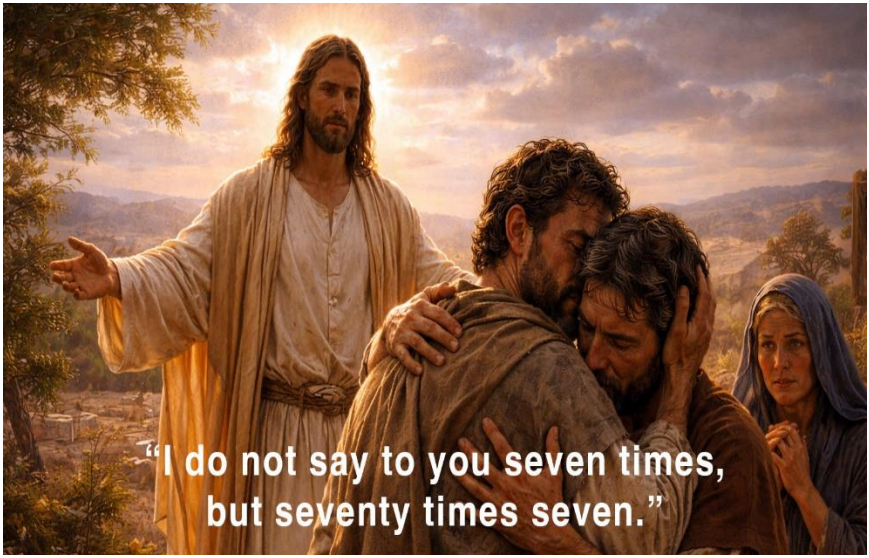

September 13, 2026
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."

Lewis B. Smedes

Welcome

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ **September 13, 2026**
Mt Hope 8:30am **Greenfield 9:50am** **Grace 11:00am**
16th Sunday after Pentecost

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

* *Call to Worship*

Sing praise to God,
Our Creator and Redeemer
Sing praise to Christ,
Our Lord and Savior.
Sing praise to the Spirit
Who has called us to worship this day.

* *Invocation*

Loving God, thank you for the great mercy and grace that draw us close to your holiness. Flow through our worship and through our lives with your holy presence and your forgiving grace, that we may be people of holy love and gracious forgiveness. In your holy name, we pray, Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* ***"Amazing Grace"***

Mt Hope VH #77 *Greenfield* CH #343 *Grace* VH #77

Prayer for Yearning

Gracious God, we want to be as grace-filled with ourselves and with others as you are. But honestly, it's easier to sing about grace than it is to offer it freely and abundantly. Help us put our songs into action, our words of yearning into lives filled with mercy and forgiveness – for ourselves and for others. Our time, seven times, or seventy-seven times, each moment of grace matters and makes us better. Let your grace flow through our lives so abundantly that it overflows into every situation, protecting and preserving everyone it touches. In your love and grace, we pray. Amen.

Words of Assurance

My friends, we belong to God, we belong to Christ. Christ's amazing grace saves and redeems. Christ's grace is enough for all.

Old Testament Reading **Exodus 14:19-31 NRSV**

19 The angel of God who was going before the Israelite army moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from in front of them and took its place behind them. **20** It came between the army of Egypt and the army of Israel. And so the cloud was there with the darkness, and it lit up the night; one did not come near the other all night.

21 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. **22** The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. **23** The Egyptians pursued and went into the sea after them, all of Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and chariot drivers. **24** At the morning watch the Lord, in the pillar of fire and cloud, looked down on the Egyptian army and threw the Egyptian army into a panic. **25** He clogged their chariot wheels so that they turned with difficulty. The Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, for the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt."

The Pursuers Drowned

26 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea, so that the water may come back upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and chariot drivers." **27** So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at dawn the sea returned to its normal depth. As the Egyptians fled before it, the Lord tossed the Egyptians into the sea. **28** The waters returned and covered the chariots and the chariot drivers, the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea; not one of them remained. **29** But the Israelites walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left.

30 Thus the Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. **31** Israel saw the great work that the Lord did against the Egyptians. So the people feared the Lord and believed in the Lord and in his servant Moses.

* *The Gospel Reading* **Matthew 18:21-35 NRSV**

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

Forgiveness

21 Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" **22** Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

23 "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. **24** When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, **25** and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. **26** So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' **27** And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. **28** But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' **29** Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' **30** But he refused;

then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. **31** When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. **32** Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. **33** Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' **34** And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. **35** So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* "***Freely, Freely***"

Mt Hope Insert *Greenfield* CH #436 *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

Thank you for the generosity of your love, forgiveness, and grace, dear God. Thank you for trusting us to share this generosity with others. Bless our offerings with grace, forgiveness, and love. Bless our lives, our giving, and our actions, that they may reflect and share these gifts in all that we say and in all that we do. Amen.

* Closing Hymn ***"Make Me A Blessing"***

Mt Hope VH #382 *Greenfield* CH #670 *Grace* VH #382

* Benediction

Forgiven and loved,
we go into the world with forgiveness and love.
Blessed beyond measure,
we will share our blessings with generosity and joy.

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

* Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle