



# Blind, yes, but **not deaf** or mute!

## Children's Story

Year B, Proper 25

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Blind, yes, but not deaf or mute!</b>
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<b>Church:</b>	Springstein Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, MB
<b>Text:</b>	Mark 10: 46-52
<b>Theme:</b>	Jesus is willing to be interrupted by and help people others consider unimportant.
<b>Needed:</b>	A blindfold and a person who is willing to be blindfolded, either one of the children from the group or a pre-selected volunteer.

### Gathering Activity:

Invite the children to come forward for the children's time. Encourage them to settle into a comfortable position for learning and worshiping, and to leave an open space in the middle for your story volunteer.

Blind-fold the volunteer and ask him or her the following questions to show that there are many things that the person doesn't know because they are unable to see: How many fingers am I holding up? What colour of shirt am I wearing? Can you tell me how to get to the 7- Eleven from here? Where is our Bible story from today? (Open your Bible to Mark 10 before asking this question) It's too bad you can't see, but maybe it will help us all understand today's story a little better, because my Bible says this story is called "The healing of Blind Bartimaeus." Let's listen very quietly so that everyone can hear, even if we can't all see.

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## **Story:**

Jesus was walking on his journey to Jerusalem and he came to a town called Jericho. There was a blind man in that town whose name was Bartimaeus. I'm going to call him Bart. Bart couldn't get a job, and he couldn't go to school, because he was blind and there was no special help for blind people in those days. So, Bart would sit at the side of the road every day and beg for money. I suspect that Bart didn't like having to beg. It was dirty and dusty at the side of the road. Maybe some people gave him some money, but a lot probably didn't. Some people probably gave him dirty looks.

(At this point, ask the person who is still blindfolded: What's it like being blind when no one helps you out?)

It wasn't fun for Bart to be blind either, but, as he sat at the side of the road, he listened and paid attention to what people said. He heard them talk about Jesus as someone who had the power to heal people. He got really excited when he heard them say that Jesus was coming to town that very day! Even though Bart couldn't see, he had very sharp ears and knew when something interesting or exciting was happening. Soon, he heard that a crowd was coming nearer. He knew, by listening, just when the centre of attention was going by. He knew this was his special chance to call Jesus. So, Bart shouted out to Jesus in a loud voice using a special name for him, "Hey! Son of David! Have mercy on me!"

Bart was noticed right away. A whole bunch of people told him to be quiet in a way that was not very nice. They thought that Jesus was much too important to worry about Bart, the blind beggar, sitting at the side of the road. But, Bart was not going to give up. He still thought he had a chance. So he shouted even

louder, "Hey, Son of David! Have mercy on me!"

And guess what happened? Jesus stopped! He told the people to tell Bart to come and stand in front of him. The people were surprised, but they told Bart and Bart jumped up to go and meet Jesus. And Jesus healed his blindness right there and then! Why? Because Jesus cares about all kinds of people! Not just the ones that others think are important. Jesus cares about people like Bart who are blind beggars, and about children like you and grown-ups like me. Jesus really cares! Bart sensed that and didn't let others discourage him from coming to Jesus for help. Jesus is pleased when people trust him to help them, like Bart did.

And now, let's help our volunteer. Would you like to see again? Yes? Well then, let's take off your blindfold and welcome you back to those who can see.

## **Prayer:**

Dear Jesus, thank you that you are willing to help everyone who calls for you. Please help me to treat poor people with respect, and to have the courage to call for your help when I need it, like Bart did. (Incorporate additional insights about the story provided by the children into the prayer.) Amen.

## **Wondering questions:**

- I wonder what it would be like to be blind, or to have to beg for money.
- I wonder why the people were angry with Bart for calling for help.
- I wonder why Jesus helped Bart.
- I wonder what Jesus wants to teach us with this story.