

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, JUNE 21st, 2026**

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Happy Father's Day

“We don't always know where the road will lead. Thankfully, we have a guide who never gets lost. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, knows the way and promises to walk beside us every step of the journey.”

OFFERING PRAYER

Generous God, Just as those faithful circuit riders gave their time, energy, and devotion to sharing the Good News, we offer these gifts as a sign of our gratitude and commitment. Bless these offerings and use them to strengthen Your church, support those in need, and share Christ's love throughout our community and beyond. May what we give today help carry the Gospel forward for generations to come. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

PRELUDE AND WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: From the wide-open fields and country roads, God calls us together.

People: We come to worship the One who guides our journey.

Leader: Like the circuit riders of old, we travel through life's valleys and hills.

People: God's presence goes with us every step of the way.

Leader: Today we give thanks for fathers and for all who have guided us in faith.

People: We gather with grateful hearts to worship God.

OPENING HYMN: #395 Come in, Come in and Sit Down

REFRAIN: Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.

- 1 You know the reason why you came,
yet no reason can explain;
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,
for we are a part of the family. **R**
- 2 God is with us in this place,
like a mother's warm embrace.
We're all forgiven by God's grace,
for we are a part of the family. **R**
- 3 There's life to be shared in the bread and the wine;
we are the branches, Christ is the vine.
This is God's temple, it's not yours or mine,
but we are a part of the family. **R**
- 4 There's rest for the weary and health for us all;
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.
So come in and worship and answer the call,
for we are a part of the family. **R**

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, Today we gather with grateful hearts, giving thanks for the fathers, grandfathers, mentors, neighbours, and friends who have helped guide us along life's trail. We thank You for those who taught us right from wrong, who showed us kindness, perseverance, and faith.

As we remember the circuit-riding preachers who carried Your Word across fields, forests, and country roads, remind us that the Gospel is still moving from heart to heart today.

Bless this time of worship. Open our ears to hear Your voice, our hearts to receive Your love, and our spirits to follow where You lead. May we leave this place strengthened for the journey ahead.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd and faithful guide, we pray.

ANTHEM**CHILDREN'S TIME****CHILDREN'S VIDEO****FATHER'S DAY LITANY:** Faith on the Frontier**Leader:** How many cowboys does it take to fix a fence?**People:** Usually, one more than you actually have!**Leader:** How many fathers does it take to complete a project?**People:** Depends how many trips to the hardware store are required!**Leader:** How many circuit-riding preachers does it take to spread the Gospel?**People:** Just one willing servant and a faithful horse!**Leader:** How many Christians does it take to share God's love?**People:** Every one of us!**Leader:** What do we do when the trail is rough?**People:** We trust the One who leads us.**Leader:** What do we do when we lose our way?**People:** We follow the Good Shepherd.**Leader:** What do we do when the load feels too heavy?**People:** We bring our burdens to Christ.**Leader:** What do we do when we stumble and fall?**People:** God's grace picks us up again.**Leader:** Who rides with us through every valley and every storm?**People:** Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Friend.**Leader:** And what good news do we carry wherever we go?**People:** That God loves us, Christ died for us, Christ lives for us, and nothing can separate us from the love of God!**Leader:** Then let us ride on in faith.**People:** Following Christ, sharing hope, and trusting God's promises all the way home. Amen.**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**

SCRIPTURE**The Circuit Rider's Psalm 23**

The Lord is my Guide and my Companion; I shall not lose my way.
He leads me along dusty roads and winding trails, through fields and
forests, over hills and across rivers. He gives me strength when the
journey is long and courage when the road is uncertain. He refreshes my
spirit beside quiet streams and beneath the shade of tall trees. He
reminds me why I ride, and renews my calling to share His love.
Even when storms gather, or the path grows rough and lonely,
I will not be afraid, for You travel with me. Your presence comforts me,
and Your promises give me peace. You prepare places of welcome
along the journey—a farmhouse table, a country church, a friendly face
at the door. There I find fellowship and grace. You fill my heart with joy
and bless me beyond measure. Your goodness travels beside me
through every mile and every season. And when my riding days are
finished, and my work upon these roads is done, I will rest in Your
eternal home, and dwell in the house of the Lord forever. **Amen.**

John 10:11-14**"I am the Good Shepherd."**

- ¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the
sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep.
So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs
away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs
away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.
¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.

REFLECTION: "Following the Trail"

Long before Hagersville and Springvale had settled ministers, faithful Methodist circuit riders travelled these roads. They crossed muddy concessions, rode through storms, and stopped wherever people gathered. Sometimes they preached in schoolhouses, homes, barns, or beneath the open sky. They came because they believed that no community was too small and no soul too far away for God's love. They did not have microphones. They did not have church buildings in every community. They did not have comfortable offices or modern conveniences.

What they did have was faith. They believed that people needed to hear the Good News. They believed that every person mattered to God. They believed that even in the smallest settlement, on the most remote farm, someone might need a word of hope, a prayer, a hymn, or a reminder that God had not forgotten them.

In many ways, those circuit riders remind us of the image Jesus gave when He said, "I am the Good Shepherd."

A shepherd knows the paths. A shepherd walks with the flock. A shepherd watches over those who are weary, vulnerable, or lost. A shepherd does not abandon the sheep when the road becomes difficult. Instead, the shepherd stays with them and guides them safely home. That same image echoes through the words of Psalm 23.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."

Those words remind us that God is not a distant ruler watching from afar. God is a guide who walks beside us. God leads us beside still waters and through green pastures. God restores our souls when life has worn us down.

Even when we travel through dark valleys, God does not send us ahead alone. God walks with us.

The circuit riders understood that truth. Every mile they rode was a reminder that they travelled under God's care. Every river crossed and every storm endured was another opportunity to trust the Shepherd who was leading them.

Many fathers have lived in much the same way.

Not perfect. Not famous. Not wealthy. But steady.

Showing up when they were needed. Providing for their families.

Teaching right from wrong. Protecting those they loved.

Encouraging their children to keep going when life became difficult.

Like a trail guide on the frontier, fathers often help point the way forward. They teach us how to work hard, how to face challenges, how to treat others with kindness, and how to keep moving forward when the road becomes rough.

Of course, fathers are human. They make mistakes. They sometimes lose their way. Every father falls short from time to time.

That is why today we give thanks not only for fathers, but for the One who never fails.

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. When earthly guides stumble, He remains faithful. When roads become uncertain, He shows the way.

When burdens grow heavy, He walks beside us. When fear surrounds us, He reminds us that we are never alone. The heroes of old western stories often rode off into the sunset by themselves. Their adventures ended with a lonely figure disappearing over the horizon. But the Christian story is different. We never ride alone. The Good Shepherd rides beside us through every season of life. Through joy and sorrow, success and failure, smooth roads and rough trails, Christ remains our companion and guide. And one day, when our journey is complete, the Shepherd who has walked beside us all along will lead us safely home. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN: #657 He Leadeth Me

1 He leadeth me: O blessed thought!
 O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
 Whate'er I do, where'er I be,
 still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

**Refrain: He leadeth me, he leadeth me;
 by his own hand he leadeth me:
 his faithful follower I would be,
 for by his hand he leadeth me.**

2 Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom,
 sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
 by waters calm, o'er troubled sea,
 still 'tis his hand that leadeth me. **Refrain**

- 3 Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine,
nor ever murmur nor repine;
content, whatever lot I see,
since 'tis my God that leadeth me. **Refrain**
- 4 And when my task on earth is done,
when by thy grace the victory's won,
even death's cold wave I will not flee,
since God through Jordan leadeth me. **Refrain**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of the open prairie and the winding road,
Today we give thanks for all those who have travelled ahead of us and
helped shape our lives. We give thanks for fathers and grandfathers.
For their hard work and sacrifices. For lessons taught around kitchen
tables, in workshops, on farms, in trucks, and on front porches.
We give thanks for mentors, teachers, neighbours, coaches, and friends
who encouraged us when we needed guidance and believed in us when
we doubted ourselves.
We remember today those whose fathers are no longer with them.
We pray for those who carry grief on this Father's Day. May they find
comfort in treasured memories and in Your everlasting love.
We pray for fathers who are struggling with responsibilities, worries,
health concerns, or family challenges. Grant them wisdom, patience,
strength, and hope. We give thanks for the faithful servants who came
before us, the circuit-riding preachers, church builders, Sunday School
teachers, choir members, and volunteers whose faith helped build
communities like ours.
May we continue their work with courage and dedication.
We pray for our church, our community, our nation, and our world.
Where there is division, bring understanding. Where there is loneliness,
bring friendship. Where there is fear, bring peace. Where there is
despair, bring hope. And now, trusting in Your goodness and mercy, we
join our voices together in the prayer Jesus taught us...

LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN: #424 May the God of Hope Go With Us
May the God of hope go with us every day,
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
bringing light and hope to every land and race.

**[Refrain:] Praying, let us work for peace;
singing, share our joy with all;
working for a world that's new,
faithful when we hear Christ's call.**

May the God of healing free the earth from fear,
freeing us for peace, both treasured and pursued.
May the God of love keep our commitment clear
to a world restored, to human life renewed. **[Refrain]**

FATHER'S DAY BLESSING

May your trails be guided by God's wisdom.
May your burdens be lightened by God's strength.
May your homes be filled with laughter.
May your hearts be filled with peace.
And may the Good Shepherd lead you safely wherever the trail may
take you.

CHORAL AMEN

POSTLUDE

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Announcements

Tuesday, June 23rd: Annual Strawberry Supper at Springvale from
4-6pm. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$10 for children. Tickets are
limited and this is a takeout only event. To reserve your ticket please
call 905-768-3910 or 905-537-4188.

Tuesday, June 23rd: Coffee Tuesday at Springvale will be postponed
this week due to the setup for the Strawberry Supper.

Sunday, June 28th: Join us at the Waterford Legion Pavilion at 2pm to
celebrate the life of Debbie Kozicki. There will be a memorial service
followed by a gathering with refreshments.

July 27th-31st: Join us this year for VBS at Springvale United as we learn about God's Creatures Great & Small from 9am-12pm. Ages 4-11 welcome to participate, and we welcome ages 12+ to join in as helpers. Bring your sense of wonder, and maybe your favourite stuffed animal friend, as we discover how God's love is woven through every wing, paw & footprint. Email Emily at info@hsupc.ca with your child's information to register.

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History about the Circuit Riding Preacher

What we do know is that Springvale began as a Methodist congregation, and like many rural churches in Upper Canada, it was originally served by travelling Methodist ministers who rode circuits between settlements. Early services were held outdoors under trees and later in a schoolhouse that served as both a school and a place of worship. One of the earliest recorded ministers was W. Tomlin, who served as both minister and teacher. The history also notes that the Methodist tradition provided living quarters for an assistant minister in the community, reflecting the circuit-rider system.

Likewise, Hagersville began as a Methodist Church before joining the United Church of Canada in 1925. Like Springvale, it would have been part of a Methodist circuit system in which ministers travelled between multiple preaching points rather than serving a single congregation. When Springvale and Hagersville were Wesleyan Methodist congregations in the mid-1800s, they would almost certainly have been part of a larger preaching circuit that connected a number of rural Methodist appointments. Early Methodist ministers rarely served just one church; they travelled from congregation to congregation on a regular schedule.

Based on the churches that existed in the area during that period, the circuit included communities such as:

- Springvale
- Hagersville
- Ballsville
- Osborne of the Gill
- Balmoral

In fact, Methodist records across Ontario often show circuits made up of five to ten preaching points, many of them schoolhouses, community halls, or small churches. The services were in charge of a superintendent minister and an assistant pastor which included 6 services every Sunday for two men.

One particularly interesting clue from Springvale's history is that the church-maintained rooms for an assistant minister in the home of John Holbrook. That suggests Springvale was important enough to be a stopping place on a larger circuit rather than an isolated congregation. The Methodist circuit-rider tradition was built around ministers who travelled on horseback from congregation to congregation, often serving several churches spread across a large geographic area. They carried their belongings in saddlebags, preached wherever people gathered, and often covered difficult roads, forests, and rural settlements.

Father's Day Humour

An old cowboy was riding down a dusty trail when a tourist stopped him and asked, "How do you know where you're going out here? There aren't any road signs."

The cowboy replied, "Well, I've been riding these trails for forty years."

The tourist said, "What if you get lost?"

The cowboy smiled and said, "Then I just keep riding until I recognize where I am."

The tourist looked puzzled and asked, "And if that doesn't work?"

The cowboy tipped his hat and said, "Then I ask somebody's wife. They always seem to know where everybody is supposed to be."

