

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, JANUARY 31st, 2021**

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REGIONAL COUNCIL PRAYER CYCLE

Troy

*In meeting Christ, we become new creations. As we share the peace of
Christ with each other, we share the newness of life he brings. Come,
enter into new life in Christ!*

CALL TO WORSHIP

By this I have known the presence of the Lord: in the rising of the sun,
in the smile of another's face, in the touch of a hand or the sound of a
laugh, in the scent of a flower holding the promise of spring.

By this I have known the power of the Lord: in the healing of hurts,
in the forgiveness of sin, in the giving of gifts beyond all expectation,
in the shower of love that comes from God's Son.

Let us give thanks to the Lord with all of our heart!

Let us worship our God, whose presence and power endures forever!

OPENING HYMN: #314 Come Now, Almighty King

- 1 Come now, almighty King, help us your name to sing,
help us to praise; one God all glorious, ever victorious,
come and reign over us, Ancient of Days.
- 2 Come now, incarnate Son, your life in us begun, our prayer attend;
come, and your people bless; come, give your word success;
stablish your righteousness, Saviour and friend!
- 3 Come holy Comforter, your sacred witness bear in this glad hour;
your grace to us impart, now rule in every heart, never from
us depart, Spirit of power!

- 4 To the great One in Three, eternal praises be for evermore;
your sovereign majesty may we in glory see,
and to eternity love and adore!

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty and most merciful God, we give thanks that you know us and
love us. Help us, through the power of your Holy Spirit, grow deeper,
wider, and fuller in our knowledge and understanding of your ways.
Help us, through the bestowal of your divine Wisdom, bring others
closer to you and to your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we
pray. Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME

CHILDREN'S SONG

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

You, God, are known for your wonderful deeds— your mercy,
forgiveness, and love. You have shown us the power of your works time
and time again. And yet, sometimes we are slow to comprehend;
sometimes we refuse to acknowledge your gifts; we act self-sufficient,
as if we provide ourselves everything we need, when we know in our
hearts that you are the author of life. Forgive us, we pray. As we confess
our sins, in thought, word or deed, may your saving presence flood our
lives that we may praise your name forevermore. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 111^[a]

¹ Praise the LORD.^[b]

I will extol the LORD with all my heart
in the council of the upright and in the assembly.

² Great are the works of the LORD;
they are pondered by all who delight in them.

³ Glorious and majestic are his deeds,
and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴ He has caused his wonders to be remembered;
the LORD is gracious and compassionate.

- ⁵ He provides food for those who fear him;
he remembers his covenant forever.
- ⁶ He has shown his people the power of his works,
giving them the lands of other nations.
- ⁷ The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.
- ⁸ They are established for ever and ever,
enacted in faithfulness and uprightness.
- ⁹ He provided redemption for his people;
he ordained his covenant forever—
holy and awesome is his name.
- ¹⁰ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.
To him belongs eternal praise.

Mark 1:21-28

Jesus Drives Out an Impure Spirit

- ²¹ They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²² The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. ²³ Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, ²⁴ “What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”
- ²⁵ “Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” ²⁶ The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.
- ²⁷ The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.” ²⁸ News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

MESSAGE: Authority

"When the Sabbath came, Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

" What does authority mean? The dictionary defines authority as a noun that implies power: “The power acquired by official position held to enforce rules or give orders, i.e. a supervisor or officer.” “The power

given to another person to act on behalf of someone else, i.e. a guardian or executor.” “The power earned: By portraying a quality that is respected. By exhibiting knowledge, skill, or experience worthy of respect.”

The scribes were the rabbis, teachers, and theologians of the Jewish communities during the life of Christ. They taught in the synagogues and had a respected role in the community. I think the scribes and Jesus fulfilled the last definition of authority: Experience and knowledge worthy of respect. The scribes' authority was implied by the position they held; they taught by quoting the Laws of Moses.

But Jesus's was different. He had no implied authority, he was a simple carpenter from Nazareth, who taught from the heart. Jesus acquired his authority by who he was ... the Son of God, the embodiment of the Holy Spirit. He earned his authority by what he said and by what he did. Jesus had authority to teach whatever He wanted to teach. He had authority to heal the sick. He had authority to forgive sin. He had authority to cast out demons. He had the authority to show what it meant to care for someone and he also showed what love for all mankind was. Jesus had tremendous authority.

In the book "A New Kind of Authority," by Barbara Lundblad, she asks the question: "Whatever happened to authority?" Looking at Jesus' actions we see a radically different kind of authority. She summarizes that the authority of Jesus leads us to inclusion rather than exclusion, and values persons over rules.

Christ did not preach as the scribes, who illustrated the Law of Moses by memorization, their teachings didn't come from the heart.

Christ taught, as one who knew the mind of God, and was commissioned to declare it. From the bible version "The Message," today's scripture is translated: "They were surprised at his teaching—so forthright, so confident—not quibbling and quoting like the religious scholars." The authority of Jesus Christ is the authority that compels a decision. It is the authority of one who confronts us with the truth in a way that commands our attention, and then calls us to respond. It is definitely the authority of one who has nothing but our best interests at heart.

As we consider the authority of Jesus, and what it means to you and me today in this world....

- Let's not forget that, through our faith, each of us has the authority to serve in His name.
- Jesus' authority came not only from his relationship to God, but also from the communities that surrounded him and that welcomed him.
- How do we engage our community of faith, gathered in his name, to be a place that nurtures healing and hope for each of us and for each person who walks through our doors?
- How do we invite and engage each person who seeks to know Jesus, to experience the power of a community of faith?
- How do we empower this authority of Jesus in our daily lives? More simply, how do we live out our Christian faith in a secular society?

The answer is simple...

We can make a decision to be more compassionate, we can make a decision for generosity, we can make a decision for honesty, we can make a decision for courage, we can make a decision that knowledge of Jesus Christ compels us to live in his ways and be an example to others. It is a decision to live a more genuine life, with lots of open doors for us to walk through. God does not ask about our ability or our inability, but our availability. We are not judged on our success, but on our persistent and heartfelt actions: Compassion, generosity, honesty, courage, all in the love of

Christ. These principles can help us to develop a closer relationship and journey with Jesus and in turn that causes us to be more like Him and better offer His hope to others.

Amen

HYMN: #371 Open My Eyes, That I May See

- 1 Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me; place in my hands the wonderful key, that shall unclasp and set me free. Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see. Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

- 2 Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear; and while the wave-notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear. Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see. Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

- 3 Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere; open my heart and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share. Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see. Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Holy and Gracious God, we give you thanks for family, friends, life, love, for all the blessings (name blessings and thanksgivings) you have bestowed upon us. Loving and Caring God, it is your desire for us to lead the way. May we have the ears to hear the cries of this world, the eyes to see and voice to speak your word that we may respond with hope. Compassionate God, fill us with your love that we may see deeply into all the needs around us, (name the hurts, needs, and hope you are carrying.) Help us to care with Your heart. In Your mercy, hear our prayer. May Your love, Your grace, Your compassion, Your mercy, carry us away, this day and lead us with love to be Your hands and heart in the world. We Ask this in Jesus Name. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: #506 Take My Life and Let It Be

- 1 Take my life and let it be consecrated, all for thee; take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.
- 2 Take my hands, and let them move at the impulse of thy love, take my feet, and let them be swift and purposeful for thee.
- 3 Take my lips, and let them be filled with messages from thee; take my intellect, and use every power as thou shalt choose.
- 4 Take my will, and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine; take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.

5 Take my love: and I will pour at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

SENDING FORTH

Jesus comes to us, offering healing and hope, speaking and acting with authority. Listen to him. Go into this world, confident in God's love and healing power. Go in peace and may God's love and peace always be with you.

AMEN.

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This is a prayer I wrote for all of us that shows us the way to the life that
God has given to each of us....

Long ago God gave to people in bondage, a pillar of fire to guide them to
freedom and to a new world. Throughout the ages...God has raised up
men and women to show people how to live as Christ lived. Men and
Women who fought to be freed from chains, and to have full
participation in decision making for their lives. For all those who fought
to have respect and dignity, and for those who were marginalized. To all
people, God gave Jesus Christ, his Son and our Lord, that we might know
of God's awesome power and love.

May we Lord, remember all those whom you have lifted up to faithfully
speak your word. Help us to be people of blessing and hope to those in
darkness. Help us to be people of strength and give courage to those who
struggle. Help us to be people of compassion and peace. May we
continue to break down the barriers that have been erected. Help us
build bridges of peace, hope and love. We ask this in the name of Jesus
who gives us authority. AMEN.

Blessings, Peggy