

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &  
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

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**REGIONAL COUNCIL PRAYER CYCLE**

Brantford (Harmony)

*“Faithfulness in Tough Times”*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Over the turbulent waves in our lives, Jesus calls us. Many times we get so busy watching the waves, we block out Jesus’ call. Look again. Jesus is calling to you. Answer....Lord, help us hear your voice. Let us place our trust in Jesus. Lord, grasp our hands and our hearts. Lord, forgive our doubts and take our lives for your service.

**OPENING HYMN: #412 This Is the Day**

1. This is the day, this is the day  
that the Lord has made,  
that the Lord has made.  
We will rejoice, we will rejoice  
and be glad in it, and be glad in it.  
This is the day that the Lord has made;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.  
This is the day, this is the day  
that the Lord has made.

2. Open to us, open to us  
the gates of God,  
the gates of God;  
we will go in, we will go in  
and praise the Lord, and praise the Lord.  
Open to us the gates of God;

we will go in and praise the Lord.  
Open to us, open to us  
the gates of God.

3. You are our God, you are our God;  
we will praise your name,  
we will praise your name;  
we will give thanks, we will give thanks  
for your faithfulness, for your faithfulness.  
You are our God; we will praise your name;  
we will give thanks for your faithfulness.  
You are our God, you are our God;  
we will praise your name.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Almighty and most gracious God, we give you thanks for this day and for calling us hereto your place of worship. We gather to praise your name, for your faithfulness endures from generation to generation. Signs of your faithfulness are all around us: love, mercy, forgiveness, new life, and the gifts of your Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Help us claim your faithfulness as we seek to increase our faithfulness to you. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

**CHILDREN’S TIME**

**CHILDREN’S HYMN**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Lord, you know us too well. You know how easy it is for us to come to you and to proclaim loudly of our faith when all is going well. But when the waters get rough and the waves threaten to swamp our little boats, sometimes we cry out in fear. We are sure that these waves will be the very things that destroy us. Over the wind and the waves you call to us to place our trust in you. That’s not so easy for us. We are so used to getting lots of reassurances and written guarantees of safety. But still you call to us. Help us take our focus off the wind and the waves and place our

gaze directly on you. Attune our hearts and our lives to hear your call and to respond in faith. For we offer this prayer in the name of Jesus. AMEN.

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Don't be afraid. Jesus is with you at all times. You are healed, forgiven, and loved. Come and live in the love of the Lord. AMEN.

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

Romans 10:5-15

New Revised Standard Version  
Salvation Is for All

<sup>5</sup>Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them." <sup>6</sup>But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) <sup>7</sup>"or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). <sup>8</sup>But what does it say?

"The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); <sup>9</sup>because [a] if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup>For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. <sup>11</sup>The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." <sup>12</sup>For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. <sup>13</sup>For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

<sup>14</sup>But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? <sup>15</sup>And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Matthew 14:22-33

New International Version

Jesus Walks on the Water

<sup>22</sup>Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. <sup>23</sup>After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, <sup>24</sup>and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

<sup>25</sup>Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.

<sup>26</sup>When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

<sup>27</sup>But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

<sup>28</sup>"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

<sup>29</sup>"Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. <sup>30</sup>But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

<sup>31</sup>Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

<sup>32</sup>And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. <sup>33</sup>Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

### MESSAGE

#### Trusting Jesus and Having Faith

So life is a little bit different hasn't it... who would have thought a year ago that we will be wearing masks everywhere we go. Who would of thought that travelling or just going to a amusement park or a movie theatre would be something that isn't happening right now. Who would of ever thought that churches would be closed that we couldn't attend church on Sunday or a church event. .

Life is causing us to hurt, to question, and for many they are questioning faith.

When life hurts, and I mean, *really hurts*, our faith in Jesus sometimes hurts too. It's hard to have faith when life hurts. Harder, I think, than when life isn't going our way.

When we are realizing our dreams, when relationships are thriving, when finances are flowing, and the stars are aligning, having faith in God comes natural to us. And I suppose it should.

But when the wheels fall off or when life falls apart and nothing seems to be going right, we feel our faith is being tested. Sometimes deeply tested. This too, I think, is a natural response. To feel stretched in our faith when chaos threatens reveals that we are human. And to be human means to hurt sometimes. Sometimes more than we want.

Faith is an interesting word. To me, and to many people I believe, when we think of the word "faith" in our English bibles, we automatically assume it as intellectual belief in God. And when life is going as planned, our minds find it easy to believe in Jesus, because we really don't need to use that much "spiritual muscle" when our lives align nicely with our beliefs.

But when life hurts, a faith that is internalized as merely mental recognition that God is good because life is good, will certainly almost always crumble under the weight of the contradictory realities we face. If God is good, then why all this bad? If God loves me, then why all this hate? If God provides, then why do finances fail? If God has gifted me in this way, then why aren't my dreams being realized? Our minds alone can't handle everything that is happening then sometimes we find that our faith is questioned by others and us.

Therefore, we must dig deep into our hearts and souls and to wrestle with God when life really hurts. Finding that deep faith knowing God is always there is midst of good and bad in our lives.

And so we reflect on our scripture today we look at Jesus's disciples who were still uncertain of what all of this meant following Jesus...

Today's passage follows last week's passage of feeding of the 5000.

Jesus was tired and so he sent the disciples out into a boat to go ahead of him to the other side and he dismissed the crowd and then he went up the mountainside to pray. The winds were a strong causing the boat to rock, it didn't say that there was a storm but the disciples were out in the water and they must have been fearful. Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the water. Well it says in our scripture that they were terrified and they thought that he was a ghost. Very

understandable.... Jesus immediately said to them take courage. It is I, don't be afraid.

Then the scripture says that Peter says Lord if it's you they come out on the water . And Jesus tells him to come. Then Peter got down out of the boat and walked on the water and came towards Jesus but when he saw the winds and he felt it, he became afraid and he began to sink and he cried out Lord save me immediately. Jesus reached out his hand and caught him and the words that he said to Peter are so important to this scripture, you of little faith, why do you doubt and then they climbed into the boat and the wind died down and the other disciples who were in that boat we're so taken by what it happened their words were "truly you are the Son of God".

The disciples finally got it. They finally realized just whom it was that they were following. This was not just a man who had to the ability to work miracles and tell incredible stories. This man is the Son of God. Faith is believing.

I am sure that some of us try so desperately to hear God and are often met with silence. I am sure that some of us have doubts and fears and question our faith.

Faith comes to all who believe. Faith comes to all who dig deeper into God's words. Faith comes in the message of Christ. In his life, death, and resurrection.

Remember ... FAITH is the daring of the soul to see farther than we can see.

**HYMN: #288 Great is Thy Faithfulness**

1 "Great is Thy faithfulness," O God my Father,  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not  
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

**Refrain:**

**"Great is Thy faithfulness!" "Great is Thy faithfulness!"**

**Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—**

**"Great is Thy faithfulness," Lord, unto me!**

2 Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,  
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above,  
Join with all nature in manifold witness  
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. **R**

3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;  
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,  
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! **R**

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

Life seems to have got very different God. We love the smooth times when all is well, but, O Lord, we have serious problems with wind and waves. We want you to “fill our sails with a lovely breeze that guides our little boats across the glassy sea”; but you know that life isn’t just glassy seas and gentle breezes. Sometimes things get rough. Help us place our trust in you during all these rough times. You call to us to reach out, to take our focus off our own panic and place our trust in your love. Then you ask us to reach out to others with the same kind of love and compassion that you have given to us. Today we have come to you with burdens and cares. Our “seas” are not calm, but you offer to us a lifeline. Be with us. Guide our lives. Give us courage and hope. Strengthen us to truly be your disciples. In Jesus’ Name, we pray.  
AMEN.

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**CLOSING HYMN: Count Your Blessings**

When upon life’s billows you are tempest tossed,  
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,  
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.  
**Refrain**  
**Count your blessings, name them one by one,**  
**Count your blessings, see what God hath done!**  
**Count your blessings, name them one by one,**  
**And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.**

Are you ever burdened with a load of care?  
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?  
Count your many blessings, every doubt will fly,  
And you will keep singing as the days go by.

**Refrain**

When you look at others with their lands and gold,  
Think that Christ has promised you His wealth untold;  
Count your many blessings. Wealth can never buy  
Your reward in heaven, nor your home on high.

**Refrain**

So, amid the conflict whether great or small,  
Do not be disheartened, God is over all;  
Count your many blessings, angels will attend,  
Help and comfort give you to your journey’s end.

**Refrain**

**BENEDICTION**

Neither wind or waves can swamp you! Place your trust in God’s mercy and love. Go into the world in peace, confident of God’s presence and love for all creation.  
AMEN.

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