

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, MARCH 30th, 2025**

Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God
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Fourth Sunday of Lent – "Eyes Opened, Paths Changed"

"Seeing our lives through Christ's vision and purpose," encourages us to view our lives from Jesus' perspective rather than our own limited human understanding. It suggests aligning our thoughts, actions, and decisions with Christ's teachings, values, and mission.

OFFERING PRAYER

God of light and love, you have given us eyes to see Your grace and hands to serve in Your name. Bless these gifts, that they may bring healing, hope, and transformation to those in need. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, all who seek God's healing and light!

People: We come to have our eyes opened and our hearts transformed.

Leader: Jesus offers sight to the blind and direction to the lost.

People: We come with open hearts, ready to see and follow Him.

Leader: Let us worship the One who changes lives and leads us into truth!

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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

Gracious and loving God, You are the giver of light and truth. Just as Jesus opened the eyes of the blind man, open our eyes today that we may see Your presence among us. Heal us, change us, and lead us on the path of faith. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

ANTHEM: I Love to Tell The Story Arranged by Anna Laura Page

CHILDREN'S TIME

CHILDREN'S VIDEO

LITANY: Eyes Opened, Paths Changed

Leader: Lord Jesus, You are the light of the world. When we walk in darkness, You open our eyes to see the path before us.

People: Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see Your way clearly.

Leader: When we are lost and uncertain, You guide our steps with truth and wisdom.

People: Lead us, Lord, that we may follow You with faith.

Leader: When doubt clouds our vision and fear holds us back, You remind us of Your presence.

People: Strengthen us, Lord, that we may walk in confidence and trust.

Leader: When we are blinded by pride, selfishness, or the distractions of this world, You call us back to Your path.

People: Humble us, Lord, that we may see with hearts of love and grace.

Leader: When we finally see You for who You are, our lives are forever changed.

People: Transform us, Lord, that we may live as children of light.

Leader: Lord, You have opened our eyes, changed our direction, and given us new purpose.

People: We will walk in Your ways, proclaim Your truth, and follow where You lead.

Leader: Once we were blind, but now we see!

People: Thanks be to God! Amen.

CHORUS: #215 "OPEN OUR EYES"

Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch Him, and say that we love Him.
Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen,
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus. (2 X)

SCRIPTURE READING: John 9: 1-41

Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind

⁹ As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

³ "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ As long

as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

⁶ After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. ⁷ "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

⁸ His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹ Some claimed that he was.

Others said, "No, he only looks like him."

But he himself insisted, "I am the man."

¹⁰ "How then were your eyes opened?" they asked.

¹¹ He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see."

¹² "Where is this man?" they asked him.

"I don't know," he said.

The Pharisees Investigate the Healing

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. ¹⁴ Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. ¹⁵ Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see."

¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath."

But others asked, "How can a sinner perform such signs?" So they were divided.

¹⁷ Then they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened."

The man replied, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸ They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. ¹⁹ "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?"

²⁰ "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. ²¹ But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." ²² His parents

said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ That was why his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. “Give glory to God by telling the truth,” they said. “We know this man is a sinner.”

²⁵ He replied, “Whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!”

²⁶ Then they asked him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

²⁷ He answered, “I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?”

²⁸ Then they hurled insults at him and said, “You are this fellow’s disciple! We are disciples of Moses! ²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don’t even know where he comes from.”

³⁰ The man answered, “Now that is remarkable! You don’t know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. ³² Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”

³⁴ To this they replied, “You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!” And they threw him out.

Spiritual Blindness

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

³⁶ “Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.”

³⁷ Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.”

³⁸ Then the man said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.

³⁹ Jesus said, ^[a] “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.”

⁴⁰ Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?”

⁴¹ Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

MESSAGE: Seeing Our Lives Through Christ’s Vision and Purpose The Power of Sight

One of the greatest blessings in life is the ability to see. Sight allows us to take in the beauty of creation, recognize the faces of loved ones, and navigate our way through the world. But there is another kind of sight that is even more important, spiritual sight, the ability to see God at work in our lives and respond to His truth.

In John 9, we encounter a man who was born blind, living in darkness until the day he met Jesus. This story is not just about physical healing; it is a powerful testimony about how Jesus opens our spiritual eyes and transforms our path. Today, we will explore how this passage speaks to our own journeys of faith.

The story begins with Jesus and His disciples encountering a man blind from birth. The disciples immediately assume that someone must have sinned to cause his blindness:

"Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2).

This was a common belief in ancient times, that suffering was always the result of sin. But Jesus corrects them:

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned... but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him." (John 9:3)

Jesus challenges their assumptions. The man’s blindness was not a punishment, it was an opportunity for God’s glory to be revealed. How often do we assume that struggles in our lives mean God is punishing us? What if, instead of asking “Why is this happening to me?” we asked, “How might God be at work in this situation?”

The real tragedy in this passage is not just the man’s physical blindness, it’s the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees and others who refuse to see Jesus for who He is.

Then, Jesus does something unexpected. He spits on the ground, makes mud with His saliva, and places it on the man’s eyes. Then He tells the man to go wash in the Pool of Siloam.

The man obeys, and when he washes, his sight is restored!

What’s striking is that Jesus heals in a way that requires action from the man. Jesus could have simply spoken and healed him, but instead, He invites the man into the process. From this I see, that

Faith requires action. Sometimes, God's work in our lives isn't instant, it involves a journey of trust and obedience

Have you ever looked at something one way, only to realize later that you were missing the bigger picture? Maybe it was a relationship, a job, or a difficult moment in life. Often, we see through our own limited perspective, shaped by our experiences, struggles, and desires. But Jesus calls us to see life differently, through His vision and purpose.

Instead of viewing hardships as divine punishment, what if we saw them as opportunities for God's power to be revealed?

So, Let call these Blind Spots.....

Blind spots are the unseen areas of our lives ... places where we lack self-awareness, understanding, or spiritual perception. These blind spots can affect how we see ourselves, how we relate to others, and how we experience God. In John 9, the Pharisees had physical sight but were spiritually blind. They thought they understood God, but they failed to recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

For us, blind spots in our relationships can cause misunderstandings, conflicts, or even prevent us from seeing the needs of others. We may assume we know people's intentions or struggles, but without truly listening or being open to different perspectives, we miss the full picture.

For example: A leader may think they are empowering their team, but their team may feel unheard or micromanaged. The solution for this maybe, practicing empathy, asking for feedback, and being open to correction can uncover these blind spots.

Blind spots also exist in our faith journey. We may have misconceptions about God, hold onto beliefs that aren't biblically sound, or fail to see where God is working in our lives. Sometimes, our struggles, traditions, or personal experiences shape our view of God in ways that limit our faith. For example, someone might see God only as a judge and struggle to embrace His grace and love.

When we become aware of them, we can work toward deeper self-awareness, healthier relationships, and a stronger connection with God. It requires humility, a willingness to learn, and a heart open to change. Blind spots are not necessarily faults; they are opportunities for growth. In John 9, Jesus heals a man who was blind from birth, but the deeper lesson goes beyond physical sight. The Pharisees, despite their religious knowledge, were spiritually blind, unable to see Jesus as the Light of the

World. Their certainty in their own understanding kept them from receiving the truth.

Likewise, we all have areas in our lives where we lack awareness ... blinding us might be, assumptions, biases, or habits that hinder our growth. When we become aware of these blind spots, we have a choice: we can resist change like the Pharisees or embrace transformation like the blind man who was healed. Growth requires humility, a willingness to learn, and a heart open to change.

Jesus invites us into a journey of spiritual sight ... one where self-awareness leads to deeper faith, healthier relationships, and a stronger connection with God. When we acknowledge our blind spots and seek His guidance, we move from darkness to light, from inactivity to renewal.

He invites us to see our challenges not as punishment but as moments where His power can shine. And He calls us to examine our hearts, asking Him to reveal the blind spots that keep us from walking fully in His vision and purpose.

On this fourth Sunday of Lent the question I leave you with today.... Will we choose to see?

Prayer: *"Lord, open my eyes. Help me to see my struggles through Your purpose, not as punishment but as opportunities for Your power. Reveal my blind spots so that I may walk in Your truth. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

HYMN: #642 Be Thou My Vision

- 1 Be thou my vision, O joy of my heart;
naught be all else to me save that thou art,
thou my best thought, by day or by night,
waking or sleeping thy presence my light.
- 2 Be thou my wisdom, my calm in all strife;
I ever with thee, and thou in my life;
thou loving parent, thy child may I be,
thou in me dwelling, and I one with thee.
- 3 Be thou my battle shield, sword for the fight
be thou my dignity, thou my delight,
thou my soul's shelter, thou my high tower;
raise thou me heavenward, O power of my power.

- 4 Riches I heed not, nor vain empty praise,
thou mine inheritance, now and always;
thou and thou only, the first in my heart,
great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
- 5 Great God of heaven, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O ruler of all.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader: Gracious and loving God, You see us fully—our strengths, our struggles, our blind spots, and our potential. Teach us to see our lives, our world, and one another through the eyes of Christ. Help us to align our hearts with His purpose and walk in His ways.

People: Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see as You see.

Leader: When we are tempted to view life through the lens of fear, doubt, or selfish ambition, remind us of Christ's vision—one of faith, trust, and sacrificial love. Give us clarity to recognize Your hand at work, even in the moments we do not understand.

People: Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see as You see.

Leader: In our relationships, may we see others with the same compassion and grace that Christ extends to us. Remove the blind spots that cause division, misunderstanding, and indifference. Instead, lead us in the way of reconciliation, kindness, and justice.

People: Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see as You see.

Leader: In times of struggle, may we not focus only on our difficulties but recognize the opportunities for growth, faith, and deeper trust in You. Let us perceive challenges not as obstacles but as pathways to Your transforming work.

People: Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see as You see.

Leader: For those who are hurting, grieving, or feeling lost, may we become the hands and feet of Christ, offering comfort, hope, and love. Where there is brokenness, may we bring healing; where there is despair, may we shine Your light.

People: Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see as You see.

Leader: Lord, as we go forth from this place, let us live with purpose, seeing each moment as an opportunity to serve, love, and glorify You.

May we follow the path Christ has set before us, trusting that Your vision is greater than our own.

People: Open our eyes, Lord, that we may see as You see. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN: Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus (#621 In Hymns for the Family God)

1. O soul, are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There's light for a look at the Savior,
And life more abundant and free!

Refrain:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.

2. Thro' death into life everlasting,
He passed, and we follow Him there;
O'er us sin no more hath dominion--
For more than conqu'rors we are! **R**

3. His Word shall not fail you--He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tell! **R**

SENDING FORTH

Leader: Go forth with eyes opened to God's love, hearts filled with His truth, and paths transformed by His grace.

People: We will walk in the light of Christ! Amen.

CHORAL AMEN

POSTLUDE

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Announcements

Tuesday, April 1st: Coffee Tuesday at Springvale beginning at 9:30am. All are welcome!

Thursday, April 3rd: Springvale UCW will meet in the Sunday School room at 12:30pm. Roll call is an Easter verse or Easter memory.

Wednesday, April 9th: Ham & Turkey Supper at Springvale from 4-6pm. Takeout only. Cost is \$25 for adults and \$12 for children. Text or call Shirley at 905-981-5455 to reserve your tickets.

Sunday, April 13th: Palm Sunday & Communion

Friday, April 18th: Good Friday Joint Service at Hagersville beginning at 10:30am. Join us after worship in the C.E. Wing for fellowship & hot cross buns.

Sunday, April 20th: Easter Sunday. Springvale will host their Easter Breakfast beginning at 8:30am with worship to follow.

Please bring in paper products for the Hagersville Food Bank! ☺

