

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &  
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH  
SUNDAY, JUNE 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

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

Munn's

*Something new is stirring in our church, O Lord. We are not sure what is going to happen. Make us ready to receive your word, open our hearts and renew our spirits. Let us be the voice of welcome and the spirit of joy to all who we meet.*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Welcome to each and every one of you!  
May the joy we have in our Lord Jesus Christ become your joy also.  
Even when things get hectic, always know that you will find refreshment in our worship, as I welcome you here each week.  
And as you have found a welcoming presence in these services of the Lord.  
Let us extend that same loving welcome to others.

**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 hast been thou forever wilt be.  
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

- 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 -  
wondrous the portion thy blessings provide. R

**OPENING PRAYER**

Lord, as we open our computers, tablets, cell phones or bulletins and come into worship, we brought with us our cares and concerns, our joys and our sorrows. Touch our hearts and heal us, Lord. Make us ready to become your faithful disciples. AMEN.

**CHILDREN'S STORY: "The White Glove Welcome"**

Marissa came to church today, having never been here before. It had been a long time since she had even darkened the doorway of a church. Lots of things had happened in her life, some good, far too many bad. She had made choices that were self-destructive, and now here she was, at the door of the church, not knowing if the roof would cave in because of her lack of presence in this holy place. That was the excuse she had used so many times before--"the roof will cave in if I come"; "It's been too long"; "I only have Sunday to rest, so I can't attend church." What would happen? This was crazy!  
The doors were open. A little way inside there stood an older woman, impeccably dressed, wearing a nice little hat and white gloves. "Good morning," the woman said, extending tentatively the white gloved hand. Marissa reached out to shake the hand, but only the gloved fingertips were offered, with a slight shake of the hand then quick withdrawal of the welcoming gesture completely. The woman seemed in a hurry to greet others although there were no others in line waiting to be greeted. Marissa looked around and saw the direction to the sanctuary. There were others there, talking animatedly. She moved toward the people, whose conversation took a sudden turn. They stopped talking and seemed to look at her briefly, then look away. She was a stranger to them. They were involved with their friends. Someone else would greet

this stranger. Taking a seat near the back of the church, Marissa looked around. Everywhere people greeted one another, obviously knowing one another. She felt awkward. What should she do?

The worship service began with wonderful music and words of welcome from the pastor. Then the pastor suggested that everyone take a moment to greet one another with the love of Christ. This was going to be awkward, thought Marissa. She stood up as the movement of the people around the sanctuary began. Suddenly she felt a tapping on her leg and looking down and saw a small child.

“Hi,” said the little child.

“Hi,” replied Marissa.

“Who are you?” asked the child.

“I’m Marissa. Who are you?”

“Timmy, just Timmy.”

“I’m glad to meet you, Timmy.”

“Are you new here?” inquired Timmy.

“Yes. It’s my first time coming.”

“I’m not new. I have been here a long time. I get to say hi to people. It’s my favorite thing to do”

“You do it very well, Timmy. Thanks for greeting me.”

“You’re welcome. I’m glad you are here,” and off he scampered.

Marissa didn’t remember being greeted by others, although she probably was. Timmy’s innocent, warm welcome stayed in her heart. “Whoever welcomes one of these, the least and the lost, welcomes me,” said the Pastor. “Welcome to the house of the Lord.” White glove and tentative welcome receded in her memory and was replaced by the genuineness of a small child. Thanks be to God for the hospitality of God, given through Timmy. AMEN

## CHILDREN’S SONG

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Patient Lord, we want to extend the hand of welcome and friendship to all whom we meet, but you know that sometimes we shy away from reaching out. We make judgments about others based on their appearance and other surface factors, and we neglect your mandate to be a welcoming presence. That lack of welcome extends further when we see needs that must be addressed and sometimes choose to turn our

backs. We turn away from the pain and suffering, protecting our own lives. Yet you remind us that as we welcome others, so we are also welcoming you. Heal us and give us strength and courage to always be welcoming others in your name. AMEN.

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

Matthew 10:40-42

New Living Translation

<sup>40</sup>“Anyone who receives you receives me, and anyone who receives me receives the Father who sent me. <sup>41</sup>If you receive a prophet as one who speaks for God,<sup>[a]</sup> you will be given the same reward as a prophet. And if you receive righteous people because of their righteousness, you will be given a reward like theirs. <sup>42</sup>And if you give even a cup of cold water to one of the least of my followers, you will surely be rewarded.”

### PARAPHRASE OF PSALM 13

How long will you ignore me, O Lord? Are you going to hide yourself from me forever?

If I’m left to my own wits, I fail miserably. I need your presence. Where are you, O Lord?

I feel as though everyone is against me. When I try to do something which I think is good, it just turns out bad and everyone makes fun of me. What can I do, Lord?

Come on, God! Look at me! Answer me!

Stop the silent treatment! Give me some hope, some direction!

I feel as though I’m going to die! I have no hope.

But I have trusted in you in the past. Help me to again place my trust in your mercy.

Remind me that you are always with me, even when I feel so all alone.

My heart will rejoice in the salvation that you offer me. My spirit shall sing your praises.

God has been good to me. In the midst of my doubts, God watches over me, gently guiding me. Blessed are all those who place their trust in God, for it shall be well with their souls!

### MESSAGE- Shouting, Speaking, Singing

How many of you have ever felt distant from God or maybe even like He’s left us or abandoned us altogether? Have you ever been depressed

or felt like there was no hope in a situation, like the world was closing in on you? Maybe a family member died, or a relationship fell apart. Maybe you were in some sort of financial trouble. Imagine the worst situation you've ever been in and remember how it felt as we look at Psalm 13 this morning.

### Psalm 13

1How Long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? 2How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? 3Look on me and answer, O Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death; 4my enemy will say, "I have overcome him," and my foes will rejoice when I fall. 5But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. 6I will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me.

I only hope the way I read this psalm gives it justice because I believe that the way it sounds represents the three different attitudes that the psalmist uses to approach God in his situation. The three sounds you should have been able to hear were shouting, speaking, and singing.

#### Shouting

As we look at the first two verses of this psalm, I envision the psalmist screaming, shouting, crying out in agony to the Lord about what's going on in his life. He's been going through something terrible for a good period of time and he wants relief. We see him talk about God turning from him, an internal struggle, and even enemies defeating him.

We don't know exactly what the psalmist was going through, but we know that he felt alone, stranded, desperate. We know he was pinned or cornered in some sort of extreme circumstance and that he wasn't able to see that God was with him so he cried out to God.

All of us have witnessed a baby crying for its mother right? Even when the mother sets the baby down do something else only for a moment, the child will feel like it's all alone. This type of feeling happens especially when the child is put to sleep in a room and the mother leaves to go do other things around the house. The child will inevitably wake up and see that nobody's there. They think they are alone and fear seeps into their mind, not to mention the complete dependence they have on their mother so they cry out.

But it's that same cry of desperation and loneliness that the baby feels that we can all go through at times. We all go through similar times in our adulthood with our family, with our friends, and even with God! Sometimes we feel like the entire world is against us and that maybe God has even left us. We can lose hope quickly. We can lose sight completely of God's big picture when we're in this type of situation too. But that's not what the psalmist does here. This is not the end of the road for his situation and since we're looking at this as something we might be able to put into practice in our lives, we know it doesn't have to be the end for us either. There's more to it!

#### Speaking

As we move to the next two verses, we can almost hear the psalmist's tone change. He moves from crying out or shouting out to God, to speaking with God and pleading for relief. Instead of continuing with his worried questioning of what God's doing in his life, he turns to specific needs.

The psalmist shows that there is at least some possibility of getting out of his situation now. He knows that God has the solution and asks specifically for it. However, he still knows that there are circumstances that will take place if God doesn't get him out of the situation.

Now earlier, I related the psalmist's cries to those of a baby. Now though, it seems our psalmist has aged a little more. He's moved to negotiating almost like a teenager would if there was something they wanted desperately. Now I know we can all relate because we've all been teenagers, seen teenagers do this, or been the people that they've done it to. They'll ask very specifically for what they want and then make some big dramatic story for what will happen if they don't get it. Have you ever caught yourself doing this with God? You've passed the stage of complete despair and entered a stage of specific need. Even though we've grown out of the stage of desperation and into a stage of reasoning, this still isn't a good place to be.

We're still the ones telling God how things are going to work even though He's the one writing the script!

However, the psalmist doesn't end here and neither should we. We still have more growing to do!

#### Singing

Finally, the last two passages give us yet another tone we can hear. He gives us singing, or praise and worship! He shows us that despite

everything that he's gone through up to this point and everything that he was probably still going through, he trusted in God to keep him throughout it.

He illustrates to us the characteristics of God that we can always and must always rely on. God's unfailing love and salvation are always there. We cannot let our circumstances fog up the window and hide these facts from us. So, this is how we can practice this Psalm.

The cries of a baby because of complete despair, and the reasoning of a teenager because of lack of confidence are both places we shouldn't be in our faith. The psalmist moves past these phases and into one of a grown man or woman and his father. In fact, the perfect example of this would be Jesus and his father. When Christ was struggling with the fact that He had to die on the cross, He constantly humbled himself and recognized that His father was in control. He said "not my will but yours."

Christ knew that God had everything under control. The psalmist came back to this understanding. He grew up into it. We need to constantly be growing up into it as well.

I think this simple Psalm has so much teaching value in it for us today. Think about it.....We all go through a growing process in our faith. For the most part, it's not just a one-time process either. It happens over and over again every time we hit a brick wall in our lives. We end up going back to an age of infancy filled with doubt and fear. Then we might grow into an age of adolescence and try to reason or bargain with God and tell him what to do. This isn't really a problem though. As long as we keep growing.

The way that we need to put this Psalm into practice is to keep growing into confidence in God. We need to always come back to a place where we can trust in His unfailing love and rejoice in His salvation. A place where we can always sing to the Lord because we know He has been good to us.

**HYMN: #595 We are Pilgrims (The Servant Song)**

1 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.

2 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.

3 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.

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

5 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.

6 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.

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

Lord, we talk so easily about being a friendly church. We like to think of ourselves as a place where everyone is welcomed. But our welcome should not stay confined to these walls. We are called to adopt attitudes of hospitality to others who may not return the favor. We are called to be willing to take the risk of hospitality in our workplace, our homes, our community, everywhere we go. You reached out to people in all kinds of conditions. Many of those people had been rejected by their society, their families. They were in need of compassionate greeting and friendship. Lord Jesus, as you have welcomed us regardless of our faults and failings, let us also be a welcoming presence to all in your name.  
AMEN.

**LORD'S PRAYER**

**HYMN: #425 God, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing**

1 God, dismiss us with your blessing;  
fill our hearts with joy and peace;  
let us each, your love possessing,  
triumph in redeeming grace;  
O refresh us, O refresh us,  
travelling through the wilderness.

2 Thanks we give and adoration  
for your gospel's joyful sound;  
may the fruits of your salvation  
in our hearts and lives abound;  
may your presence, may your presence,  
with us evermore be found

**BENEDICTION**

Do not ever be afraid to welcome others. Bring your welcoming,  
accepting spirit to all those whom you meet. May God go with you on  
your journey this week and all of your days.

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