

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &  
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH  
SUNDAY, MARCH 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024**

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Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God  
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**REGIONAL COUNCIL PRAYER CYCLE**

Copetown

“Corrupting the House of Worship”

**OFFERING PRAYER**

The wisdom of the world  
tells us to hoard what we own, O God,  
while you invite us to share what we have  
with those in need.

Accept our gifts and our offerings for your purposes,  
that we may be your servants in the world.

**PRELUDE AND WELCOME**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: This is the third step on our Lenten Journey.

**P: Be with us, Lord, as we enter this step.**

L: The Lord will be asking us to recognize our selfishness.

**P: It is on this journey that we will face our greed and selfishness**

L: It is on this journey that God will confront us.

**P: Our hearts are ready to receive God.**

L: Come, then, and let us move forward toward the Cross.

**P: Let us faithfully and confidently follow Jesus. AMEN.**

**OPENING HYMN: #343 I Love to Tell the Story**

1 I love to tell the story of unseen things above,  
of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.  
I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;  
it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.

**I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory,  
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.**

2 I love to tell the story; more wonderful it seems  
than all the golden fancies of all our golden dreams.  
I love to tell the story, for some have never heard  
the message of salvation from God's own holy Word. **R**

3 I love to tell the story, for those who know it best  
seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.  
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,  
'twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long. **R**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Lord, we come to you this day with so many things laying claim to our  
lives, our hearts, and our spirits. Open our ears and our hearts to hear  
your words of healing love. Prepare us to be faithful disciples for you.  
For we ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

**CHILDREN' S TIME**

**CHILDREN VIDEO**

**READING FOR OUR LENTEN JOURNEY**

*One Voice:* “Jesus, you have come to the temple, looking neither for  
wealth nor wise ones...”

*Leader:* What did you find, Lord? Have you found those who seek  
position and status rather than serving you? Have you found those who  
are more concerned with the fiscal “bottom line” than being disciples?

*One Voice:* “you only asked me to follow humbly...”

*Leader:* It's interesting, Lord, that you only asked for our commitment  
and humility. You did not say that we had to be persons of distinction or  
importance; that we had to toe the line....you asked for our  
sincerity....and we placed profit above discipleship.

*One Voice:* “O Lord, with your eyes you have searched me, and while smiling, have spoken my name; now my boat’s left on the shoreline behind me; by your side I will seek other seas.”

**People:** You know us, Lord. You know us thoroughly. We are weak, and we always think that you should choose someone more worthy; someone who is better prepared; someone who is more eloquent, than me. Yet, you have smiled, and reached out to us. We can’t turn away. We can’t walk away. we can’t let other things crowd out your words of confidence in me. Help us, Lord, to reach back to you - to be willing to go forth, leaving all the things that have cluttered and blocked our life and our service to you. Let us “fish other seas” with you, serving humbly, joyfully, and confidently.

### LET US PRAY (UNISON)

Patient Lord, we have cluttered the “temples” of our lives with so much unnecessary things that they have blocked out your healing words of hope and mercy. We have been keenly aware of our economic situation and have spent much time and energy worrying about these things. . Forgive us when we have been so preoccupied with these things that we have not listened to your words and followed your ways. Clear away our fears and frustrations. Give us clean hearts and spirits. Help us to be confident in your mercy and transformational love. These things we offer in the name of Jesus, the Christ.

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Rejoice! You are forgiven. Let the clutter of your life fall away and be replaced by the love of God in Christ Jesus. AMEN.

### \*CHORUS: #238 “What A Mighty God We Serve”

What a mighty God we serve! What a mighty God we serve!  
Angels bow before Him, Heaven and earth adore Him;  
What a mighty God we serve. X2

### SCRIPTURE READINGS: John 2:13-22

**John 2:13-22** <sup>13</sup>When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money.

<sup>15</sup>So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts,

both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup>To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" <sup>17</sup>His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me." <sup>18</sup>The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" <sup>19</sup>Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." <sup>20</sup>They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" <sup>21</sup>But the temple he had spoken of was his body. <sup>22</sup>After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

### MESSAGE: Spring Cleaning

When spring arrives, more sunlight brightens your home as the days grow longer, and fresh air blows in once the temperatures warm up enough to open your windows. But all the light and fresh air reveal what you may not have noticed during the dark, cold days of winter: Your house is a mess. It’s not fun to see the clutter and dirt that needs to be cleaned up around your house, but the more light and air that flow in, the more motivated you are to do some spring cleaning.

Spring cleaning can be more than just a chore, however. It can actually be exciting if you use the time to start cleaning up something far greater than your house: your soul. The closer you get to Jesus – the Light of the world – and the more you invite the Holy Spirit to blow the fresh air of His love into your life, the more you become aware of how messy your soul has become. Thankfully, there’s no sin too messy for God to clean up when you follow His divine cleaning plan of confession, repentance, and reconciliation.

Today I want to tell you about a time when Jesus did some spring cleaning. It was time for the annual Passover celebration, so Jesus traveled to Jerusalem. When He arrived, He went to the temple. He couldn’t believe his eyes. There in the temple area he saw people who were selling cattle, sheep, and doves for the people to use as sacrifices in the temple. There were tables set up for money changers so that people could change their money to pay their temple taxes. It looked more like a carnival than a house of worship.

Jesus did not like what he saw. He was so angry that he made a whip from some rope and he drove the cattle and sheep and those who were selling them from the temple. He went to the tables of the money changers and turned them over, scattering coins all over the temple floor. To the ones who were selling the doves he said, “Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market.” Yes, I would say that Jesus did some spring cleaning in that temple.

Without doubt, this is a far cry from what the place of worship should have been, and Jesus wouldn’t have it. Turning heads by his claim of authority, Jesus spoke for God and turned over tables. And central to it all was what he quoted from the Old Testament, from Isaiah and Jeremiah:

“Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? Isaiah 56: 7-8

Jesus believed that the temple was a place that should be set aside for people to draw closer to God. It was not meant to be a place where a person’s sincere desire to worship God should be exploited for profit. With this action Jesus, ended a way of life and thought. The normal practice of sacrificing animals and pigeons for the sins of the people would not be needed now that He had come. He would be the new house in which God’s glory will break forth.

We are now in the season of Lent. It is the time in the church year when we focus on setting priorities in our spiritual lives, gaining some clarity and perspective on what really matters in our Christian faith. Just as driving while distracted can lead us into trouble, distracted discipleship can lead us into dangerous territory. We can be so busy and preoccupied with the church that what our faith and worship are about can become impossible for people to distinguish.

Today, Jesus is still challenged by the darkness in our lives. When we gather to worship, pray and listen to His Word, our minds are filled with earthly concerns. The light of Christ shines in the darkness and draws our thoughts back to Jesus.

Christ enters our lives, forgives our sins and cleanses us so that we can worship properly. We become a cleansed temple. Through Jesus, we have been given forgiveness and freedom. We don’t receive them because we follow detailed and perfect rituals, but through Christ’s gift to us.

As we think about Jesus cleansing the temple, we should also think about some other cleaning that needs to be done. Lent is a time to look inside ourselves and see if there is anything in us that needs to be changed. As, I started this message out, now is the time to start cleaning up something far greater than your house.... Because I know in my faith and maybe yours’s as well, there some areas of your life where Jesus needs to do some ‘spring cleaning’?

**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.

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

Lord, sometimes we have difficulty hearing the story of Jesus cleansing the Temple of those who would lie, cheat, and steal. We always want Jesus to be patient, meek, and mild. But there are many times when bold action is required to cleanse the cancer of greed and avarice from our lives. Lord, help us to remember that Jesus’ patient words often fell upon deaf ears. Remind us that we need to be bold in our faith; first examining our lives and clearing out the pain, greed and fear. Replace our anxieties with confidence in your all-sustaining love and grace. Enable us to put our service to you and your people above our

selfishness. As we reach out to others in need, remind us that we also stand in need of your mercy; for we ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ. AMEN.

**CLOSING HYMN: #579 The Church is Wherever God’s People**

- 1 The church is wherever God's people are praising,  
singing God's goodness for joy on this day.  
The church is wherever disciples of Jesus  
remember his story and walk in his way.
- 2 The church is wherever God's people are helping,  
caring for neighbours in sickness and need.  
The church is wherever God's people are sharing  
the words of the Bible in gift and in deed.

**SENDING FORTH**

Go forth with the Lord at your side, seeking goodness and compassion.  
Bring the words of hope and peace to all whom you meet. Go in peace.

**CHORAL AMEN**

**POSTLUDE**

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Please bring in paper products for the  
Hagersville Food Bank!

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❁Helen’s Treasures is looking for children & adult  
clothing donations. If you have been thinking about  
doing some spring cleaning, keep them in mind for  
your donations. ❁

## Announcements

**Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>:** Coffee Time at 9:30am at Springvale. All are welcome!

**Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>:** Do you love to sing? Come out to the Port Dover Community Sing-Along at Grace United Church upper hall (18 Chapman St. W) at 7pm. This is not karaoke, everyone sings together! This month's music theme covers all the best-known Irish tunes. \$2 donation to cover costs. For info, call Janice at 416-505-1658 or email [janice@ketchen.net](mailto:janice@ketchen.net).

**Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>:** Official Board meeting at 10:30am at Springvale.

**Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>:** Daylight Savings time begins! Don't forget to change your clocks and look forward to brighter days.

**Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>:** Scrapbooking table setup in the late afternoon/evening at Hagersville. All help is appreciated.

**Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup>:** St. Patrick's Day. Wear your green!

**Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Chili Lunch at Hagersville from 11:30am-1pm. Tickets are \$10/person. Takeout Only. Call Susan at 905-768-3729 by March 21st to order ahead.

**Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>:** Good Friday Service at Hagersville at 10:30am. Hot cross buns served afterwards.

