



March 31, 2024
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Palm Sunday Meditation

Billy Graham once responded to someone who shouted out, "God is dead! God is dead!" Dr. Graham with tenderness replied, "That is strange because I just talked to Him in prayer a few minutes ago." Yes, the day you believe in the resurrection is the day you change the universe, and most importantly, you can reflect that transforming truth.

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
Easter Sunday / 'Waiting for the Feast Lenten Series: Terror and
Amazement!'

March 31, 2024
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

We gather in the presence of God's love to celebrate the best love story ever told.

The Holy Story of the Risen Christ!

A story of the Risen Christ who came as a sacrificial lamb to heal a hurting world.

The Divine sign of God's love and grace.

The story of three women who rose early to care for Jesus' body in the tomb.

An act to honor God's loving presence sent to be among us.

These women arrived and saw an empty tomb; they were shocked and afraid.

They remembered the symbol of human shame of the old rugged cross.

But the story did not end with the crucified Jesus. An Angel of God appeared in the empty tomb, and their terror transformed into amazement.

God's love had once again been revealed.

The journey of the three women continued; they were asked to go out and spread the Good News of God's love, peace, and justice found in the Risen Christ!

Today, we receive this Good News; Christ is Risen. He is Risen as He said!

* *Invocation*

Resurrecting God, strengthen in us the will to go out, sharing your Good News of God's redeeming love. Guide us in telling the story of your endless love through our words and deeds. Remind us of

your presence. Fill our hearts with your ways of love that bring about peace and justice for all. With your loving embrace, protect us in the face of terror and hateful actions. Bring us your hope found in the excitement of eternal life and saving love exemplified in Jesus, the Risen Christ! Amen.

* *Opening Hymn* “*Christ the Lord is Risen Today*”

Mt Hope VH #132

Greenfield CH #367

Grace VH #132

Prayer of Transformation and New Life

Redeeming God, We recognize that your love for all creation is great and unmovable. All that we need on earth has been provided, and yet we struggle to share a portion of our blessings so that all might have enough. You have created an earth vast with land and sea. Give us the strength to help make this world a better place by embracing your agape love of equality for all creation. Let your ancient story of love be our new, innovative, and transformative story of love. The kind of love that transforms hearts, O God, and leads us towards this new way of living. May this new life speak to the kind of prosperity that overflows with your love of peace and justice for all people, everywhere!

Words of Grace

God of Grace and Glory, We are humbled by your faithfulness and love. Even if our fears spark terror and doubt, you never leave us. There is no other love greater than yours. You call upon all of creation to spread the Good News of your love and glorious light. You comfort us even in the bitterness of life as we embrace the loving assurance of forgiveness found in Jesus Christ, whose grace and mercy bless us still.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 25:6-9 NRSV

⁶ On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear.
⁷ And he will destroy on this mountain

the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the covering that is spread over all nations;
⁸ he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the
earth,
for the LORD has spoken.

⁹ It will be said on that day,
“See, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might
save us.

This is the LORD for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

John 20:1-18 NRSV

Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.)

TH #497

The Resurrection of Jesus

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ² So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” ³ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴ The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵ He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ and the cloth that had been on Jesus’s head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed, ⁹ for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

¹¹ But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb, ¹² and she saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, “Woman, why are you

weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, “Do not touch me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and she told them that he had said these things to her.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn*

“In the Garden”

Mt Hope VH #228

Greenfield CH #635

Grace VH #228

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

**Let us remember that weeping may endure for a night, but
joy comes early in the morning. May these gifts of blessing
be a sign of the love, light, and glory of our redeeming God
who has created a world of abundance with all that we
need. May we remain thankful for your generosity, O God,
as we dedicate these offerings to you and your beloved
creation. Amen.**

* *Closing Hymn*

“Christ Arose”

Mt Hope VH #133

Greenfield CH #357

Grace VH #133

* *Benediction*

Loving and Gracious God, We are grateful for your Good News of
loving abundance for all creation. Now, let us go out like the three
women who experienced an empty tomb. Going out with Christ's
light shining deeply in our hearts. Go in Peace & Love. Let the
people of God say, **Amen.**

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*