

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4th, 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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REGIONAL COUNCIL PRAYER CYCLE

St. George

*Holy One, we come to you, listening for your word of compassion.
Renew us with your strength. Empower us with your love.
Guide us in your ways, that we may know you and worship you,
our everlasting God.*

OFFERING PRAYER

We dedicate our gifts and ourselves to your service, O God. May the ministries we support help to heal the broken-hearted and bind up their wounds. May we provide healing and comfort in your name, food for the hungry, and places for prayer and worship. We are your servants, loving God, and we offer ourselves to you. Amen.

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Gather us in, the broken-hearted and the joyful.

Gather us in, the weak and the strong.

Gather us in, the fearful and the brave.

Gather us in, the young and the old.

Gather us in, to sing of God's works.

Gather us in, to praise Jesus Christ.

Gather us in, to worship and wonder.

Gather us in, to know of God's love.

OPENING HYMN: #226 For the Beauty of the Earth

- 1 For the beauty of the earth,
 for the glory of the skies,
 for the love which from our birth
 over and around us lies,
 **God of all, to you we raise
 this our hymn of grateful praise.**
- 2 For the beauty of each hour
 of the day and of the night,
 hill and vale, and tree and flower,
 sun and moon, and stars of light, **R**
- 3 For the joy of human love,
 brother, sister, parent, child,
 friends on earth, and friends above,
 for all gentle thoughts and mild, **R**
- 4 For each perfect gift sublime
 to our race so freely given,
 graces human and divine,
 flowers of earth and buds of heaven, **R**

OPENING PRAYER

Powerful God, from the very beginning you blessed creation. You have loved and shielded your people through all joys and trials of life. We come to you this day, rejoicing in the many blessings you have given to us. We open our hearts again to hear your word for us and to gather strength and joy for service in your world. Be with us and bless us again, we pray. AMEN.

ANTHEM

CHILDREN'S TIME

CHILDRENS' VIDEO

LITANY

L: Do you see the wonders of God's creation?

P: Life is moving too fast. We don't have time to waste.

L: Do you know the magnificent love of God?

P: We know what we need.

L: Do you see the needs of others?

P: Our own needs dominate our lives.

L: Do you need to be healed?

P: We are fine, just as we are!

L: Really? Have you reached out to others in compassion offering healing and hope?

P: Sometimes.

L: Have you dared to admit your need for God's love?

P: To admit to a need is to make ourselves vulnerable.

L: Become vulnerable to God. In Jesus Christ, God became vulnerable to the world.

P: We could be hurt.

L: God will heal you.

P: We could be lost and frightened.

L: God will find you and give you comfort.

P: We could become downtrodden and weak.

L: God will lift you up and strengthen you, for that is God's way of loving.

P: Thanks be to God who will walk with us, heal and protect us.

AMEN.

VIDEO CHORUS: In His Time

In His time, in His time,

He makes all things beautiful in His time.

Lord, please show me ev'ry day,

As You're teaching me Your way,

That You do just what You say, in Your time.

In Your time, in Your time,

You make all things beautiful in Your time.

Lord, my life to You I bring,

May each song I have to sing

Be to You a lovely thing, in Your time.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 40:21-31

²¹ Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded?

²² He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. ²³ He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing. ²⁴ No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff. ²⁵ "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One. ²⁶ Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. ²⁷ Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God"?

²⁸ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. ²⁹ He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. ³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; ³¹ but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Mark 1:29-39

Jesus Heals Many

²⁹ As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. ³⁰ Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. ³¹ So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. ³² That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. ³³ The whole town gathered at the door, ³⁴ and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place

³⁵ Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. ³⁶ Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: “Everyone is looking for you!” ³⁸ Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.” ³⁹ So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

MESSAGE

Jesus was clearly an early riser. He wakes up early to pray and He prays in a deserted place where no one can disturb Him. Then He goes on to teach, heal the sick and cast out demons. Even after sunset, for as long as there are people who need His presence, He is still at work.

The gospel reading shows us how Jesus was always on the move. It was a Sabbath day and people were supposed to rest and be quiet but not Jesus. Attending to people in need was more important to Him than following the letter of the law. Thus, even on a day of rest, He still performed healing and exorcism.

Not a single day was idle for Jesus. He knew He had little time on earth and He had to accomplish what He was sent for. He was always available to people who were in need. He does not reject people who seek Him.

Here we are on Sunday and it's the Sabbath... and I sure you all know what “Sabbath” means? “Remember the Sabbath to keep it Holy” ... means to take a time apart from the busyness of life to rest and to think about all the positive things that God has done for us.

Sunday mornings at church, is where we sing the songs of praise, we pray together, we listen to the Bible readings, and you hear me preach ☺. Sunday was meant to be the day of rest and gather strength for the week ahead.

In today's Gospel lesson we hear the story of Jesus healing Peter's mother-in-law and then the crowds of people are brought to the courtyard for Jesus to heal. He healed all of these people with such love. But the next morning, very early before sunrise, Jesus went to a quiet place to pray. He needed some time alone, to rest his body and his spirit for the times yet to come. It wasn't long before the disciples tracked him down and pleaded with him to come, because more people, large

crowds had gathered, but Jesus said, “let's go in another direction, for there is very much work to be done.”

It's like that with all of us ... adults, teens, elders, children. We always feel that there is much yet to be done, but we do require some time to rest, to pray, to think about God in our lives, and to ask God to help us. You know... I have been lovingly told many times to go to the mountain, to reflect to find peace and recharge for what is ahead. That advice is not only for me, it's for all of us. It does not only mean to find rest but this also means to see the wonders of God's creation and look deeper into ourselves. Sometimes life is moving so fast ... we feel we don't have time to waste. In that we don't see the needs of others, or we haven't even dared to admit your own need for God's love.

This might sound strange but we need to become vulnerable to God so God can use us. Because Jesus became vulnerable to the world. Yes, you may be afraid, because the world can hurt us, we can become frightened, you might feel downtrodden and weak, remember that God will lift you up and strengthen you, for that is God's way of loving us, walking with us, healing and protecting us.

Jesus is still available in our age at any time anywhere. He will always have time for you and for me. He is just one call away through prayer. He may no longer attend to us physically but He uses people as His instrument to help us. He might be calling us now to help a neighbour in need. Do we have time to call that neighbour? Do we have time for those in need?

Jesus does not only heal us physically. His presence alone lifts us emotionally and spiritually. He casts away our doubts and fears. He erases our guilt and fills our hearts and minds with peace and joy. Most especially, we can ask Him to cast out the demons in us and others. In today society though, it's often when we're worried, anxious, or overwhelmed that we cry out to God to speak to us. We look for God's voice for guidance when we need something. The good news is that God is always wanting to hear from us and speak to us.

God is constantly speaking to people. But too often, they miss out on hearing God's messages because they seek His guidance only occasionally – usually when they're going through a crisis or facing a major decision. Then, with a dire need to hear from God, people become confused and frustrated when they don't clearly hear what they should do. They start to wonder how to hear from God and why they aren't.

It doesn't have to be that way. God wants everyone to hear His voice and messages for us clearly, and it's possible to do so. The key is to forget about formulas and gimmicks for hearing from God, and to focus instead on developing the kind of relationship with God that will empower you to hear God speaking regularly. The closer you get to God, the more you can enjoy ongoing conversations with Him, both listening and hearing from Him, and the more God will use those conversations to transform you into the person He wants you to become. Find the Sabbath in your life, whatever day it is or where it is and take the opportunity to find your direction lead by God.

HYMN: #589 Lord, Speak to Me

- 1 Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
in living echoes of your tone;
as you have sought, so let me seek
your straying children lost and lone.
- 2 O lead me, so that I may lead
the wandering and the wavering feet;
O feed me, so that I may feed
your hungering ones with manna sweet.
- 3 O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
the precious truths which you impart;
and wing my words, that they may reach
the hidden depths of many a heart.
- 4 O fill me with your fullness, Lord,
until my very heart o'erflows
in kindling thought and glowing word,
your love to tell, your praise to show.

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

Tragedies abound, O Lord. Our newspapers, television newscasts, and media all report the troubled happenings in our world. War and strife seem to be the order of the day. And we are caught up in the midst of this chaos. Calm our spirits, Lord. Help us to focus on the love you have given to us in Jesus Christ. Remind us again that his healing mercies extend to us this day as surely as they did to the people of long ago. We

have gathered on this day to hear your word, to be forgiven and healed, to find ways in which we may serve you in peace. We have lifted names of those near and dear to us who stand in need of your healing mercies and compassionate love. Some names we have spoken aloud; and others we have uttered in our hearts. You have heard all our prayers. You know our needs and concerns before our voices can frame them. Let us accept the love you give to us. Empower us to take that love and use it for good in your world. Let the message of hope and compassion go forth from us again to this world which focuses on tragedy and turmoil. And once again, let us know fully that you are with us. 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.
**R: 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

We are being sent into a world in need of healing. We have been given all that we need to be God's messengers of peace. Go now into the world, rejoicing in God's presence with you. Bring the news of peace and hope to all you meet.

CHORAL AMEN

POSTLUDE

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Please bring in paper products for the
Hagersville Food Bank!

Announcements

Tuesday, February 6th: Coffee Time at 9:30am at Springvale. All are welcome!

Friday, February 9th: Coffee time at Hagersville at 10am.

Tuesday, February 13th: Pancake Supper at Hagersville from 4:30-6:30pm. There will be pancakes, ham, sausage, baked beans & a fruit cup. Tickets are \$12.50 for adults, \$5.00 for ages 6-12, under 5 are free. Or take advantage of the family deal (2 adults, 2 children) for \$30. Tickets will be sold at the door.

Friday, February 16th: Scrapbooking setup at Hagersville in the late afternoon/evening, all help appreciated.

Sunday, February 18th: Springvale Annual Meeting after 9:30am worship. Chili & Soup will be provided, please bring a little

Friday, February 23rd: Soup Lunch at Hagersville from 11:30am-1pm. More information to come.

Sunday, February 25th: Hagersville Annual Meeting after worship with potluck lunch to start.

Wednesday, March 6th: Office Board meeting at 10:30am at Springvale.