

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st, 2025**

Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God
Ministry of Pastoral Care & Worship: Rev. Peggy Bartlett
Cell: 905-317-5275 Email: info@hsupc.ca
Website: www.hsupc.ca
Church: Hagersville- 905-768-5863 Springvale- 905-768-1501

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Seeing God through a Child's Eyes
God invites us to see Him with childlike trust, joy, and wonder.

OFFERING PRAYER

Generous God,
You give us life, laughter, and love.
Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude,
and use them to build a world where your children are safe,
your love is known, and your joy is shared.
Amen.

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Come, all who are weary, all who are searching, all who are full of questions.

People: We come with open hearts, eager to see God.

Leader: Unless we become like children, we cannot enter the kingdom of God.

People: With joy, wonder, and trust, we come to worship.

All: Let us worship God, who calls us His children.

OPENING 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.

2

**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**

OPENING PRAYER

God of grace and wonder, you welcome us as your children and invite us to trust you with open hearts. Take away our fears, soften our doubts, and renew our joy. May we see you today as children see the world—with amazement, with honesty, and with love. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

ANTHEM

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, We confess that we sometimes forget how to see you with childlike trust. We get caught up in worry, pride, and doubt. Forgive us, Lord, and renew our hearts. Teach us again to laugh, to trust, and to wonder at your love. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear the good news: God's mercies are new every morning. In Christ, we are forgiven, loved, and made new. Thanks be to God!

CHILDREN'S TIME

CHILDREN'S SONG: I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy

1 I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy,
Down in my heart, Down in my heart, Down in my heart;
I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy,
Down in my heart, Down in my heart to stay.

2 I've got the peace that passeth understanding,
Down in my heart, Down in my heart, Down in my heart;
I've got the peace that passeth understanding,
Down in my heart, Down in my heart to stay.

3 I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus,
Down in my heart, Down in my heart, Down in my heart;
I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus,
Down in my heart, Down in my heart to stay.

LITANY: Childlike Eyes

Leader: Lord, open our eyes to see your love.
People: Like children, we will look for you with wonder.
Leader: Open our hearts to trust your care.
People: Like children, we will depend on you.
Leader: Open our lives to share your joy.
People: Like children, we will laugh, sing, and rejoice.
All: Lord, help us to see you through a child's eyes.

SONG: He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

He's got the whole world in his hands
he's got the whole wild world in his hands
He's got the whole wild world in his
hands he's got the whole world in his hands

He's got the little bitty baby in his hands
he's got the little bitty baby in his hands
He's got the little bitty baby in his
hands he's got the whole world in his hands

He's got you and me brother in his
hands he's got you and me sister in his hands
He's got you and me brother in his
hands he's got the whole world in his hands

He's got everybody here in his hands
he's got everybody here in his hands
He's got everybody here in his hands
he's got the whole world in his hands

SCRIPTURE READING: Mark 10:13-16

The Little Children and Jesus

¹³ People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

Matthew 18:1-5

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

² He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. ³ And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

MESSAGE: Seeing God through a Child's Eyes

Have you ever watched a child see something for the very first time? Maybe the sparkle of Christmas lights, the flutter of a butterfly, or the sound of their own laughter? Their eyes widen, their whole face lights up, and suddenly the world feels fresh and new. Children carry a sense of wonder that we, as adults, often forget.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:3, "*Unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*" At first, that sounds strange. Does He want us to be childish—immature or naive? Of course not. What Jesus is pointing to is the gift of being childlike, to be trusting, joyful, curious, open.

Think about a child who leaps into their parent's arms. They don't stop to analyze: What if they drop me? What if their arms aren't strong enough? They just jump ... because they trust.

God invites us to that kind of trust. To lean into His arms, even when we can't see the whole path ahead. In our adult lives, we tend to overthink, to worry about "what ifs," to hold back in fear. But faith is a leap, a trust that God is there, ready to catch us.

Maybe you've had moments when life felt uncertain, and yet you sensed God holding you steady. That's childlike faith, believing not because you've figured everything out, but because you trust the One who loves you.

Think about this....Children laugh freely. They don't worry if they laugh too loud, or if their dance looks silly. Their joy is unfiltered, bubbling up from the heart.

As adults, we often weigh ourselves down with burdens, worries about tomorrow, pressures of work, regrets from the past. Joy gets pushed aside. But God calls us to rediscover joy, in the rising of the sun, in the sound of music, in the kindness of a friend, even in the quiet moments of peace.

When we worship with childlike joy, our hearts open wide. We see God not only in the big miracles but in the small blessings, the smell of fresh bread, the warmth of a hug, the beauty of creation. Joy lifts our eyes beyond our struggles and reminds us that God is present, even here, even now.

And you know that children are endlessly curious. They ask "*Why?*" a hundred times a day. They look up at the stars with awe. They see miracles in ordinary things, like a puddle to splash in, a dandelion to blow into the wind.

God wants us to hold on to that wonder. The world is full of His fingerprints, but we miss them if we rush too quickly or let cynicism cloud our view. Wonder slows us down and opens our eyes to the holy in the ordinary.

The truth is, when we lose our sense of wonder, we lose part of our connection to God. But when we look at the world with childlike eyes, even the simplest things, bread and wine at the table, water poured in baptism, a candle's flame, become reminders of God's love and presence.

To see God through a child's eyes is to live with trust, joy, and wonder. It means setting down our fear and picking up faith. It means laughing again, even when life is heavy. It means pausing long enough to see the holy hidden in plain sight.

Remember everyone that the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. So may we learn to trust again, to laugh again, and to wonder again. May we see God not just with grown-up reason, but with childlike eyes, wide open to love.

Amen

HYMN: Can A Little Child like Me

1. Can a little child like me
Thank the Father fittingly?
Yes, oh yes! be good and true,
Faithful, kind, in all you do;
Love the Lord, and do your part;
Learn to say with all your heart,
- o *Refrain:*
Father, we thank Thee,
Father, we thank Thee,
Father in Heaven, we thank Thee.
2. For the fruit upon the tree
For the birds that sing of Thee,
For the earth in beauty dressed,
Father, mother, and the rest,
For Thy precious, loving care,
For Thy bounty everywhere,
3. For the sunshine warm and bright,
For the day and for the night,
For the lessons of our youth—
Honor, gratitude, and truth,
For the love that met us here,
For the home and for the cheer,
4. For our comrades and our plays,
And our happy holidays,
For the joyful work and true
That a little child might do,
For our lives but just begun,
For the great gift of Thy Son,

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Loving God, you welcome us as your children, and you invite us to trust you with open hearts. Today we lift our prayers before you.

We pray for children everywhere, those who live in safety and love, and those who face hunger, fear, or neglect. Surround them with your care, bless them with joy, and raise up communities to nurture and protect them.

We pray for parents and caregivers, for all who guide and support children. Give them wisdom, strength, and patience. Remind them that their love shapes the next generation and reflects your love for us.

We pray for those who have lost their sense of joy, those weighed down by grief, anxiety, or despair. Restore their spirits, O God, and renew in them the gift of laughter, hope, and peace.

We pray for communities in need, places broken by poverty, division, or violence. Bring healing where there is pain, unity where there is conflict, and light where there is darkness.

We pray for your church, O God. Make us people of wonder and trust, willing to see your presence in simple things and ready to follow you with childlike faith.

Lord, help us to love as you love, and to see as children see, with joy and hope. In Jesus who taught us to pray saying....

LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN: #357 Tell Me the Stories of Jesus

1 Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear;
things I would ask him to tell me if he were here;
scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

2 First let me hear how the children stood round his knee;
and I shall fancy his blessing resting on me;
words full of kindness, deeds full of grace,
all in the love-light of Jesus' face.

3 Tell me, in accents of wonder, how rolled the sea,
tossing the boat in a tempest on Galilee;
and how the Master, ready and kind,
chided the billows, and hushed the wind.

4 Into the city I'd follow the children's band,
waving a branch of the palm-tree high in my hand;
one of his heralds, yes, I would sing
loudest hosannas! Jesus is King!

5 Show me that scene in the garden of bitter pain;
and of the cross where my Saviour for me was slain.
Sad ones or bright ones, so that they be
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

SENDING FORTH

Leader: Go now with childlike trust, with laughter in your heart, and wonder in your eyes.

People: We go to see God's love in all things.

Leader: May the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the joy of the Spirit go with you always.

CHORAL AMEN

POSTLUDE

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Announcements

Thursday, September 25th: Scrapbooking table setup at Hagersville at 4pm. All help is appreciated.

Sunday, September 28th: The Ryerse Jazz Singers will be performing at 2pm in the sanctuary. Join us to share in the love of music while raising money for the C.E. Wing floor. Free will offering.

Sunday, September 28th: Springvale Anniversary joint service beginning at 11am. Gary & Shirley Teal will be speaking on their mission work in Africa. Lunch to follow.

Tuesday, September 30th: Turkey Supper at Springvale from 4pm-6pm. Takeout only. Adults are \$25, ages 12 and under are \$10. For tickets call Barb at 905-768-3910 or Betty at 905-537-4188.

Sunday, October 19th: Hagersville United 156th Anniversary service & the town of Hagersville 150th special service at 2pm with guest speaker Rev. Douglas Mitchell. More details to come.

Wednesday, November 12th: Official board meeting at Springvale at 1:30pm. Moved from Oct. 15th.

Wednesday, November 12th: Unified Board meeting at Springvale at noon. Please bring lunch with you.

Please bring your paper products for the Hagersville Food Bank!

