

**HAGERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH &  
SPRINGVALE UNITED CHURCH  
SUNDAY, JUNE 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

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

South Cayuga

*The blessing of Father, Spirit, Son, Holy Trinity, Three in One,  
be in the worship we share be in our living and our breathing, that  
through our hearts our words, and our prayers your truth may be heard.*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Good Morning! How are you doing today?  
I am sure you would say OK. But right now the best answer is ...  
sometimes good; other times not so good.  
Welcome to our worship this morning.  
I hope you come with great joy, for we need this healing love.  
Here you will also find a vision of peace for a broken world.  
We are all in this together to become part of that vision and be those  
who serve God with just hearts and kind spirits

**OPENING HYMN: 291 "All Things Bright and Beautiful"**

All things bright and beautiful,  
all creatures great and small,  
all things wise and wonderful:  
in love, God made them all.

1 Each little flower that opens,  
each little bird that sings,  
God made their glowing colours,  
God made their tiny wings. R

- 2 The purpleheaded mountains,  
the river running by,  
the sunset and the morning  
that brightens up the sky; R
- 3 The cold wind in the winter,  
the pleasant summer sun,  
the ripe fruits in the garden:  
God made them every one. R
- 4 The rocky mountain splendour,  
the lone wolf's haunting call,  
the great lakes and the prairies,  
the forest in the fall; R
- 5 God gave us eyes to see them,  
and lips that we might tell  
how great is God our maker,  
who has made all things well. R

**OPENING PRAYER**

Abba, Father, Mother, Creator—we call You by many names, but the names we choose show our relationship with You. We desire to draw closer to You, O God. We desire to hear Your voice above the chatter of the world, to know Your ways and to walk in them.  
Spirit of Life, Wind and Breath among us, we feel You move through us, guiding us on our journey, inspiring us to share Your love with others.  
Jesus, the Christ, the Savior of us all, our Brother and Friend, we desire to walk in Your ways and to love one another as You have first loved us.

Triune God, we desire to relate to You and to each other more fully, so that we might draw into the depths of Your love, first glimpsed at creation, when Your voice called us and the earth forth out of darkness into Your light. Continue to call us, guide us and lead us into this world and beyond. **Amen.**

**CHILDREN'S TIME**

## CHILDREN'S SONG

### PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION

God the Creator, we come, in awe of you. We are overwhelmed by the wonder of your creation; we are inspired by the mystery of life; we are amazed by the beauty of your world; we are astonished that such a God would have anything to do with the likes of us. So, we kneel before you, in awe and wonder, humbled before your greatness.

God the Son, who has come amongst us in the person of Jesus; you have walked our streets; you have lifted our children; you have sat in our churches. So we come, with you beside us, no longer remote and distant. We come, no longer in fear and trembling, but seeking the embrace of your love, the smile of your acceptance, the touch of your forgiveness. We dare to come close to you because you have come close to us.

God, the Spirit of Life, we are thankful for your constant presence; for the healing of your love; for the challenge of your Word; for the inspiration of your Gospel; for the community of your Church. Renew us and refresh us; enable us and enliven us; challenge us and change us; prompt us and improve us ... in our worship ... in our mission ... and in our service in the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and all to your Glory Amen.

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 8:1,3,4 (NIV)

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?

Matthew 28:16-20 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The Commissioning of the Disciples

<sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in

heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."<sup>[a]</sup>

### Adaptation of Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Everything was dark when God began creation. God's spirit swept over the waters of this yet to be shaped planet.

Let there be light, God commanded. And there was light, beautiful light, flooding over part of the planet as it began to spin on its axis.

That was the first day – the light that illumines all.

God called the light Day and the darkness Night.

God looked at the waters and separated them.

The waters above were called Sky; the waters beneath were called oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, ponds, streams

So the second day was accomplished and God was pleased.

God was please, but God wasn't done yet. Pushing up from the waters came the dry land.

Springing forth from this land were fruit trees, vegetation.

Each fruit and plant yielded seed, each according to its kind so that it would reproduce and continue.

Delighted with God's own work, God declared it very good.

And so the third day occurred. Lush and green, beautiful with golden grain the earth was giving birth to those things which would sustain life.

God scattered lights in the sky and called them stars to illuminate the Night. A greater light was placed in the sky in the Day and it was called the Sun. A lesser light was given in the Night sky and God called it Moon.

God was very pleased and saw that it was very good. This was the fourth day.

The beautiful waters of the seas and oceans were vacant and so God created the wondrous sea creatures, fish, and all manner of sea and ocean creatures.

The lakes and rivers teamed with fish and aquatic life.

God saw that it was good and so the fifth day was accomplished.

We need some creatures to roam the earth. God created all the creatures upon the earth, endless was the variety of wildlife God created.

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We need someone to take care of these creatures

So God created humanity; and the writers of Genesis wanted us to remember that we are created in God's image, not to be God, but to be God's good stewards; the people who would treat the earth carefully and lovingly.

So, that's how they saw it – the beginnings of our ministries of peace with justice – beginning as stewards of God's creation, not abusers, not destroyers.

We haven't done a very good job. We've abused the land and its people. We have enslaved people and we have allowed young ones to starve, old ones to give up hope. That's not how God wanted it.

We've got another chance to do this right, right now, this very minute. It's up to us. We who call ourselves by Christ's Name must now bear some responsibility for this earth and its people.

Then God will see creation, its creatures, its humans, and call it very good.

## MESSAGE

Our Mysterious God

The definition of Mystery is something that is difficult or impossible to understand or explain.

But there are some mysteries that will always be a mystery. Today, Trinity Sunday, we come against one of those mysteries - God. I dare say that it's not very often that we think of God as a mystery.

Who is God? Where is God? What is God? I can't touch him. I can't say how big he is because I don't know what to measure. I can't see him. If I wanted to take a photo of God I don't know where to point the camera. I can't knock on his door and have morning tea with God at his home. I can't feel the presence of God because I'm never too sure if I am only feeling my own emotions. I can't imagine what God is like because I always end up using human pictures, giving him human qualities so that he makes sense to my small human mind. I can't think like God because if I could I would be able to understand why a young mother had to die, why thousands of people die in earthquakes, or why a child gets cancer.

We don't often talk about the mystery and awesomeness of God these days. We have tried to be a bit more logical and talk more about Jesus and refer to him as a companion, a friend, a miracle worker. Others view God as a nameless being playing with us in the same way as a cat plays with a mouse. What has happened is that people have fashioned God after their own likeness.

As humans, creatures of God, we can't even begin to imagine what God is like. We are restricted to describing God with earthly language and so can only express what God is like in the vaguest of terms and left guessing what we have missed. This is the mystery of God, the great God, the only God who is three persons in one God, who refuses to be categorised, who is far bigger and greater than we could ever imagine, who existed before this world was made, the God who created this world, put the sun and moon and stars in place, the one who created us and said "it was good".

The early Christians started talking about a Triune God. This wasn't to make God more logical and understandable and acceptable to human ways of thinking. In fact, the idea of the Trinity intensified the mystery and awesomeness of God. They were taught of strong powerful God unseen to them, they witnessed Jesus as the teacher, the one sent to save them, that Jesus had a unique relationship with the Father and that the Holy Spirit was given to them to work with them in the absence of Jesus and had a unique relationship with the Father and the Son.

Against all sorts of odds, against all human logic, and in the face of mounting opposition, the Church maintained that Jesus Christ is true God, equal with the Father, and that the Holy Spirit is God, equal with the Father and the Son.

So there we have the Trinity ....

The psalmist can see that God is truly majestic when he says, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens" (Ps 8:1). He looks at the stars and the moon, and these days we could go further and add the galaxies and planets of the universe, and he can only conclude that these must be the work of a great God.

Maybe you have done the same. You looked at the magnificent colours of a sunset, the intricate structure of a beautiful flower, the mountains, the green fields, a star filled sky and you have said, "There, that's proof

that there is a God. Anyone who wants to see evidence of God's existence doesn't need to look any further.

As for how Jesus fits into all of this ... we prepare for his coming as an infant, we follow his life and when God calls him into ministry we listen to his teachings and learn of his miracles and healings and we walk the road of the cross with him, celebrate his resurrection and wait for his return.

And then last week we celebrated Pentecost – the pouring of the Holy Spirit on his disciples and the church. Jesus said that he and the Father would send the Spirit to remind us of the truth of God's promises, to guide us, to encourage us and sustain us when the going gets tough. There is nothing more personal than the Spirit of God. He knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows when we need reassuring. He knows when we are afraid and timid and need the encouragement that comes from God's Word. He knows when we are guilty and depressed and need comforting. He becomes a part of our existence in this world. He lives in us even though we allow our sinful nature to take control of our lives so often. Theoretically speaking some people might say this is impossible this is impossible for God... but God does it anyways.

The doctrine of the Trinity is not an attempt by the church to unravel the mystery around God. In fact, it deepens the mystery. It doesn't tell us everything about what God is and who he is. It raises more questions rather than give answers. But it does tell us about some important things about God – things that are life changing.

Who is God? He is our heavenly Father who made us, takes cares of us and calls us his dear children. Who is God? He is Jesus Christ who gave his life on the cross to re-establish our relationship with God. He reveals the way to God and to eternal life. Who is God? God is the Spirit in you giving you faith in God and guiding you in your daily walk as a Christian.

Faith in the Triune God acknowledges the might and majesty of God but at the same trusts in a God who cares.

I have met many Christians over the years who have been puzzled by the idea of the Trinity... God 3 in 1, some even to the point of saying that they find it impossible to believe. But I don't think we will be questioned about our understanding of the Trinity when we get to the Heaven. After all in human terms this is an impossible concept ... let's leave it as a part of the mystery of God.

But what is important is that in the up and down struggles of daily life we have a God who saves, a God who loves, a God who has gone to extreme lengths to ensure that you have a living relationship with him. Our God might be majestic and mighty but he is here now and wants you to be with him in all eternity.

Let us make it our prayer, Lord God in spite of our unbelief and lack of understanding of who you are, we know you are with us in all times and places, you are that quiet voice in times of turmoil, you are the message in songs and hope for the future. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy spirit, show us your new way of living. 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 wavenotes 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**

God of Love and Mercy, you have given us stewardship to care for this wonderful planet and to care for our neighbors. We have been blessed with a variety of gifts and talents and you call us to use them to help others. Open our hearts today to ministries of peace with justice. Embolden us to become part of this great cloud of witnesses who were unafraid to be your disciples. We think of so many in this church and in our lives who have gone before us, braving the difficulties presented by life. We name them in our hearts before you, grateful for their example. (Silent prayer.) We also name in our hearts those people who are ill, who mourn, who feel lost and alone, those who are part of cultures of oppression and indignity. Help us to be those people who, by our example, will break those chains of poverty and burst the doors that imprison their spirits. Be with this church that it may be a true witness to Jesus Christ in all that we do. In the name of the father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen and Amen

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**HYMN:** 481 “Sent forth by God’s blessing”

- 1 Sent forth by God's blessing, our true faith confessing,  
                                   the people of God from this dwelling take leave.  
 The supper is ended, O now be extended  
                                   the fruits of this service in all who believe.  
 The seed of Christ's teaching, receptive souls reaching,  
                                   shall blossom in action for God and for all.  
 God's grace did invite us, God's love shall unite us  
                                   to work for the kingdom and answer its call.
  
- 2 With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,  
                                   the tasks of our everyday life we will face.  
 Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,  
                                   embracing God's children of each tribe and race.  
 With your feast you feed us, with your light now lead us;  
                                   unite us as one in this life that we share.  
 Then may all the living with praise and thanksgiving  
                                   give honour to Christ and the name that we bear.

**SENDING FORTH**

**(based on the words from 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 (NRSV))**

<sup>11</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters,<sup>[a]</sup> farewell.<sup>[b]</sup> Put things in order, listen to my appeal,<sup>[c]</sup> agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. <sup>12</sup> Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you.  
<sup>13</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of<sup>[d]</sup> the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

**CHORAL AMEN**

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**Four Worms in Church**

Four worms and a lesson to be learned!!

A minister decided that a visual demonstration would add emphasis to his Sunday sermon. Four worms were placed into four separate jars. The first worm was put into a container of alcohol. The second worm was put into a container of cigarette smoke. The third worm was put into a container of chocolate syrup. The fourth worm was put into a container of good clean soil. At the conclusion of the sermon, the Minister reported the following results:  
The first worm in alcohol . . . . Dead.  
The second worm in cigarette smoke . . Dead!  
Third worm in chocolate syrup . . . Dead!  
Fourth worm in good clean soil . . Alive?!  
So the Minister asked the congregation, "So, my friends, what did you learn from this demonstration?"  
Maxine, sitting in the back, quickly raised her hand and said, "As long as you drink, smoke and eat chocolate, you won't have worms!" That pretty much ended the service!