

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &  
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

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Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God  
Ministry of Pastoral Care & Worship: Pastor Peggy Bartlett  
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- 2      Let me, God, be open, let me loving be.  
let your world of people speak to me. **R**
- 3      Let me, God, be ready, let me be awake.  
in your world of loving my place take. **R**
- 4      Teach me, God, to know you, hear you when you speak,  
see you in my neighbour when we meet. **R**

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**REGIONAL COUNCIL PRAYER CYCLE**

Wainfleet: Morgan's Point-Fork's Rd East Pastoral

*“Are You Using the Gifts God Gave You?”*

**OFFERING PRAYER**

There are no limits to the gifts you have given us, gracious Lord. Now we return thanks to you for these gifts and we bring these tokens to you, asking for your blessing on givers and gifts. Help these gifts and givers to be your witnesses throughout the world. AMEN.

**PRELUDE AND WELCOME**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: We lift our eyes to the Lord.

**P: God created the heavens and the earth**

L: We raise our voices in songs and speech

**P: We raise our voices in prayer and praise.**

L: Lord, hear our prayers, accept our praise.

**P: Lord, open our hearts to receive your blessings of peace.**

**OPENING HYMN: #299 Teach Me God to Wonder**

1      Teach me, God, to wonder, teach me, God, to see;  
let your world of beauty capture me.

**R:      Praise to you be given, love for you be lived,  
life be celebrated, joy you give!**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Awesome God, you created the world and all that is in it. You blessed each element of creation with your love. You called us from slavery into witness and service. Be with us this day as we gather to worship. Clear our minds of all the distractions which would draw us away from you. Open our hearts and spirits and let your healing and empowering love flow in. Prepare us to be witnesses to your power and love as we use the gifts with which you have blessed us in your service. For we offer this prayer in the name of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ. AMEN.

**ANTHEM**

**CHILDREN'S TIME**

**CHILDREN'S SONG**

**LITANY**

L: The voice of God is speaking to you. God is calling you today to come and rejoice. Come to me, dear ones. Open your hands.

**P: We can't, Lord. Our hands are calloused and dirty, rough.**

L: Open your hands. My healing and cleansing love will protect and soothe you.

L: Come to me, beloved friends. Open your hands.

**P: We can't, Lord. Our hands have been wounded and they are bleeding.**

L: Open your hands and I will touch your wounds and stop the bleeding.

L: Come to me, disciples, witnesses. Open your hands.

**P: We can't, Lord. We have nothing to offer to you. Our hands are empty.**

L: Open your hands and I will give you my peace. Now you are healed.

**P: Now we can reach out to help.**

L: Now you can go into the world to offer blessing and hope.

**P: Praise be to you, O God, who has taken our excuses and turned them into commitment.**

L: You are loved by God and given so many gifts to be used to help others. Do not fear to use these gifts, for God is with you, continually blessing you and the gifts in your service. AMEN.

**\*CHORUS: #66 "I WILL SING OF THE MERCIES"**

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever, I will sing, I will sing.

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever,

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord.

With my mouth will I make known

Thy faithfulness, thy faithfulness,

With my mouth will I make known

Thy faithfulness to all generations.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS: Matthew 25:14-30**

**The Parable of the Bags of Gold**

<sup>14</sup> "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. <sup>15</sup> To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag,<sup>[a]</sup> each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. <sup>16</sup> The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. <sup>17</sup> So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. <sup>18</sup> But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

<sup>19</sup> "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup> The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'

<sup>21</sup> "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

<sup>22</sup> "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'

<sup>23</sup> "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

<sup>24</sup> "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. <sup>25</sup> So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

<sup>26</sup> "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? <sup>27</sup> Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.'

<sup>28</sup> "'So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. <sup>29</sup> For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. <sup>30</sup> And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

**MESSAGE: Wasted Opportunities**

Once again Jesus shares a parable ... The Parable of the Talents might seem confusing at first, but it contains important life lessons for every Christian.

So your first question might be.....What talent did God give me? To some, he gives wealth. To others, he gives a career that has influence. Many of us have children, spouses, and family. Do you see that this is all about the opportunity? Opportunity comes in so many different forms. There are so many different gifts being given to God's people. Each of us has something from God, with God knowing our ability. What has God given you, and what does he want you to do with it?

If we want to sit back and selfishly enjoy our wealth, we would be better off not committing our lives to Christ. If we want to avoid using the talents, privileges, opportunities, and abilities God has given us and do nothing with them, what will happen to us? This one talent man buried his talent, but what about us! God will one day come to settle accounts with us, and he will see what we have done with what he has given to us. Were you given the ability to teach and speak? Why aren't you using your ability to teach and speak the truth of the gospel to the lost? There are always opportunities to speak about your faith. Haven't you given the ability to care and show compassion toward those who are suffering?

Use your ability to help those who are in need of compassion or care. Are you a top-notch organizer? How much time are you spending organizing teaching materials, resources, events, etc.? We should devote ourselves to whatever we know how to do. There is coming a day when you will have to give an account for what you have done with what God has given you. Don't refuse to do the work. We need workers in the kingdom, not spectators.

It blows my mind to see people totally out of balance in their service of themselves and their service for the Lord. There is work that we all can do. Every part of the body of Christ needs to be equipped and functioning for the body to grow.

God doesn't expect us to do more than we can do, but he expects us all to grow in our abilities and to do the best we can do. We need to grow in our ability so that God can give us more opportunities. Peggy writes ..... "I may never preach as good as Jesus or write as well as Paul, but I do my best to use what I have to God's glory. When you love God, you will grow in your ability and step out in faith."

Don't be afraid of using your abilities. Do not believe that you are a less than one talent man or woman. Do not fear messing things up. God has given you what you can handle, and he expects you to worship him with your life. Be free from fear and anxieties. You won't mess up what God cannot fix. You will fail, but you will grow from that. I wonder how much of the five talents were lost in the process of gaining five more. Take a risk, and do what you can to glorify God.

Don't waste your opportunity. Some might think that it doesn't matter how much work we do for the Lord. But this parable teaches us otherwise. We need to be thankful that God has allowed us to serve him and make the most of this opportunity. It may seem like a long time to be working. It may be challenging to wait for a big payoff after this life. But our master will come, and the more we accomplish, the more we will be given in the end.

### **Conclusion**

If we remain faithful to the end, we will get to hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your master. You have been faithful over a little. I will put you in charge of much." Jesus is fighting for his disciples to have eternal joy. That's what I'm doing and why I'm speaking to you this way. I want you to experience the everlasting joy that only goes to those who use their abilities in the

kingdom. Don't leave this place and hide what God has given you. Use it to God's glory. Build up this community of believers and inspire spiritual growth in your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Remember, it is a privilege to be entrusted with talents, resources, and opportunities to work toward God's purposes in the world.

### **HYMN: #371 Open My Eyes**

- 1       Open my eyes, that I may see  
          glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;  
          place in my hands the wonderful key  
          that shall unclasp and set me free.  
                          Silently now I wait for Thee,  
                          ready my God, Thy will to see,  
                          Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!
- 2       Open my ears, that I may hear  
          voices of truth Thou sendest clear;  
          and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,  
          everything false will disappear.  
                          Silently now I wait for Thee,  
                          ready my God, Thy will to see,  
                          Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!
- 3       Open my mouth, and let me bear,  
          Gladly the warm truth everywhere;  
          Open my heart and let me prepare  
          Love with Thy children thus to share.  
                          Silently now I wait for thee,  
                          Ready my God, Thy will to see,  
                          Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Wise and Patient God, we know what you want us to do, but we are far too often hesitant to follow through for you. You give us multiple blessings and ask that we develop these gifts and use them to help others. In times of great crisis, we come through, we mobilize. But in the intermediate times, we hold back. We develop a "let someone else do it" attitude. We often think of our gifts, our talents as things that are less than worthy. In this country in which competition is the ruling code,

we don't want to compete with others, because we feel we just don't have the right "stuff". How blind we are, Lord! To each one of us you have given gifts which can be used to help others. Each gift and talent is precious in your sight. Rather than compete with others to see who has the greater talent, let us use the gifts we have been given joyfully. One of the greatest gifts is the gift of prayer. And we have brought before you, Lord, the concerns which have been weighing on our hearts. Touch the lives of all these people and situations with you healing love. Give each one a sense of your powerful presence. Flood their lives with hope and peace. Help each one of us to be workers for you. Help us to trust in your abiding presence and love for us. Challenge us to use the gifts and to honor the giver, for we ask these things in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

### LORD'S PRAYER

**CLOSING HYMN:** #365 Jesus Loves Me

1 Jesus loves me, this I know,  
for the Bible tells me so;  
little ones to him belong,  
in his love we shall be strong.

**REFRAIN: Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me! The bible tells me so.**

2 Jesus loves me, this I know,  
as he loved so long ago,  
taking children on his knee,  
saying, "Let them come to me." **R**

3 Jesus loves me still today,  
walking with me on my way,  
wanting as a friend to give  
light and love to all who live. **R**

### SENDING FORTH

As you have been blessed, now go to be a blessing to others. Go, bringing the news of peace and hope, of healing and love. Go and the God of peace will always go with you.

### CHORAL AMEN

### POSTLUDE

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### Announcements

**Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>:** Please join us for a showing of "The Chosen" at Hagersville at 7pm in the Sanctuary. This will be continuing each Sunday.

**Saturday, November 25<sup>th</sup>:** Please join us at Hagersville United Church for High Tea from 12pm-2pm. Cost is \$20 per person, in advance if possible. Call or text 905-515-6908. E-transfer can be sent in advance to dalebvecero@hotmail.com.

**Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup>:** Reign of Christ Sunday ~ Regular Services at both Churches & Celebration of Communion

**Monday, November 27<sup>th</sup>:** Coffee time at Hagersville from 10am-12pm.

**Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>:** Coffee time at Springvale starting at 9:30am. All are welcome.

**Wednesday, November 29<sup>th</sup>:** Springvale will be selling their Pre-Order Cookie Trays with pickup between 4-6pm. Large trays are \$40, medium trays are \$30 and small trays are \$20. Bowls of chili will be available to go for \$10. Available by pre-order, please call 905-537-4188 or 905-768-3910

**Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>:** First Sunday of Advent

**Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>:** Second Sunday of Advent – White Gift Sunday

**Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>:** Candlelight Service at Springvale at 7pm.

**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>:** Morning Worship Service at Springvale at 10am. (Only one service in the morning)

**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>:** Christmas Eve Service at Hagersville at 7pm

**Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>:** Joint Service at 10:30am at Hagersville. Christmas Sweater Sunday.

Please bring in your paper products for the  
Hagersville Food Bank 😊

