

**CAMBRIDGE STREET UNITED CHURCH**

Lindsay, Ontario

10:30 a.m. - March 2, 2008

**Lent 4**

Order of Service

\* (indicates where the congregation stands as able)

**Theme** (January – July): ***The People of God on a Transitional Journey***

**Today's Theme:** It's not always easy to see things clearly in the desert. We may get fooled by a mirage that gives the illusion of a beautiful oasis of life-giving water. When we get closer, we are surprised to find out it's just more desert. Sometimes we are blind to the beauty that is there in full bloom. Yet we do not need to remain blind to the goodness around us. If we choose to, we can open our eyes to the surprise of life on our journey.

Prelude: Partita on "St. Columba" - E. Stroobach  
(*The King of Love My Shepherd Is*)

Words of Welcome

\* Opening Hymn: **#605 "Jesus Teacher, Brave and Bold"**

Call to Worship (**All - see the back of today's bulletin**)

Opening Prayer: (All)

***God of light, give us the courage and the insight to see your movements among us. We say that we are here because we want to come close you, but then, when you come close to us, we are discomforted. We want you to come to us, but we want you to come in ways that we expect. We want you to speak to us, but not in a way that disrupts our lives.***

***Great Shepherd, keep near to us, keep blessing us with your unexpected intrusions, keep bringing us life and light. Keep intruding upon our darkness with your great light. For in your light is life, which reveals truth we have not seen and opening our eyes to possibilities we may not have realized. On this day may we be receptive to learn from you and from one another. Amen.***

\* **Song of Glory** (congregational response in **bold**)

*Praise our God! **Praise our God!**  
Care for all God's friends! **Care for all God's friends!**  
Love our God. **Love our God.**  
God's love never ends! **God's love never ends!***

Time with the Children (children come forward)  
Children leave for Sunday School classes

**Scripture Readings**

1<sup>st</sup> Testament

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Samuel is surprised by God who sees the inner person. The procession of Jesse's sons (signified by 7, the number of completeness), fail to meet God's criteria. Then David comes. David is the unexpected choice; the youngest son, who belongs to the smallest clan of the smallest tribe of Israel. Samuel anoints David with oil. One who was anointed was set apart from the ordinary and given divine authority. The story of David's anointing makes it clear, from the beginning, that David's success as a king was due to God's power and choice.

2<sup>nd</sup> Testament

John 9:1-41

This is the story of the healing of a blind man on the Sabbath. Jesus takes the initiative; the man has not asked for help. Jesus discounts the prevailing belief that the man's condition was caused by someone's sin. The healed man gave a wonderful witness. The result was that the Pharisees expelled him from the synagogue and he loses his only source of income, begging. Jesus returns and ministers to his hurts. At the end of the story, Jesus remarks "My calling is to bring sight to those who do not see, and to question the vision of those who think they do see." Which am I? Am I open to be surprised by God?

\* Hymn: **#748 "God Is My Shepherd"**

Sermon: *Walking Through Life's Valley - Our Great Surprise*

Anthem: *"Morning Trumpet"* - arr. Alice Parker & Robert Shaw  
(soloist: Rhys Warren)

The Offering of our Gifts and Ourselves

Offertory: *"Christ the Life of all the Living"* - J.S. Bach

\* Offering Doxology (VU #551)

***For food in a world where many walk in hunger;  
for faith in a world where many walk in fear;  
for friends in a world where many walk alone,  
we give you humble thanks, O Lord.***

Offertory Prayer (All)

***O healing God, who moves in ways that we can scarcely imagine, receive our offerings this day. Receive the gifts from our hearts. We want to be your people, yet we are often afraid to do those things that might move us closer to you.***

***Remind us that we each have a part to play in the faith community. Whether or not we see ourselves as leaders, remind us that many people do see us as those who might lead them to Christ.***

***Often we discount our own gifts because we do not think we are smart enough, or strong enough, or articulate enough to serve you. Yet, as we read stories of the faithful, we must admit that you never seem to choose those who might be the most obvious.***

***Rather, you chose those who are old, or slow of speech, or young. These unlikely candidates carry the banner of your truth to the world.***

***Remind us that each of us has an important role to play in your kingdom. Provide us with the spiritual strength to do what we need to do to be kingdom people. Amen.***

Prayers for Ourselves and Others

Jesus' Prayer

\* Hymn: **#657 "He Leadeth Me"**

The Blessing (All)

***Let us go out to love in word and in deed: to care for the poor, to share the good news, to heal the sick, and to release those in bondage.***

***Let us give God the freedom to use us, asking only that the light of Christ touch the world through our ministry, and that all glory be given to God.***

***Blessing and power of God is upon us in our living and our serving.***

Commissioning (composed by Don Besig & Nancy Price)

***Go now in peace. Never be afraid.  
God will go with you each hour of every day.  
Go now in faith, steadfast strong and true.  
Know he will guide you in all you do.  
Go now in love, and show you believe.  
Reach out to others so all the world can see.  
God will be there watching from above.  
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.  
Amen. Amen. Amen.***

Postlude: Finale on "St. Columba"

WORSHIP THEME SUMMARY

Jesus heals us of our blindness. Sometimes his healing can be a threat, for we love darkness rather than light, yet by his grace, we may live in his light.

**WELCOME** to all who are worshipping with us this morning, including all visitors and guests. Please be sure to sign our Guest Book at the back of the church, and include your full address so that we can acknowledge your presence. If you're attending on a regular basis, feel free to call the office and have your name added to our mailing list.

Thank you for those serving us today:

Greeters: *The Puffer Family*

Ushers: *Rick Carter, Sandra & Graham Lowe, Therese & Chris Yu, George Graham, Judy & Dave West, Ialean & Jim Foster, Mike Puffer, Hugh Snoddon*

Elevator Helper: *Alexander Winter*

Scripture: *Suzanne Bell*

Fellowship Time: *Property Committee*

Counting Team: *Mary Fitsell, Brenda Burns, Erna Johnston, Betty Ann Kennedy, Bernie & Lillian Nickerson*