

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &  
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH  
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

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

Linden Park Community

*“No matter the disappointment, God is still blessing us in other amazing ways. Never give up, keep trying. See your blessings, find strength and keep moving. You will conquer again.”*

**Today as you have given your offering as you arrive let us offer this prayer in gratitude for all that we have received.**

Generous God, you have blessed us with so much. Take these gifts and cause them to work for you in this world which you have loaned to us.  
AMEN.

**PRELUDE & WELCOME**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATION**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: Whether you arrived here first this morning or came in as the service was beginning, God bids you joyful welcome.

**P: We thank you and thank God for this generous welcome.**

L: You are precious in God's sight, a delight in God's presence.

**P: Lord, we have come seeking your healing mercy.**

L: Know that God's compassionate love is poured over you this day.

**P: Hallelujah!**

**HYMN: #232 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You**

1 Joyful, joyful we adore you,  
God of glory, life and love;  
hearts unfold like flowers before you,

2

opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
drive the gloom of doubt away;  
giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with the light of day.

2 All your works with joy surround you,  
earth and heaven reflect your rays,  
stars and angels sing around you,  
centre of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
chanting bird and flowing fountain,  
sound their praise eternally.

3 You are giving and forgiving,  
ever blessing, ever blest,  
wellspring of the joy of living,  
ocean depth of happy rest!  
Source of grace and fount of blessing,  
let your light upon us shine;  
teach us how to love each other,  
lift us to the joy divine.

4 Mortals join the mighty chorus  
which the morning stars began;  
God's own love is reigning o'er us,  
joining people hand in hand.  
Ever singing, march we onward,  
victors in the midst of strife;  
joyful music leads us sunward  
in the triumph song of life.

## OPENING PRAYER

Lord, who lifts us up, reside in our hearts today. Help us to listen closely for your word to us. Remind us that you are always with us, throughout all of our lives. Give us confidence in your presence, so that we may go into your world ready to witness to your love through our works and our deeds, for we pray these things in Jesus' name. AMEN.

## CHILDREN'S TIME

## CHILDREN'S SONG

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, work sometimes brings out the worst in us.  
At home, at school, in the workplace,  
even in our relationship with you,  
we too easily question what others do and get,  
instead of taking care of our own business.  
Take away our bitterness.  
Teach us the art of the careful complaint.  
Give us grateful hearts, we pray. Amen.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS:** Matthew 20:1-16 NIV

### The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

**20** "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup> He agreed to pay them a denarius<sup>[a]</sup> for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

<sup>3</sup> "About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. <sup>4</sup> He told them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' <sup>5</sup> So they went.

"He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. <sup>6</sup> About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, 'Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?'

<sup>7</sup> "'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.

"He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'

<sup>8</sup> "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'

<sup>9</sup> "The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. <sup>10</sup> So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. <sup>11</sup> When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. <sup>12</sup> 'These who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'

<sup>13</sup> "But he answered one of them, 'I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius?' <sup>14</sup> Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. <sup>15</sup> Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

<sup>16</sup> "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

## MESSAGE

As I began to think about our gospel lesson from Matthew the other morning, another parable of Jesus's it seems like my direction came around 7.30 as I was heading out for my walk.

Let me begin by saying.... Jesus is a master storyteller. He knows the way to set up the scene to grab his disciples' and follower's attention. He knows how to build the suspense, and introduce the conflict that creates a good story. And he knows how to resolve that conflict so that his listeners never forget the moral of the story. And that 'moral of the story' is not what anyone expects it to be.

It seems that many times as ministers, as worship leaders, even theologians try to dig very, very deep into these parables of Jesus. This morning the simplicity of it just seem to came to me and I would like to share my thoughts with you. I think about who Jesus was presenting this Parable to. They be no different then you and I. Some of the people might have been well educated; some were just working class and others were those trying to survive in a society where they might have been downtrodden on. When Jesus told parables, he told them so people would have to think and then understand and I know that this Parable is about the reward of the Kingdom of Heaven.

So, let me put this into perspective. Here we have the landowner who needs workers to work in his vineyard. He hires one person early in the morning tells him how he will pay him, then he hires another at noon, then he hires another person that comes in an hour and a half before quitting time and then pays them all equally. And this is where the passage becomes hard to understand ... this passage is not an easy one. It is a hard one.

I think what Jesus is saying here some of us have Christianity faith and belief from the very beginning of our lives from the time we are children, we go to Sunday school church it's part of our home life, devotion prayer, and the faith that was instilled in us from a very young age is carried and lived throughout our lives.

For some they discovered Christ halfway through their lives. Situations in which a chaplain or a minister or someone that had a strong faith, or a friend or even maybe a stranger came into their lives and talked about Christ with them, talked about forgiveness, talked about a life where you can lay your stress your worry your pains your anxiety on God and they found that faith. And then there are those who people who are at the end of their lives those who have dropped into a church once in a while, maybe questioned who this God was but never believed. And in the end of their lives for some reason something drew them to God and lead them to believe. In saying that ... the reward is the same. The Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus's parables were reflective of what was going on in the world then and still reflective of what is going on here now but in the end the basic message is that we will receive the same reward whether we had faith as a small child and carried it through our lives whether we have faith lost it and we found it in our middle years or whether we found that faith at the end of our lives the reward/ pay is the same.

The problem in this parable is that in society people expect to be paid for their time. I worked harder than you therefor I deserve more pay than you.

What if the moral of the story is a lesson in humility for the disciples of Jesus, who had a tendency to think more highly of themselves just because they got to hang out with the Son of God all the time. Gods pay scale isn't based on merit, but God's great love for us. God's pay scale gives us our daily bread, so that we will depend completely on him. God pay scale promises us the Kingdom of heaven.

Christ calls us to *make disciples, not comparisons*. Instead of complaining and comparing, Christ calls us to work in his vineyard, for the harvest is plentiful, and the laborers are few.

Therefore, instead of comparing ourselves to others, God calls us to put down the measuring stick altogether, and do what we are gifted and called to do as workers in God's kingdom. So, let's roll up our sleeves and head into the vineyard. We have been called to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Let's get to work. Amen.

# **HYMN: #626 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say**

- 1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'Come unto me and rest;  
lay down, O weary one, lay down  
your head upon my breast.'  
I came to Jesus as I was,  
weary and worn and sad;  
I found in him a resting place,  
and he has made me glad.
- 2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'Behold, I freely give  
the living water; thirsty one,  
stoop down, and drink, and live.'  
I came to Jesus, and I drank  
of that life-giving stream;  
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
and now I live in him.
- 3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'I am this dark world's light;  
look unto me, your morn shall rise,  
and all your day be bright.'  
I looked to Jesus, and I found  
in him my star, my sun;  
and in that light of life I'll walk  
till travelling days are done.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Lord of justice and mercy, we quibble over perceived little injustices. We look around us and see mercy being offered to others, when we feel that they have done little to merit such treatment. Our world is in such bad shape. There are true injustices and horrible situations in which peace and mercy seem to be dim and distant hopes. Give us eyes to see where justice and compassion may be offered. Give us hearts to reach out to those who are new in faith and who struggle in life. Enable and strengthen each one of us in your service, that we may offer peace and hope to others, not counting the cost, but sharing the wealth of your mercy and love. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

## LORDS PRAYER

### HYMN #638 God, Take My Hand

- 1      God, take my hand and lead me upon life's way;  
direct, protect and feed me from day to day.  
Without your grace and favour I go astray;  
so take my hand, O Saviour, and lead the way.
  
- 2      God, when the tempest rages, I need not fear;  
for you, the Rock of Ages, are always near.  
Close by your side abiding, I fear no foe,  
for when your hand is guiding, in peace I go.
  
- 3      God, when the shadows lengthen and night has come,  
I know that you will strengthen my steps toward home,  
and nothing can impede me, O blessed Friend!  
So, take my hand and lead me unto the end.

## SENDING FORTH

Go forth into God's world as God's own children. Let the love of Christ be reflected in your life and your deeds. Go with joy to serve the Lord.

## CHORAL AMEN

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