

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &  
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH  
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

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

Old Windham

*“As we enter into this sacred place, put away the pressures of the world that ask us to perform, to take on masks, to put on a brave front. Silence the voices that ask you to be perfect. This is a community of compassion and welcome. A place where we can experience unconditional love of God and each other. Welcome in the name of the one who IS unconditional love!”*

***Your Generosity Matters (formerly Minutes for Mission)***

The Incredible Difference Your Gifts Make: Bill's Story

In 1971, long after falling in love with nature at camp, Bill and a small group of friends anxiously climbed on board a boat called *Greenpeace*. Together, they set sail for the Arctic Ocean to stop the testing of a nuclear bomb. Greenpeace as a movement was born.

“It was camp that really made me aware of nature and made me want to save it,” says Bill, a United Church member and strong advocate of outdoor ministry.

Your Mission & Service donations support 25 United Church-run camps across the country. Every year, your generosity gives thousands of children an opportunity to attend camp.

Who knows? One of them might be so impressed by our natural world that they get on board a movement to save it. Please make a gift today!

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: God has invited us to come.

**All: So we gather.**

One: God has spoken to the world.

**All: So we listen.**

One: God has given us glimpses of grace and mercy.

**All: So we wait and watch, longing for healing, eager for hope.**

One: God has been faithful to all generations.

**All: So we trust. And so we worship God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.**

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

1 Great is thy faithfulness, God our Creator,  
there is no shadow of turning with thee;  
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;  
as thou has 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, ever to 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. **[Refrain]**

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 --  
wondrous the portion thy blessings provide. **[Refrain]**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Powerful God, from the very beginning you blessed creation. You have loved and shielded your people through all joys and trials of life. We come to you this day, rejoicing in the many blessings you have given to us. We open our hearts again to hear your word for us and to gather strength and joy for service in your world. Be with us and bless us again, we pray. AMEN.

**CHILDREN'S STORY**

**CHILDREN'S SONG****PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION**

Creator God, Source of all life, in you all creatures are connected  
and all creation redeemed and made new.

Day by day you make yourself known to your people.

In the beauty of the heavens we see your glory.

In the bounty of the earth we know your generosity.

In strength for our bodies and minds we experience your energy.

Delighting in all that we have seen, known, and heard,

we worship you, one God, Creator, Christ, and Spirit.

Holy One, along with our praise, we offer you our confession.

At times we forget what we once knew of your love.

Consumed by worry, we forget to trust you.

Although we know you made us for a purpose, we choose our own  
ways. Discouragement seeps into our hearts in the cold of winter  
and we do not serve you with eagerness.

We fail to speak out against injustice in our community.

Forgive us. Renew our energy for your purposes.

Raise us up on wings of faith. May we walk by your light and not grow  
weary. May we run and not faint. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS*****Psalm 147:1-11***

<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD.<sup>[a]</sup>

How good it is to sing praises to our God,  
how pleasant and fitting to praise him!

<sup>2</sup> The LORD builds up Jerusalem;  
he gathers the exiles of Israel.

<sup>3</sup> He heals the brokenhearted  
and binds up their wounds.

<sup>4</sup> He determines the number of the stars  
and calls them each by name.

<sup>5</sup> Great is our Lord and mighty in power;  
his understanding has no limit.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD sustains the humble  
but casts the wicked to the ground.

<sup>7</sup> Sing to the LORD with grateful praise;  
make music to our God on the harp.

<sup>8</sup> He covers the sky with clouds;  
he supplies the earth with rain  
and makes grass grow on the hills.

<sup>9</sup> He provides food for the cattle  
and for the young ravens when they call.

<sup>10</sup> His pleasure is not in the strength of the horse,  
nor his delight in the legs of the warrior;

<sup>11</sup> the LORD delights in those who fear him,  
who put their hope in his unfailing love.

***Mark 1:29-39***

New International Version

**Jesus Heals Many**

<sup>29</sup> As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. <sup>30</sup> Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. <sup>31</sup> So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

<sup>32</sup> That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. <sup>33</sup> The whole town gathered at the door, <sup>34</sup> and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

**Jesus Prays in a Solitary Place**

<sup>35</sup> Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. <sup>36</sup> Simon and his companions went to look for him, <sup>37</sup> and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"

<sup>38</sup> Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." <sup>39</sup> So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

**MESSAGE: Remember the Sabbath**

Good morning! Here we are on Sunday and it's the Sabbath... and I sure you all know what "Sabbath" means? "Remember the Sabbath to

keep it Holy” ... means to take a time apart from the busyness of life to rest and to think about all the positive things that God has done for us. Usually our “Sabbath” celebration is Sunday morning ... but for you now.... it is when you sit down to listen to or to read this worship or take some quiet time for yourself. Sunday mornings at church, which we all miss, is where we sing the songs of praise, we pray together, we listen to the Bible readings, and you hear me preach ☐. Sunday was meant to be our day to rest and gather strength for the week ahead. In today’s Gospel lesson we hear the story of Jesus healing Peter’s mother-in-law and then the crowds of people are brought to the courtyard for Jesus to heal. He healed all of these people with such love. But the next morning, very early before sunrise, Jesus went to a quiet place to pray. He needed some time alone, to rest his body and his spirit for the times yet to come. It wasn’t long before the disciples tracked him down and pleaded with him to come, because more people, large crowds had gathered, but Jesus said, “let’s go in another direction, for there is very much work to be done.”

It’s like that with all of us ... adults, teens, elders, children. We always feel that there is much yet to be done, but we do require some time to rest, to pray, to think about God in our lives, and to ask God to help us. You know... I have been lovingly told many times to go to the mountain, to reflect to find peace and recharge for what is ahead. That advice is not only for me, it’s for all of us. It does not only mean to find rest but this also means to see the wonders of God’s creation and look deeper into ourselves. Sometimes life is moving so fast ... we feel we don’t have time to waste. In that we don’t see the needs of others, or we haven’t even dared to admit your own need for God’s love. This might sound strange but we need to become vulnerable to God so God can use us. Because Jesus became vulnerable to the world. Yes, you may be afraid, because the world can hurt us, we can become frightened, you might feel downtrodden and weak, remember that God will lift you up and strengthen you, for that is God’s way of loving us, walking with us, healing and protecting us.

This week you will have some homework to do and some of you will complain about it ... but I know many of us are feeling burdened, many scared, uncertain what the future holds, tried or just feel you can’t face things anymore. Jesus would tell you that if you are going to be ready to serve God, you need to do this...I need to do this.

So, get some rest, take some time with God, just be quiet, don’t speak, don’t whisper, don’t sing, don’t shout, just be quiet and listen for God’s still small voice...and then listen to God’s loving word for you, for it will always begin with “Don’t worry, I’m with you, forever. You don’t need to fear.” Those words are for all of us, no matter what age you are. Find the Sabbath in your life, whatever day it is or where it is and take the opportunity to find your direction lead by God.

**HYMN: #595 We Are Pilgrims**

We are pilgrims on a journey,  
fellow travellers on the road,  
We are here to help each other,  
walk the mile and bear the load.

Sister, let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
Pray that I may have the grace,  
to let you be my servant too.

I will hold the Christ-light for you,  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping,  
when you laugh I’ll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow,  
till you’ve seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven,  
we shall find such harmony,  
Born of all we’ve known together  
of Christ’s love and agony.

Brother, let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
Pray that I may have the grace  
to let you be my servant too.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Holy and loving God, we thank you for the story of Christ's life among us, a pattern for the way we live. We give you thanks for moments of quiet and contemplation that restore us, and help us perceive your Spirit at work in the world and in our own lives. Teach us to trust in your strength, so that we can live with confidence and courage even in the midst of stress and anxiety. These days of pandemic are still difficult and we need to know you are near in our lonely times. Meet us in that place of deep stillness within us all. In the quiet of this moment we hand over to you all those things stirring within us today:

Anything that has been distracting or hurtful...  
(*Hold a silence*)

Anything that makes us worry or brings sleepless nights...  
(*Hold a silence*)

Our hopes and dreams for the future...  
(*Hold a silence*)

and for the lives of those we love...  
(*Hold a silence*)

We hold before you the needs and hopes of those we know who need your presence, especially remembering those facing grief and loss...  
(*Hold a silence*)

We pray for wisdom for the leaders of our world...  
(*Hold a silence*)

We pray that those who manage the world economy find honest, just and generous ways to respond to the challenges caused by the pandemic...  
(*Hold a silence*)

We pray that the dignity of each creature be honoured and the earth itself be treasured...  
(*Hold a silence*)

May peace with justice thrive in the world you love.  
And now we pray together in the words that Jesus taught:

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**HYMN:** #344 How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds

- 1 How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds  
in a believer's ear!  
It soothes the sorrows, heals the wounds,  
and drives away all fear.
- 2 It makes the wounded spirit whole,  
and calms the troubled breast;  
'tis manna to the hungry soul,  
and to the weary, rest.
- 3 Dear Name! the rock on which I build,  
my shield and hiding-place,  
my never-failing treasury, filled  
with boundless stores of grace.
- 4 Jesus, my Shepherd, Brother, Friend,  
my Prophet, Priest, and King,  
my Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,  
accept the praise I bring.
- 5 The effort of my heart is weak,  
and cold my warmest thought;  
but when I see you whom I seek,  
I'll praise you as I ought.

**SENDING FORTH**

We are being sent into a world in need of healing. We have been given all that we need to be God's messengers of peace. Go now into the world, rejoicing in God's presence with you. Bring the news of peace and hope to all you meet. AMEN.

**CHORAL AMEN**