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I WAS BLIND, BUT NOW I SEE!

Waterloo North Mennonite Church

Sunday, March 22 2020, 10:00 a.m.

Lent 4: Show us, Jesus, how you define blindness

Focus statement: Jesus looks at inner attitudes, not external appearance. The church leaders are blind to their sins and so easily pass judgment on others. All of their empty words could not save them. The blind man only had to say, "I believe." Those options are given to us today also. We have to say, "I believe," so Jesus can show us where we are blind.

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Chiming to Worship and Silent Reflection

Psalm Reading Psalm 23

(see last page)

Call to Worship (from Psalm 23)

Leader: The Lord is our shepherd!

People: We have everything we need.

Leader: The Lord leads us beside peaceful waters and right paths,
comforting us through the valleys of despair, and
preparing for us a rich feast.

People: We have more than we need.

Leader: The Lord anoints us for healing, strengthening, gifting, and blessing.

People: Our cups overflow with goodness and mercy.

All: We will live in the house of the Lord forever.

Hymn: HWB (blue) #377 Healer of our every ill (vs 1&4)

Confession

All: God, we confess that we are quick to judge others and not acknowledge our own sins and weaknesses. (silence)

We confess that we do not always follow your example because immorality, impurity, and greed are part of our lives, and obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes come from our lips. God, we need your light to shine on us to expose the things we say and do that are not pleasing to you. (silence)

Forgive us our sins.

Silence

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Though your hearts were once filled with darkness, now you are full of the light of the Lord. This light within you produces only what is good and right and true. Let the Holy Spirit fill and control you. Walk in the light for you are no longer blind.

Children's Time

Congregational Prayer

Scripture Reading John 9:1-41

(see insert)

Hymn: HWB (blue) #517 Open my eyes, that I may see (vs 1&4)

Sermon

Hymn of Response: HWB (blue) #545 Be thou my vision (vs 1,2,5)

Ritual of Response

[I Will Rise](#) (performed by Ontario Mennonite Music Camp)

Extinguishing the Light and Benediction

Leader: Leave from here knowing that you are a forgiven sinner with the light and power of God living in and through you so that those who are spiritually blind can say, "I believe!"

With gratitude and respect, we recognize that we are worshipping on the traditional land that once belonged to the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe peoples. We regret the lack of respect given to the Indigenous people in the past, and pledge to work for justice and reconciliation.

Leading Us in Worship

Pianist	Elvera Froese
Worship Leader	Gordon Allaby & Kendra Whitfield Ellis
Children's Time	Kendra Whitfield Ellis
Congregational Prayer	Peggy Zehr
Sermon	Ron Flaming
Sound	Kevin Lanctot

Our Lenten theme is "Show Us". May our hearts and minds be open when we engage these texts and declare, "Show us." We seek to better understand God, and Jesus lived and taught to show everyone the will and passion of God. As we petition the passages to "Show Us", may we also be receptive to the surprising love and grace of God. The visuals for Lent present the bleak, lonely aspect of Lent. Extinguished candles will mark our journey to the cross.

Psalm 23 (NRSV)

- ¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
² He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
³ he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.
⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.
⁵ You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
⁶ Surely^[e] goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
my whole life long.

John 9:1-41 (NRSV)

9 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the

Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵ He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰ The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" ³⁶ He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." ³⁸ He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.