

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, JANUARY 28th, 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

Marshall Memorial

“Amazing Teacher”

Speak with authority in our lives, Christ.

Speak to us, and to what is in us, so that we might be whole.

Speak to us, with love, with hope, and with strength, so that we might hear you, and know, deep inside, that we are your people, and that you are our God. Let it be so.

OFFERING PRAYER

On my own, what I have to give doesn't amount to much in the light of all you have given to me and in the face of so much need. Put together as a congregation, what we offer you here in love becomes more, not simply added together, but somehow multiplied in its usefulness. We ask you to bless our gifts and with the addition of your blessing, just as it was with the loaves and fishes, there is enough for all.
Amen

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Praise the Lord, you people of God.

**We have come to sing, and laugh,
and shout God's praises for all to hear!**

Listen to the Lord, you people of God.

**We have come to hear God's word,
and ponder the mysteries of God's sacred promises.**

Praise the Lord, you people of God.

Our God is an awesome God, greatly to be praised.

OPENING HYMN: #374 Come and Find the Quiet Centre

- 1 Come and find the quiet centre
in the crowded life we lead,
find the room for hope to enter,
find the frame where we are freed:
clear the chaos and the clutter,
Clear our eyes, that we can see
all the things that really matter,
be at peace, and simply be.
- 2 Silence is a friend who claims us,
cools the heat and slows the pace,
God it is who speaks and names us,
knows our being, face to face,
making space within our thinking,
lifting shades to show the sun,
raising courage when we're shrinking,
Finding scope for faith begun.
- 3 In the Spirit let us travel,
open to each other's pain,
let our loves and fears unravel,
celebrate the space we gain:
there's a place for deepest dreaming,
there's a time for heart to care,
in the Spirit's lively scheming
there is always room to spare!

OPENING PRAYER

God of power and might, you sent prophets to your people, calling us back to your covenant, and teaching us your ways. In the fullness of time, you sent us your Son Jesus, teaching with such authority, that our eyes were opened to see your ways anew. Open our hearts and minds, that we may understand and proclaim your teachings for all to hear. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

ANTHEM**CHILDREN TIME****CHILDREN'S VIDEO****AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

In This Hour, Let Us Celebrate. God is with us, this we believe. For we have seen the signs of grace in every place, in every generation. The beauty of the creation, in all its pristine wonder, is not the only dwelling place of the Creator. This, our God, is born again in cities as well as stables, is found in holy places in the modern market place and sits with us in coffee shops and by the one who hopefully sings a song on the streets on this day.

The Spirit dances on concrete and holds in comfort those who walk with briefcases and shopping bags. The God who is more than we can ever name or know is beside us in every work place and every hidden home of our body, mind and soul.

***CHORUS: #161 "AWESOME GOD"**

Our God is an awesome God, He reigns from heaven above,
With wisdom, pow'r and love, Our God is an awesome God. X2

SCRIPTURE READINGS:**Deuteronomy 18:15-20**

¹⁵The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. ¹⁶For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die." ¹⁷The LORD said to me: "What they say is good. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. ²⁰But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, is to be put to death."

Mark 1:21-28

²¹They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²²The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. ²³Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, ²⁴"What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" ²⁵"Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" ²⁶The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. ²⁷The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him." ²⁸News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

MESSAGE

Mark 1:21-28

Judges, Kings, Priests, Prophets and Authority – oh my!

We have an avid desire for information. We feel that we can deal with all the problems we face if only we can become better informed. And there are a lot of people who want to provide you with information, usually for money. Some will try to tell you the secret of investing in the Markets. Others will try to sell you on a miracle diet. Others will try to share the secrets for happiness. Others will try to predict the future. The problem is that not all sources of information are reliable. Some are downright harmful. Those who want to share their knowledge are more interested in their own profit than yours. Let the consumer of information beware.

Religion is not free from distorted information. In fact, it may be the most unreliable and harmful of all. Religion and spirituality is a huge business. We all want to hear from God. We all want to know what happens when we die. We all miss loved ones who have passed on and wish we could talk to them one more time. We all want to know if there is any purpose in life. Today's secular world leaves a large void in our hearts, and there are those who claim they can fill it. Let the consumer of religious products especially beware. Because there is much misinformation about faith and religion out there. But, there is nothing wrong with the religious questions people ask, but where does one get the truth. Ultimately, truth comes from God who is Truth itself. We

as Christians believe that the Bible is God's spoken truth to us and that God wants us to know this truth. So, as we look at a passage from the Old Testament Book of Deuteronomy today, it helps us to understand what God has to say about this matter.

Up to this point in Deuteronomy, the law has spelled out the role of kings and judges and priests. Each is invested with a distinct kind of institutional authority. However, over time, in the history of Israel and her people, these roles began to take on a rigid function in which "public power structures based on these roles easily became inflexible. They tended to become detached from actual personal needs, and so became unresponsive to the changing religious and social circumstances of the community."

So, reading Israel's history in the book of Deuteronomy shows us how the corrective role of the prophet in the community of faith, as opposed to institutional inflexibility, prophets offered. Looking back on the whole of Hebrew Scriptures, we see how this role played out as intended in later prophets like Isaiah, Ezekiel and Hosea. However, in the context of the book of Deuteronomy, which recounts the history of God's people ahead of their entrance into the promised land, their model of a prophet was someone like Moses. A prophet like Moses is raised up in the community and set apart from it to speak God's word and work into that community and then called to lead by God.

The role of a prophet is to unsettle the settled. The church is unfortunately filled with prophets who love to speak the truth, and some who use words as weapons. God said, I will raise up a Prophet speaks the truth in love. One commentator refers to the role of prophet as laid out in the Deuteronomy as one who will serve as "an authorized arbitrator and a teacher of the law." If that sounds familiar, well, it's supposed to.

In the wisdom of the Lectionary, this Sunday's text from Hebrew Scripture is paired with the story of Jesus preaching in Capernaum. The people listening in the synagogue "were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." Then, after healing a demon-possessed man, they again exclaim, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." Although we are still in the first chapter of Mark at this point, the parallels to and fulfillments of Hebrew Scripture

needn't be lost on us and will only continue to grow as the story of Jesus' life unfolds.

The purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry was teaching, not performing miracles or casting out demons, even though these actions accompanied his teaching and told of God's presence within him. Casting out this particular demon reinforced Jesus' authority to teach. When he taught in the synagogue, he referred to no source of authority beyond himself, unlike the Jewish rabbis who referred to the authority of the Scriptures. Jesus is the source of authority. Jesus claimed to be the Son of God, and the demon reinforced this claim by acknowledging him to be the Son of God. The demon came out because it could not resist Jesus' authority. The Scribes and the Pharisees only recognized a Jesus who threatened their authority.

A Bible teacher who wants to have an impact on his/her students must teach life applications from the Scriptures that they have lived out personally. In other words, the teacher must "practice what he/she preaches." Jesus did that when he cast out the demon.

There are people who capture the interest and attention of their audience every time they speak. These people often speak with authority. Jesus was one of those people. When he spoke, people listened because he spoke the very word of God. When God speaks, there is a ring of genuineness. His authority and power can encourage us to make changes in our lives. An encounter with Jesus and his authority changes everything.

All of us have been given authority to tell others about the Good News of the Gospel. But in saying that ... we need to believe that Jesus is the fulfillment of Moses' prophecy and of the Old Testament as a whole. We need to listen carefully to what Jesus said. We need to see what Jesus did to prove that He is that promised prophet. We need to listen to God who raised up his Son to proclaim the Gospel. We need to hear what Jesus said and discern carefully.

HYMN: #567 Will You Come and Follow Me

- 1 Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

- 2 Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?
- 3 Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?
- 4 Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?
- 5 Christ, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

For all those who fail to recognize prophets, and for prophets whose words go unheeded, we pray for compassion, wisdom, and understanding. For all those who cower in fear of God and thus fail to know intimately the awesome wonder that is the Divine, we pray for compassion, wisdom, and understanding. For all those who are misled by others – well-intentioned or otherwise – in the name of religion, we pray for compassion, wisdom, and understanding. For all those who fear the authority of Christ, and cannot embrace new teaching, we pray for compassion, wisdom, and understanding. For the church as the Body of Christ: prophetic voice, example, teacher, vehicle of God's justice and compassion, we pray for compassion, wisdom, and understanding. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN: #574 Come, Let Us Sing of a Wonderful Love

- 1 Come, let us sing of a wonderful love, tender and true,
tender and true, out of the heart of the Father above,

- streaming to me and to you: wonderful love, wonderful love dwells in the heart of the Father above.
- 2 Jesus the Saviour this gospel to tell joyfully came,
joyfully came, came with the helpless and hopeless to dwell,
sharing their sorrow and shame, seeking the lost, seeking the lost, saving, redeeming at measureless cost.
- 3 Jesus is seeking the wanderers yet; why do they roam?
Why do they roam? Love only waits to forgive and forget;
home, weary wanderers, home! Wonderful love, wonderful love dwells in the heart of the Father above
- 4 Come to my heart, O thou wonderful love! Come and abide,
come and abide, lifting my life till it rises above envy and falsehood and pride: seeking to be, seeking to be lowly and humble, a learner of thee.

SENDING FORTH

Leader: With an authority born of love,
Christ sends us forth
to live the healing we have received,
walk in the wisdom we have been given,
and delight in the awesome wonder of God.
Anyone who loves God is known by God.

All: We go as those who know we are loved.
We go to make God's love known. Amen.

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.

Sunday, February 18th: Springvale Annual Meeting after 9:30am worship.

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

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

