

HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25th, 2026

Ministry of Caring: The Whole People of God

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"157 Years of Faith ... The Church That Love Built"

*Celebrating Our Past, Giving Thanks for Our Present, and Trusting
God with Our Future.*

OFFERING PRAYER

Loving God, bless these gifts and the hands that have offered them. May
they help us continue the work begun so many years ago, sharing your
love, welcoming your people, and bringing hope to our community.
Amen.

PRELUDE & WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: For 157 years, God's people have gathered in this place.

People: We give thanks for the faith that brought us here.

Leader: Through changing times, celebrations, struggles, and new
beginnings,

People: God's love has remained constant.

Leader: We remember those who built, served, taught, sang, prayed, and
loved.

People: We are grateful for the faithful footsteps that came before us.

Leader: Today we celebrate the church we are.

People: A family of faith, friendship, hope, and love.

Leader: And together we look toward tomorrow.

All: With grateful hearts and joyful voices, let us worship the God who
has been with us through every generation!

OPENING HYMN: Pg. 806 O God, Our Help in Ages Past

1 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast,
and our eternal home:

2 under the shadow of thy throne
thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is thine arm alone,
and our defence is sure

3 Before the hills in order stood,
or earth received its frame,
from everlasting thou art God,
to endless years the same.

4 A thousand ages, in thy sight,
are like an evening gone,
short as the watch that ends the night
before the rising sun.

5 Time like an ever-rolling stream
soon bears us all away;
we fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the opening day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guide while troubles last,
and our eternal home.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, Today our hearts are filled with gratitude.
We thank you for 157 years of faith, fellowship, and service in this
community. We thank you for the vision of those early settlers who
believed that a place of worship was important enough to build, even
when life was difficult and resources were few. We thank you for the
generations who followed, for their sacrifices, their generosity, their
prayers, and their love. We thank you for the laughter that has filled this
church, the tears that have been shared, the friendships that have grown,
and the countless lives that have been touched.

And we thank you that your work among us is not finished.
As we remember yesterday, celebrate today, and look toward tomorrow, remind us that the church is not simply bricks, windows, pews, and a roof. The church is your people, gathered together in love. Bless our worship this morning. May the music lift our spirits, the memories warm our hearts, and your presence remind us that we are part of something much greater than ourselves. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

ANTHEM

A JOURNEY THROUGH 157 YEARS

Part One: Humble Beginnings “A Dollar and a Dream” (1847–1881)

Every great story has a beginning.

And the story of Hagersville United Church began long before there was a beautiful sanctuary, an organ, or even a proper church building.

Between 1847 and 1850, early settlers gathered for worship in a little log schoolhouse situated between what we now know as Hagersville and Ballsville, near the location of Hewitt's Dairy. There were no fancy pews. No sound systems. No PowerPoint presentations.

And certainly no one asking the minister to make sure the microphone was turned on! But they had something much more important. They had faith. They had one another. And they had a desire to worship God. During the 1860s, Hagersville was part of a much larger Methodist circuit, with ministers travelling between several communities.

Can you imagine the travelling those early ministers did?

No heated cars, no GPS, and no stopping at Tim Hortons for a double-double! And because the parsonage was located in Nanticoke, ministers often stopped at Hager's Roadhouse when they came to preach every second Sunday. Then came the year 1869. Charles Hager deeded a plot of land to the Wesleyan Methodists for the grand sum of one dollar! One dollar!

Now, I don't know what you can buy for a dollar these days, but I can assure you it isn't a piece of property in downtown Hagersville!

And yet, that single dollar helped make possible something that would bless generations of people. That same year, the first portion of the church was built.

In 1873, the Reverend T. D. Pearson became the first minister in charge. Among the pioneer families were the Hagers and the Hallbrooks, who occupied square pews on either side of the minister.

Now, I wonder whether those were considered the best seats in the house, or whether everyone else was simply happy to sit a little farther away! And we must remember Chief Herkimer, a church member known throughout the area for his beautiful singing voice. He was the first to teach singing in the village. Music has been part of this congregation's story from the very beginning.

By 1881, the church had grown enough that a new wing was added, creating a cross-shaped building and providing more room for worshippers. From a little log schoolhouse to a growing congregation, God was already doing something wonderful.

And the story was only beginning.

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.

Part Two: “Growing, Changing, and Standing Strong” (1891–1925)

As the years passed, the church continued to grow and change.

In 1891, the large circuit was reorganized, and Springvale remained connected with Hagersville. And isn't it wonderful that, all these years later, Hagersville and Springvale are still worshipping together?

Our congregations have shared a great deal of history, and today we continue that friendship and ministry. In 1895, further changes formally established the Hagersville–Springvale Charge. In 1904, renovations were made to the basement. But in 1909, a fire caused extensive damage, making major repairs necessary.

Now, I'm sure that was a heartbreaking time for the congregation.

But those faithful people didn't give up. They repaired, rebuilt, and continued. And during that period, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hager and Mr. and Mrs. William Harris presented the beautiful memorial window along the side of the church. What a wonderful reminder that even after difficult times, beauty and hope can emerge.

Then, between 1914 and 1916, during the ministry of the Reverend E. L. Flagg, a new pipe organ was installed to replace the old hand-pumped organ. I imagine whoever had been responsible for pumping that old organ was especially grateful!

In 1923, a new Methodist parsonage was built, officially opening on December 12. And then came another significant milestone.

In 1925, with Church Union, the congregation became part of the newly formed United Church of Canada. The name may have changed, the building had changed, and the world around them was certainly changing. But one thing remained. Their faith in God.

And their commitment to one another.

HYMN: #331 The Church's One Foundation

1 The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the word:
from heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

2 Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth,
her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
one holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.

3 'Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war
she waits the consummation of peace for evermore;
till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blessed,
and the great Church victorious shall be the Church at rest.

4 Yet she on earth hath union with God, the Three in one,
and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee.

Part Three The Story Continues “From Generation to Generation” (1951–2026)

Of course, the story of Hagersville United Church didn't end with Church Union in 1925. Not by a long shot! Because just like any family home, a church needs a little attention now and then.

And sometimes, a little renovation turns into something much bigger!

In 1951, a beautiful new front entrance was added to the church.

And in 1952, the Almas Memorial Window was presented and installed in that entrance. A new chancel was also added, and the entire church was redecorated, giving the sanctuary a Romanesque-style appearance. But as anyone who has ever owned an older building knows, the work is never quite finished!

By 1965, the congregation was once again rolling up its sleeves.

Major renovations began throughout the interior, including the addition of a new chancel. And the installation of a beautiful ceiling by the Nixon Brothers. On Sunday, November 14, 1965, special rededication services were held, with the Reverend H. A. Bagnall as guest speaker.

The beautiful Nativity Memorial Window, installed by George E. Cowan, became another lasting reminder of the generosity and faith of those who loved this church. And isn't that something worth remembering? These beautiful windows are much more than coloured glass. They are reminders of people. People who worshipped here. People who loved this church. People who wanted to leave something beautiful for the generations who would follow. Then came a very special year. In 1969 Hagersville United Church turned 100! During the ministry of Reverend Martin Rule, the congregation celebrated its centennial in October.

The Moderator of the United Church of Canada, the Reverend Dr. McClure, was the guest speaker. There were special worship services, refreshments, and even an anniversary cake made to look like the church itself!

During that same year, the Scatter Memorial Window was installed, adding another beautiful piece to the church's history.

One hundred years of faith. One hundred years of music, of people gathering together in God's name. But the story wasn't finished. Not even close! The years continued to pass. Ministers came and went. Children grew up, families changed, and new generations found their way through these doors.

From 1997 to 2006, the Reverend Warren Schell served this congregation, sharing in its worship, ministry, and community life. And then, in 2007, I had the privilege of becoming part of this wonderful church family. Now, when I first arrived, I certainly didn't imagine that nearly nineteen years later I would still be standing here, celebrating 157 years of this congregation's history! And I have to say, you've certainly kept me busy! But what a blessing it has been. Because over these years, I have come to understand that the greatest treasure of Hagersville United Church isn't found in the beautiful windows, the sanctuary, or even the wonderful history we celebrate today.

It is found in the people. In the friendships. In the laughter. In the way people come together when someone needs help. In the willingness to try something new, even when we aren't quite sure how it's going to turn out! And in the love that continues to make this church a home for so many. Then, in 2019, we reached another wonderful milestone. Our 150th anniversary!

One hundred and fifty years since that first church was built on land purchased for just one dollar. Former minister Reverend Warren Schell returned to share in that special celebration. And once again, the congregation gathered to remember, to give thanks, and to celebrate the faithfulness of God. And now, here we are in 2026. One hundred and fifty-seven years! And what a journey it has been. From a little log schoolhouse to this beautiful sanctuary. From a hand-pumped organ to the music we enjoy today. From ministers travelling by horse and buggy to worship services with microphones, computers, and slideshows! And from those first pioneering families to the wonderful church family

gathered here this morning. So much has changed. And yet, so much remains the same. We still gather to worship. We still sing the hymns of faith. We still pray for one another. We still celebrate life's joys and support one another through its sorrows.

And we still believe that God has a purpose for this congregation.

Over the last few years, our church family has grown in wonderful and sometimes unexpected ways. With the closing of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, we have had the privilege of welcoming many of its members into our congregation, and then a couple of years later with much pleasure the members of the Assembly of Friends joined us.

And what a blessing that has been!

Because a church isn't simply about the people who have always been here. It's about making room for those who are looking for a place to belong. And every person who joins us brings new gifts, new friendships, and new stories that become part of our own.

Today, that purpose continues through our worship, our fellowship, our outreach into the community, and our Sunday School Breakfast Club, where another generation of children is discovering friendship, kindness, and God's love.

And I can't help but wonder what those early pioneers would think if they could see us today. I think they would be amazed by some of the changes. But I also think they would smile.

Because the little seed of faith they planted all those years ago is still growing. And perhaps that's the greatest anniversary gift we can give to those who came before us. To continue what they started. To keep the doors open. To keep the welcome warm. To keep the music playing. And to keep sharing God's love with our neighbours. Because, friends, after 157 years, we are not simply celebrating a church that was. We are celebrating a church that IS! A church with a history to treasure. A family of faith to celebrate. And a future still waiting to be written. And I believe, with all my heart, that God isn't finished with Hagersville United Church yet! Thanks be to God! Amen.

HYMN: Pg 820-821 Psalm 100 – Make a Joyful Noise

Make a joyful noise all the earth!

Worship your God with gladness.

Make a joyful noise all the earth.

Come to this place with a song!

- 1 Know that your God has made you.
Know it's to God we belong.
And come to this place with joyfulness and praise.
Worship your God with a song! **R**
- 2 Enter these gates, thanks giving.
Enter these courts with praise.
Sing thanks to your God and bless the holy Name.
Worship your God with a song! **R**
- 3 Ages through endless ages,
seasons of endless years,
the love of our Maker ever shall endure.
Worship your God with a song! **R**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Hebrews 12:1–2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. The message is simple: We honour those who walked before us, we find strength in Jesus who walks beside us, and we continue the journey of faith for those who will come after us. Faith is not about how fast we run, but about continuing the journey with God, one faithful step at a time.

1 Corinthians 3:6–9 — Paul reminds us that some plant, others water, but God gives the growth.

⁶ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. ⁹ For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building.

REFLECTION: "They Planted the Seeds ... We Carry the Story"

One hundred and fifty-seven years! That's a lot of Sundays.
A lot of sermons. A lot of hymns. And probably more church potluck dinners than anyone could ever count!

As I look around this beautiful sanctuary today, I can't help but think about all the people who have sat in these pews before us. Some of their names we know. Some are remembered in windows, plaques, and historical records. And some have long since been forgotten. But every one of them helped write the story of this church. When Charles Hager gave that piece of land for one dollar back in 1869, I wonder if he ever imagined that 157 years later, people would still be gathering here to worship God.

And of course, we can't tell the story of Hagersville United Church without remembering the story of Hagersville itself. Because our town was built on hard work, determination, and faith. Hagersville was a railway town. The trains brought people looking for new beginnings. They brought businesses, lumber, and building materials to build homes, shops, and churches. There was the gypsum plant, the quarries, and the many industries that provided work for families. And as the town grew, so did its churches. In fact, Hagersville had six churches!

Now, I suspect there might have been a little friendly competition between them. Perhaps over who had the best choir, the biggest Sunday School, or the finest church supper! And I wouldn't be surprised if a few people chose their church based on who made the best pies!

But those churches were about much more than Sunday worship.

They were places where friendships grew, families found support, and faith was passed from one generation to the next. The railway helped build the town, but the churches helped build the community. And that brings me to Paul's words in our scripture today:

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth." — 1 Corinthians 3:6

Isn't that a beautiful description of our church? Those early pioneers planted the seeds. They gave what they could, built what they could, and trusted God with the future. And generation after generation, others came along to water those seeds. And through it all, God continued to give the growth. But growth isn't always measured by how many people are sitting in the pews. Sometimes it's a child discovering that church is a place where they belong. Sometimes it's a lonely person finding friendship. Sometimes it's someone receiving a meal, a kind word, or a little hope when they need it most. And that is what makes a church truly special. The greatest legacy of Hagersville United Church isn't its age. It's its love.

And perhaps that is our greatest responsibility today. Not simply to preserve what those before us built, but to continue what they began. To keep planting seeds of kindness. To keep welcoming new faces. To keep sharing God's love. And to remember that the story of this church isn't finished. You know, those old railway tracks that helped build Hagersville remind us of something. A railway is always leading somewhere. It connects the past with the future. And so does our faith. Today we give thanks for yesterday. We celebrate today. And we place tomorrow in God's hands. Because after 157 years, God isn't finished with Hagersville United Church yet! We still have songs to sing, stories to share, people to welcome, and love to give. And just like those early trains that helped build our town, we are still moving forward ... carrying the faith of yesterday, the love of today, and the hope of tomorrow. Thanks be to God. Amen.

ANTHEM

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Gracious God, Today we thank you for all the generations who have called Hagersville United Church their spiritual home. For those who first gathered in a little log schoolhouse. For those who built this sanctuary. For those who worked through difficult times, who repaired and rebuilt, and who never lost sight of their faith. We thank you for every minister who has preached your Word, every musician who has shared their gifts, every Sunday School teacher who has encouraged a child, and every volunteer who has offered their time and talents. We remember with love those who are no longer with us. Their voices may no longer fill this sanctuary, but their faithfulness remains part of who we are. We thank you for the congregation of today. For the friendships, the laughter, the fellowship, and the many ways your love continues to be shared. And we pray for the future. Help us to be courageous enough to embrace change, wise enough to honour our history, and loving enough to welcome everyone who comes through our doors. We pray for our community, for those who are lonely, those who are grieving, those who are struggling, and those who simply need to know someone cares. May this church continue to be a place of comfort, hope, and belonging. And may the generations yet to come find here what so many have found before them:

Faith. Friendship. And the never-ending love of God. We offer these prayers in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray together, saying...
The Lord's Prayer

CLOSING HYMN: #422 God Be With You Till We Meet Again

1 God be with you till we meet again;
loving counsels guide, uphold you,
with a shepherd's care enfold you;
God be with you till we meet again.

Refrain:

**Till we meet, till we meet,
till we meet at Jesus' feet;
till we meet, till we meet,
God be with you till we meet again.**

2 God be with you till we meet again;
unseen wings protecting hide you,
daily manna still provide you;
God be with you till we meet again. **[Refrain]**

3 God be with you till we meet again;
when life's perils thick confound you,
put unfailing arms around you;
God be with you till we meet again. **[Refrain]**

4 God be with you till we meet again;
keep love's banner floating o'er you,
smite death's threatening wave before you;
God be with you till we meet again. **[Refrain]**

ANNIVERSARY BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

As we leave this place today, may we carry with us the memories of those who came before us, the joy of those who walk beside us, and the hope of those who will follow. May the God who guided the first settlers, who blessed the builders, who strengthened the generations, and who continues to walk with us today, bless us with courage, compassion, laughter, and love. And may Hagersville United Church continue to be a light in this community for many years to come.

For the God who was faithful yesterday is with us today and will guide us into tomorrow. Go in peace, go in joy, and go knowing that our story is still being written.

GRACE WILL BE SHARED FOLLOWED BY...

GO NOW IN PEACE

Go now in peace, never be afraid
 God will go with you each hour of every day
 Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true
 Know He will guide you in all you do
 Go now in love and show you believe
 Reach out to others so all the world can see
 God will be there watching from above
 Go now in peace, in faith, and in love
 Amen. Amen. Amen.

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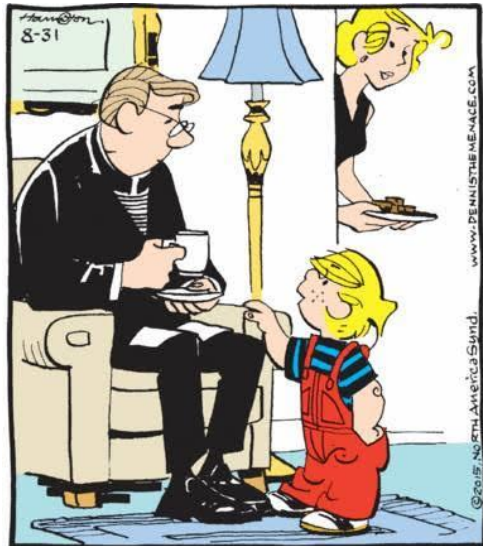
Hagersville Announcements

Sunday, November 8th:
 Remembrance Service.

Tuesday, November 17th:
 Church Council meeting at
 6:30pm

Wednesday, November 18th:
 Unified Board at 12pm at
 Springvale, Official Board
 meeting at Springvale at
 1:30pm.

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



"SO, PASTOR, YOU WORK SUNDAYS AND THE
 OTHER SIX DAYS, YOU JUST HANG OUT?"