

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH
SUNDAY, JULY 26th, 2020**

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

Stoney Creek

*In the midst of summer and all that is happening, when our thoughts
seem occupied with finding ways of relaxation and fun, we find
ourselves confronted with the difficult task of faithful living. May these
words and songs help us to see that no matter what happens in our lives
nothing can separate us from the love of God.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

How shall we praise God? We are so tied up in knots, twisted and bound
to the negative. Help us, O Lord. to bring us to your loving presence.
Lord, change our hearts. Help us be fashioned by your love and peace.
Guide us and help us be images of your love. Give us hearts for service
and witness to your presence and power.
May we come this day and discover who God calls you to be in this time
of worship.

WORDS OF CHORUS – CHANGE MY HEART OH LORD

Change My Heart Oh Lord
Make It Ever
New Change My Heart Oh Lord
May I Be Like You 2x

You Are The Potter
I Am The Clay Mould
Me And Make Me
This Is What I Pray.

Change My Heart Oh Lord
Make It Ever New
Change My Heart Oh Lord
May I Be Like You

OPENING PRAYER

Our gracious and ever loving God, we come in the midst of summer
looking for refreshment. We rest in the knowledge of the wonderful
works you have done for us, and of the deep and abiding love you have
for us and for all God's people. Search our hearts. Fill our soul with
your indwelling Spirit who whispers to our soul that all will be well if
we but trust in you. Shine your light before us, that we may see our path
to you and to your kingdom on earth. Amen.

CHILDREN'S TIME

CHILDREN'S STORY

What kinds of things do you worry about? Yes, I worry about those
things too. In fact I have this poem here by Shel Silverstein that lists all
kinds of things that might be worrisome.

Read Poem: **Whatif by Shel Silverstein**

Last night, while I lay thinking here,
some Whatifs crawled inside my ear and pranced and partied all night
long and sang their same old Whatif song:
Whatif I'm dumb in school?
Whatif they've closed the swimming pool?
Whatif I get beat up?
Whatif there's poison in my cup?
Whatif I start to cry?
Whatif I get sick and die?
Whatif I flunk that test?
Whatif green hair grows on my chest?
Whatif nobody likes me?
Whatif a bolt of lightning strikes me?
Whatif I don't grow taller?
Whatif my head starts getting smaller?

Whatif the fish won't bite?
 Whatif the wind tears up my kite?
 Whatif they start a war?
 Whatif my parents get divorced?
 Whatif the bus is late?
 Whatif my teeth don't grow in straight?
 Whatif I tear my pants?
 Whatif I never learn to dance?
 Everything seems well, and then the nighttime
 Whatifs strike again!

That is quite a list of what ifs! Sometimes I also think that all these what ifs and worries and things that could happen or event things that DO happen that are sad or scary, what if God does not love me anymore—???

Have you ever thought of that what if? Did you hear our scripture for today though? I heard it loud and clear, let me read it to you. "For I am convinced—which means I am very, very sure and certain, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, (things like being bullied, losing a grandparent, a divorce or darkness or a pandemic, etc) nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Do you know what that means—not one single thing will ever make God's love go away. Not for you, not for me, not for anyone. Phew... that is some good news, to know that love will be with us no matter what happens or does not happen.

What I would like you to do is take a piece of paper and write 'what if' on the top. Then, I want you to go ahead and write or draw anything that worries you or scares you. Then after you do that, draw a BIG HEART over the top of it and write God's Love in that heart to help you remember that nothing will separate you from God's love.

Let Us Pray... Jesus, help us remember, no matter what ifs we worry about, no matter what comes our way, that your love is with us to stay. Amen

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Diligent Lord, who watches over us at all times, be with us all these days. We confess that we have allowed a host of worries and frustrations to crowd out your word for us. As you give us peace and your

transforming love, also forgive all those times when we have been less than faithful disciples. Gently visit us again with your healing powers. Restore our hope and courage and joy for all the times ahead. We ask this in the name of the Master Healer, Jesus Christ. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Here is some wonderful news! While we were worrying and fretting, God has been at work in our lives offering healing and peace. Receive these gifts in the name and love of the Lord our God. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Matthew 13:31-33

31 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. 32 Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches." 33 He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."

Matthew 13:44-52 44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. 45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it. 47 "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. 48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. 49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous 50 and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 51 "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. "Yes," they replied. 52 He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

Romans 8:26-39 - New International Version

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. **27** And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[a] have been called according to his purpose. **29** For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

More Than Conquerors

31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? **32** He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? **33** Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. **34** Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? **36** As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”[b]

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. **38** For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[c] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, **39** neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

MESSAGE**Romans 8:26-39 Why God Allows Bad Things to Happen**

An old church building needed remodeling, so during his sermon the minister made an emotional plea and looked directly at the richest man in town. At the end of the sermon, the rich man stood up and said, “Pastor, I will contribute \$1,000.00”

Just then plaster fell from the ceiling and struck the rich man on the shoulder. He stood up and said, “I will increase my donation to

\$5,000.00.” Before he could sit down, another chunk of plaster fell on him, and he stood up and said, “I will double my last donation.”

He sat down and a larger chunk of plaster hit him on the head. He jumped up and shouted, “Pastor, I will give \$20,000.00”

This prompted one of the elders to shout, “Hit him again, Lord! Hit him again!”

Have you ever wondered why God allows bad things to happen to his people? Well, God uses all of our circumstances to work for our good when we have faith. In other words, when we are Christ-like, God can take the negative circumstances of our lives and use them for our good, especially if using them for good fulfills his will for our lives. It's like an oyster taking a grain of sand—something that irritates the oyster—and turning it into something of great value—a pearl.

Take Joseph, for example. He was sold into slavery by his brothers and ended up in jail in Egypt, but God used all of these experiences to prepare Joseph for his ultimate role of saving his family and the people of Egypt from famine. While still in prison, Joseph correctly interpreted dreams for two of Pharaoh's servants—his cupbearer and chief baker. As the dreams had predicted, the baker was executed and the cupbearer was restored to service.

Two years later, Pharaoh had two dreams that disturbed him, but no one could tell him what they meant. The cupbearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about him. Pharaoh sent for Joseph, who told him that God was warning that a famine was coming and that preparations had to be made. Joseph was released from prison and put in charge of the preparations.

When the famine came, it was widespread and affected Joseph's family. The same brothers who sold Joseph into slavery came to Egypt to find food. Joseph still loved them and forgave them. He arranged for all of the family to move to Egypt. Pharaoh promised them the best of the land.

Joseph trusted God through many years of hardship, and God worked all of those painful circumstances for the good of Joseph, his family and God's chosen people in the generations to come. His chosen people grew from a few to millions.

Satan is often called “the accuser,” but any charges Satan makes against us will never stand up because the Jesus who blesses us is also the Jesus who judges us. We are protected by Christ's death and resurrection.

Anyone who would take away our salvation would have to be stronger than God, and since no one is stronger than God, we can never lose our salvation. God speaks of love as Christ's love for his people. Christ's love protects us from the trials of life. No one and nothing can separate us from God.

Paul affirms the incredible power of the love of Christ in Romans 8:26-39. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we can't find the words to pray. When believers are hurting so much that they can't mention their desires, the Holy Spirit intercedes with groans that words can't express. Paul urges us to recognize the depths of our despair, but we must remember that we are not alone. God is always with us, even when we feel alienated, separated and alone.

Remember, God gave up his son, so he will freely give us everything we need for sanctification and glorification. When we are redeemed, we receive a new heart and we begin the lifelong process of transformation. Then we have to immerse ourselves in the Scriptures so that God can use his word to transform our minds.

God will take our negative experiences and use them to shape us and use us for his purposes. That doesn't mean that God is pleased with all of our negative circumstances. He gets mad when people drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. He is sad when we are persecuted for our faith. God loves us enough to be with us and walk with us when we face the storms of life.

Sometimes we can only learn great lessons of faith when we face difficulties. God's plans are not always our plans, because his plans carry a greater purpose.

And, we do not always know why God allows bad things to happen to us.

When we face times of trial, we can turn to God's Word and ask him for help. God knows our needs. He won't let anything happen to us without supplying the grace we need to turn the stumbling block into a stepping stone of faith. When God puts hard times together like a baker puts the ingredients for a cake together, they can work out for our good, including our failures and our hopelessness. God is at work in our lives. He undoes Satan's messes and leads us where he wants us to go.

When our faith in Jesus operates in our lives, we are more than capable of handling whatever approaches us. He will give us the victory because of what he did for us on the cross. We can live happy, contented, joy-

filled lives when we live in his goodness and with God in proper perspective.

When Christ returns, he will use the world's destructive tools such as disaster, disease, death and decay as tools to accomplish his good will. As believers we will also be made into something good because we will be glorified. We can face life's trials with the knowledge that God can use our trials for good and make us into something better than we can be on our own, and that is a life that is as Christ-like as possible. We can then be an example for others who are facing hardships. They can look at us and see that if faith can help us remain strong in the face of adversity, faith in God will help them as well. Our presence can sprinkle God's healing love onto others wherever we go.

We must remember that when bad things happen, God is in control. He loves us and he will take care of us. People who love God and are called according to his purpose are assured that God will transform a bad situation to bring a good result. Our spiritual struggle will help us to move toward the greater good of salvation. Because God raised Jesus from the dead, our present experience of suffering and what we can expect of the future are changed. There will come a time when even the worst suffering we endure now will pale in comparison to the glory that will be revealed to us in heaven.

I would like to leave with this thought... In the long run, whether you call on him or don't call on him, God will be present with you. God created you and God loves you.

HYMN: #606 In Christ there is no East or West

- 1 In Christ there is no east or west,
in him no south or north,
but one great family of love
throughout the whole wide earth.
- 2 In him shall true hearts everywhere
their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord
close binding humankind.

3 Join hands, then, people of the faith,
whate'er your race may be;
all children of the living God
are surely kin to me.

4 In Christ now meet both east and west,
in him meet south and north;
all Christ-like souls are one in him
throughout the whole wide earth.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of surprising love, you have called us to be your treasures, to be those who love and serve you by helping meet the needs of others. Jesus reminded us that we were like mustard seeds that could grow into mighty shelters for those who felt abandoned; that we were like yeast placed in flour which causes the whole dough to rise and to be fruitful for the nourishment of God’s people, that we are also nets, cast into the unknown sea, gathering people for the Lord that they might be healed and saved. You place so much hope and trust in us. Please help us not to fail you. We bring before you this day persons and situations which need your healing love. Help us to be vehicles of that word for these dear ones. Give us courage and empower us to serve you boldly and joyfully, for it is in the healing love of Christ that we offer this prayer. AMEN.

CLOSING HYMN: When Peace Like a River

1 When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll;
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
"It is well, it is well with my soul."

Refrain

It is well with my soul;
it is well, it is well with my soul.

2 Though Satan should buffet,
though trials should come, let this blest assurance control:
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
and has shed his own blood for my soul.

Refrain

3 My sin oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
my sin, not in part, but the whole,
is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more;
praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

Refrain

4 O Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
the trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend;
even so, it is well with my soul.

Refrain

BENEDICTION

With a song of praise on our lips,
we go forth with God.
With the love of God in our hearts,
we go forth with God.
With a commitment to usher in God’s kingdom,
we go forth with God.
With all that we are and all we can be,
we go forth with God.

CHORAL AMEN

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WOW! It’s almost August already! Normally August would be our “vacation month” but nothing about this year is normal.

This year we will be working through August to continue to bring you all the bulletins and online services each week. Peggy will also still be available to contact if needed. Enjoy the rest of your summer ☺