

The following is done in 20 font. This is to help those with sight issues – obviously if your printer isn't up to a 14 page bulletin (!) please reduce as you see fit. The font was chosen for its readability – but we had differences of opinion as to what worked best. All artwork and quotes are copyright free, but credited.



Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he was always at the King's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

Mountainview CRC in Grimsby, Ontario

The Story of Mephibosheth – to be included as a footnote or insert

On the day that his dad Prince Jonathan died, and his grandpa King Saul died in battle, on that day, Mirab Baal's life went terribly wrong. His nurse took him to Lo Dabar, a city far away from the palace, his name was changed from Mirab Baal to Mephibosheth, after all who would be interested in a person with a name like that - "Son of Shame." And he had to learn how to live without his legs. Oh, they were still there but they did nothing. He had to learn to sit again. He had to learn to be carried by others. He had to learn to be cared for by others. And he always had to pay special attention to his feet, they quickly developed sores and then they took a long time to heal because they had poor circulation due to lack of exercise. His nurse continued to care for him but living in secret, without his dad, without his grandpa, was hard, very hard, very very hard for a long long time. But then he found out that King David and Jonathan, Mephibosheth's father, had been very good friends before Jonathan was killed. He also discovered something very special about David! David had God's love in his heart. And he wanted to show God's love and God's kindness to others, even to Mephibosheth. It was God's love that brought him back to a position of honor in the king's palace. It was the love of God that made him a prince again.

Opening Hymn

All music is left to the discretion of the congregations participating. Some choices we liked – Here I Am Lord; Songs of Thankfulness and Praise; The Church of Christ in Every Age)

Call to Worship

(Our recommendation is to find three folks in your congregation to participate in this opening, as we felt the ironic tone would be better conveyed)

LEADER: Lord, how awesome it is that we can gather here today and loudly sing praises to your name, and know that we are standing in your presence!

PEOPLE: Lord, I can't stand. I use a wheelchair and there is no place for my chair.

LEADER: It really is great, Lord, that we are able to hear you speak to us through the proclamation of the word this morning!

PEOPLE: I'm sorry, God. I didn't hear what was said.

LEADER: And, Lord, it's so fantastic to be able to read your Word along with the pastor, and to recite the creeds, and litanies.

PEOPLE: This morning my vision is dim, God. I cannot read the bulletin.

LEADER: Lord, we really feel blessed that we understand everything that is happening around us in the church in this hour.

PEOPLE: God, why do I learn so much slower than others, and must feel, week after week, that I do not really belong here?

ALL: Open us, O God. Make us accessible to your Spirit, and accessible to all your people.

Adapted from Rev. Dave Wade

Prayer of Confession

Almighty and creating God; we come before you today as people who are separated from one another by fear, prejudice, and ignorance. By our language, actions and facilities we declare insiders and outsiders in our lives and in our church. Forgive us and create in us the vision of opening our hearts, minds, and doors as wide as the love of God, so that no one is left outside. Help us to reach beyond ourselves to discover the joy of community. Give us the patience to discover that all people have gifts and abilities to share with our community of faith. We pray in Jesus name. Amen

Adapted from Southeastern United Methodist Agency for Rehabilitation (SEMAR) 2004

Absolution

God who is faithful and kind, God who holds all of creation in His Hand - today releases you from

your sin and calls you to discover your wholeness through Christ Jesus. You are each loved, called and sent, as you are, to a world which is need of the gifts you have to offer. The God of Grace blesses you and calls you his own. And in His name we claim our forgiveness.

Amen.

Hymn

Prayer of the Day

As we seek to have open hearts, open minds and open doors... Help us to move beyond opening the door to welcome only those who can climb the steps to enter. Help us to move beyond opening our hearts to love only those who look like us. And help us to move beyond opening our minds to accept only those who think like us. Help us to create an

environment, in our church and in our
community, where all are welcome. In your
name we pray. Amen

Adapted from Rev. Dr. Thomas W. Binford, III

First Lesson

We chose to follow the lectionary.

2 Kings 5:1-14

Second Lesson

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Psalm

30

The following message may be used or adapted or put something in place of your own. We felt to emphasize the beauty of God's creation was important.

Children's message based on Genesis 1:26-28

By Mark Stephenson, Director of Disability Concerns

Objects: 1) a hand mirror, 2) paper on which is written the words "The image of God", 3) tape

Keep the paper and tape concealed. Begin your message by holding up the mirror. Say, "Boys and girls, this mirror reflects an image of whatever is in front of it. If I hold it in front of my face, I see an image of my own face. If I hold it in front of your face, you will see an image of your own face - see?" (Put mirror in front of each child briefly.)

Then, while looking at your own reflection, say, "This mirror reflects something else too. It reflects the image of *God*! Isn't that amazing?! In fact, I'm looking at the image of *God* right now. Would you like to see the image of *God* in this mirror?" (Again, put mirror in front of each child briefly.)

Ask, "Did you see the image of *God* when you looked in the mirror?" (Wait for responses.)

While gazing in mirror say, "No? Well I do right now."

Show mirror to one child and ask, "What do you see?"

(Child answers, "Me!")

"You see yourself?"

(Child answers, "Yes.")

"Then you are looking at the image of God, because the Bible says that you and every one of us here is the image of God. Here, take one more look in the mirror and see the image of God."

(Show mirror to each child one more time.)

Say, "Isn't that amazing? Whenever you look in a mirror, you see the image of God, because you are the image of God. To help you remember that, take a piece of paper and write the words 'The image of God' on it, like this (show paper). Tape it to your bathroom mirror at home (Tape paper to

bottom of mirror, and hold up so that children can see). That way, every time you look in the mirror, you will remember that you are seeing the image of God."

(As children return to their seats, gaze into the mirror and admire the image of God you see there.)

Gospel

Mark 1:40-45

Sermon

Sermon Hymn

Apostles Creed

Responsive Reading

Pastor: The Lord calls us as his covenant people to care for each other.

Congregation: We who belong to Christ must answer his call to serve each other in his name.

Pastor: Remarkable examples in the Bible teach us how God uses each member of his community in surprising ways to enrich and enlarge his church.

Congregation: Our Lord is our supreme example. He wanted and welcomed people with disabilities whom society rejected as useless.

Pastor: We have not always made it possible for people with disabilities to participate fully in this community. We have often isolated them and their families.

Congregation: We pledge ourselves to be the caring church we should be, paying special attention to the needs and gifts of people with physical, sensory, mental, and emotional impairments.

Pastor: We pledge ourselves to remove the barriers which keep people from being fully included in our fellowship:

Congregation: The barrier raised by attitudes we hold which make those with disabilities feel unwanted among us; the barrier raised by communication we carry on which ignores those who don't hear, see or learn like us; the barrier raised by architecture we tolerate which makes it hard for some people to join us.

All: Lord, alert us to barriers. Teach us to eliminate them; and show us that in serving we will be served. **AMEN.**

Adapted from "A Resolution on Disabilities" adopted by the Christian Reformed Church Synod 1985

Meal

Offering

The Great Thanksgiving

Communion done as per congregational practice, but we ask that you spend some time thinking about how those with

mobility & motion concerns will partake more easily. We recommend: "We serve wine, grape juice and if you need assistance, please let the usher or worship assistant know." Make sure the ushers and worship assistants are prepared to offer that help!

Lord's Prayer

Consider saying this slowly, loudly and deliberately so that all may hear and understand.

Blessing

God has blessed you with life, and with differing talents and gifts. Through these you are able to serve him and society in various ways. While some people's contributions seem great and others' more modest, the witness value of our efforts is always a sign of hope for everyone.

Our faith helps us to break open the horizon beyond our own selves in order to see life as God does. God's unconditional love, which bathes every

human individual, points to a meaning and purpose for all human life.

Through his Cross, Jesus in fact draws us into his saving love and in so doing shows us the way ahead — the way of hope which transfigures us all, so that we too, become bearers of that hope and charity for others.

May God Bless & keep you. May you follow Him to your true purpose this coming week. In the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit - amen.

Pope Benedict 2008 gathering

Closing hymn