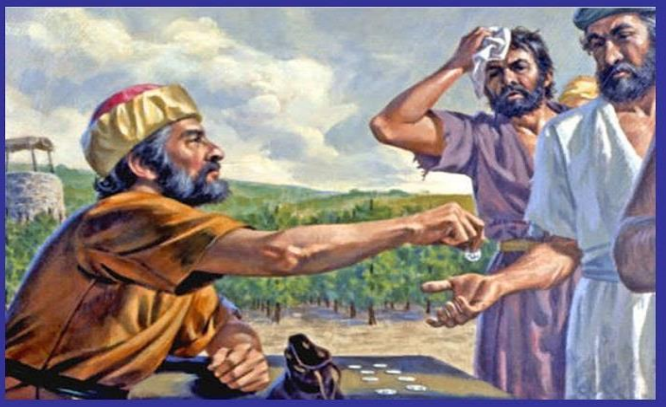

The Parable of the Vineyard Workers

September 20, 2026
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."
Winston Churchill

Welcome

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ September 20, 2026
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am Grace 11:00am
17th Sunday after Pentecost | "Heard Your Complaining"

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

* *Call to Worship* *inspired by Psalm 105*

O give thanks to the Holy One! Tell of God's wonderful works.
Declare God's marvelous deeds among the peoples.
O give thanks to the Holy One! Give glory and rejoice!
Sing praises to our God! Let our hearts be glad!
O give thanks to the Holy One! Remember the miracles and the judgments.
The Holy One has remembered us. Praise God!

* *Invocation*

Sovereign and Awesome God, we come to worship you, to know you and to be known by you. Expand our hearts so that we may love fully. Build our courage to understand the truth. Nurture our spirits to be gracious, merciful, and kind. Transform us in your image and for your glory as we dwell in your presence. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* ***"Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"***

Mt Hope VH #162 *Greenfield* CH #400 *Grace* VH #162

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Just God, we acknowledge that accountability is both a gift and a necessary step toward healing and repair. We also know that we do not sin against you alone. Forgive us for only seeking absolution from you for our benefit. Help us reconcile with siblings, neighbors, friends, and enemies by recognizing the harm we have caused and committing ourselves to repair. Amen.

Words of Grace

The Holy One is faithful to forgive and lavish in extending grace and mercy. At the same time, God wants us all to be well and whole. The Holy One will strengthen us to be accountable to both God and one another as well as to do the work of restoration and repair.

Old Testament Reading **Exodus 16:2-15 NRSV**

2 The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against
Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. **3** The Israelites said to them,
"If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt,
when we sat by the pots of meat and ate our fill of bread, for you
have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly
with hunger."

4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from
heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather
enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will
follow my instruction or not. **5** On the sixth day, when they prepare
what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other
days." **6** So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the
evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out
of the land of Egypt, **7** and in the morning you shall see the glory of
the Lord, because he has heard your complaining against the Lord.
For what are we, that you complain against us?" **8** And Moses said,
"When the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill
of bread in the morning, because the Lord has heard the
complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your
complaining is not against us but against the Lord."

9 Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the
Israelites: 'Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your
complaining.' " **10** And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation
of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory
of the Lord appeared in the cloud. **11** The Lord spoke to Moses, **12** "I
have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At
twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your
fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.' "

13 In the evening quails came up and covered the camp, and in the
morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. 14 When the
layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a
fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. 15 When the
Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they
did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that
the Lord has given you to eat.

* *The Gospel Reading* **Matthew 20:1-16 NRSV**

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

The Laborers in the Vineyard

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out
early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 After
agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them
into his vineyard. 3 When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw
others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and he said to them, 'You
also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So
they went. 5 When he went out again about noon and about three
o'clock, he did the same. 6 And about five o'clock he went out and
found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you
standing here idle all day?' 7 They said to him, 'Because no one
has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the
vineyard.' 8 When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to
his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning
with the last and then going to the first.' 9 When those hired about
five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. 10 Now when
the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of
them also received a denarius. 11 And when they received it, they
grumbled against the landowner, 12 saying, 'These last worked only
one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the
burden of the day and the scorching heat.' 13 But he replied to one
of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with
me for a denarius? 14 Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to
give to this last the same as I give to you. 15 Am I not allowed to do
what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious
because I am generous?' 16 So the last will be first, and the first
will be last."

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* **"*There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*"**

Mt Hope VH #207 *Greenfield* CH #355 *Grace* VH #207

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

Loving God, thank you for the opportunity to participate in spreading the good news through gifts we offer today. Bless these gifts, magnify them, and sanctify them for your glory. Amen.

* Closing Hymn *"O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee"*

Mt Hope VH #403 *Greenfield* CH #665 *Grace* VH #403

* Benediction

As you go, share the love and hope of Christ.
Let generosity be your guide.
Let love be your compass.
And let peace be your destination.

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

* Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle

Heard Your Complaining: *Service Prayers for the Seventeenth 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.*