

<PIC>

July 16, 2023
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Pastor
Mrs. Wendy Farber

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Pianist
Sylvia Olewinski (MH)

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Jeff Farber (Greenfield)

Organist
Gary McIntyre (Grace)

Sunday Morning Meditation

Who could have dreamed that this little baby would change the course of the world?

– Martin Bell
The Way of the Wolf (1968)

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ
Mt Hope 8:30am Greenfield 9:50am
7th Sunday after Pentecost / Christmas in July

July 16, 2023
Grace 11:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

* *Call to Worship*

Sing, choirs of angels.

Sing in exaltation.

Let the shepherds in the fields rejoice.

Let the stars in the sky worship the newborn king.

For heaven has come down to earth.

Salvation has come to our homes this day.

Sing, choirs of angels.

Sing in exaltation.

* *Invocation*

God of love, choirs of angels sang to your glory on the night of Jesus's birth. Open our mouths to sing your praise, that we might join the heavenly chorus. As the shepherds left their sheep in the fields may we leave our cares behind, that we too may find the hope of our salvation in the Christ child. On this most holy of nights, may our worship befit the Prince of Peace, who came to show us the depths of your love. Amen.

* *Opening Hymn*

"Away in a Manger"

Mt Hope PH #137

Greenfield CH #262

Grace TH #109

Prayer of Yearning

Source of joy, you are the author of everlasting life. Touch us with the wonder of that holy night when your Son came into the world. For we yearn to leave the shadows behind to walk in darkness no more. We long to behold your light shining in our lives, as it shined in the stars above on the night love came down at Christmas. Guide our steps in the manger, and make us instruments of your justice and

peace, that the gift of your salvation may reside in every corner of the globe. We ask this in the name of our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Amen.

Words of Grace

Like the people of old, we, who walked in darkness, have seen a great light. We, who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on us light has shined. Live in this light and you will live indeed.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7 NIV

²The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.

³You have enlarged the nation
and increased their joy;
they rejoice before you
as people rejoice at the harvest,
as warriors rejoice
when dividing the plunder.

⁴For as in the day of Midian's defeat,
you have shattered
the yoke that burdens them,
the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor.

⁵Every warrior's boot used in battle
and every garment rolled in blood
will be destined for burning,
will be fuel for the fire.

⁶For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne

and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD Almighty
will accomplish this.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Luke 2:1-20 NIV

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

TH #497

The Birth of Jesus

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn* “*There’s a Song in the Air!*”

Mt Hope VH #99

Greenfield FHP #85

Grace VH #99

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

God of surprise and wonder, you came in a way no one expected. When we looked for you in power and might, you came in weakness and vulnerability. As we worship you anew this day, open our hearts to those you came to save – especially the least and the lost. May the gifts we offer into your service continue the work you began in a manger so many years ago. Amen.

* *Closing Hymn*

“Joy to the World!”

Mt Hope VH #88

Greenfield CH #270

Grace VH #88

* *Benediction*

Walk in darkness no longer.

We will walk in the light of Christ.

Sing of Christ’s birth with the choirs of angels.

We will sing with the heavenly host.

Go and proclaim the good news.

Jesus Christ is born.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*