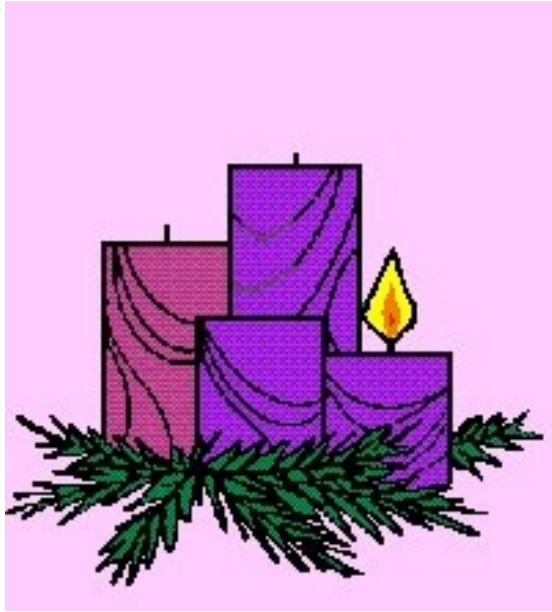


**Melville United Church**  
**Sunday, November 29, 2015**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent - Hope**



*\* Congregation please stand as you are able.*

**Bold print invites congregational response.**

Presiding today: Rev. Marion Loree

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Sharing the Light**

**Prelude/Centering Time:** Improvisation

**Call to Worship:**

What's this Advent all about?

**It's about waiting.**

Waiting for what?

**Waiting for the Christ child.**

But wasn't he born a long time ago?

**Yes! But we wait for him to be born again,  
in our hearts, in our minds, in our actions.**

But how?

**When we speak words of peace.**

**When we live lives of justice.**

**When we work for hope and joy.**

**When we worship God.**

**Then the Christ child lives in us.**

In all of us?

**In all of us!**

Come, let God live in us as we worship together.

**\*Hymn:** Come, O Come, Emmanuel -vs 1,2,6,7

**VU 1**

**Opening Prayer:**

God of Advent surprises, awaken us.

**Awaken us to the possibilities forming by your Spirit within;**  
awaken us to those challenges that become opportunities in faith;  
**awaken us to vulnerability and humility as the soil out of which joy  
blossoms;**

awaken us to the hope of good news that transforms fear into self-  
giving;

**awaken us, O God, to faith alive! Amen.**

**Melville United Church**  
**St. Andrew Street West, Fergus, ON: 519-843-1781**  
**Team Ministry**

Minister of Worship & Pastoral Care	Rev. Marion Loree
Minister of Faith Formation & Outreach	Rev. Robin Osborne
Minister of Music:	Matthias Schmidt
Church Secretary:	Gerri McCullough
Custodian:	Robert Mitchell
Chair of Church Council:	Mary Lloyd
Pastoral Care:	Alison Rainford, Rev. Marion Loree
Chair of Pastoral Care & Prayer Chain Captain	Alison Rainford
Summer Office hours:	10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Th. & F.
E-Mail:	secretary@melvilleunited.com
<b>Web Site:</b>	<a href="http://www.melvilleunited.com">www.melvilleunited.com</a>
Pastoral Care Numbers:	519-826-9385, 519-835-8605, 519-843-3841

**Prayer for Inner Healing:**

God of grace, sometimes we can get so caught up in the preparations for Christmas

**that we lose sight of the birth that is at the centre of it all.**

We can become so stressed by needing to be prepared

**that we stop preparing ourselves to receive your love anew.**

We become so overwhelmed by the things we believe we have to do

**that we want it all to be over and done with so we can carry on as if nothing has happened.**

Forgive us, God

**for letting things get away from us.**

Reshape us in this Advent season,

**that we might refocus on receiving your love into the world once again,**

challenge us to imagine a world so transformed that we barely recognize it!

**Guide us, so that our preparations are real,  
anticipating a changed world and a renewed heart. Amen.**

**Words of Assurance:**

“The time is coming,” God declares, “when I will fulfill my gracious promise with the people...” Friends, know that in the midst of all that is going on in our lives, God is forever fulfilling promises, loving us unconditionally, and leading us into a new day.

**Thanks be to God. Amen!**

**Chorus:** Jesus Came Bringing Us Hope

MV 33

**Jesus came bringing us hope.**

**Jesus came bringing us hope.**

**Jesus came bringing us hope.**

**Hallelujah forever more! (Repeat)**

**Advent Candle Lighting:** (written by Richard Bott. **Gathering**, Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 1015-1016. Page 60. Used with permission.)

People on the west side sing:

**Advent's here- are you ready?**

**Every year (yes, already)**

**the cycle comes round,**

**the Christ to be found.**

People on the east side sing:

**Join us in the walk to Bethlehem!**

**Hope's alive - in our living.**

**Mistakes are made, but there's forgiving.**

**This Christmas we'll share**

**the Good News everywhere.**

West side:

**Join us in the walk to Bethlehem!**

All sing:

**In our lives there can be gloom and sorrow,**

**fears, frustrations - yes - they can abound.**

**But the Christ child is coming (not tomorrow).**

**In this little one our hopes are found!**

East side:

**Advent's here - are you ready?**

**Every year (yes, already)**

**this first candle we light,**

**to guide us through the night.**

All:

**Join us in the walk to Bethlehem!**

*(The first candle is lit)*

*(To the tune of Winter  
Wonderland- Composer  
Felix Bernard)*

**Prayer:**

**You are the hope of the world, God.**

**You are the guiding light in our lives.**

**Open our eyes to your world.**

**Open our hearts to your presence.**

**Open our lives to your hope**

**that we might be eyes, hearts, and hands of hope -  
everywhere we go.**

**We ask it in Christ's name.**

**May it be so!**

**Theme Conversation: Hope**

**Candle-Lighting Hymn:** Hope is a Star - vs 1 **VU 7**

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 33:14-16 (the Inclusive Bible-The First Egalitarian Edition)

(A righteous branch from David's line)

"The days are surely coming, says YHWH, when I will bestow on Israel and Judah all the blessings I promised them. In those days and at that time I will raise up a righteous branch from the line of David, who will bring justice and integrity to the land. In those days Judah will be safe and Jerusalem will be secure. They will call the land, 'YHWH is our Justice.'

**Responsive Reading:** Psalm 25 -refrain 2 (To you, O God, I lift my soul) **VU 752**

**Reader:** Alison Rainford

**Scripture:** Luke 21:25-36 (the Inclusive Bible-The First Egalitarian Edition)

(Signs in the heavens and the earth)

"Signs will appear in the sun, the moon and the stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish, distraught at the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the earth. The powers in the heavens will be shaken. After that, people will see the Chosen One coming on a cloud with great power and glory. When these things begin to happen, stand up straight and raise your heads, because your ransom is near at hand."

And he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, or any other tree. You see when they're budding and know that summer is near. In the

same way, when you see all these things happening, know that the reign of God is near. The truth is, this generation will not pass away until all this takes place. The heavens and the earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on your guard lest your spirits become bloated with indulgence, drunkenness and worldly cares. That day will suddenly close in on you like a trap. It will come upon all who dwell on the face of the earth, so be on your watch. Pray constantly for the strength to escape whatever comes, and to stand secure before the Chosen One."

**Message:** Signs of Hope

**Offering:**

**Ministry of Music:** M. Archer - People look East (Words like VU 9)

**Offering Hymn:** As With Gladness Men of Old - vs 3

**VU 81**

**As they offered gifts most rare  
at that manger crude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy,  
pure and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to you, our new born King.**

**\*Offertory Prayer:**

**We offer these gifts, O God, in the hope that they might help make your promises come true. We offer our whole selves as well and recommit ourselves to exploring ways that we can live the love and justice of Christ's coming every day throughout the year, and not just in this season. Amen.**

**\*Communion Hymn:** As We Gather at Your Table

**VU 457**

**Sacrament of Holy Communion**

*The elements of communion today will be served by intinction. At the appropriate time, you will be invited to come forward to one of the stations, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup and return to your seat. Please take the time you need. For anyone who cannot come forward please remain in your seat and you will be served at the end.*

**Invitation:**

As we come to this table we are reminded that this is not the table of Melville United Church; nor is it the table of the United Church of Canada or any particular denomination. It is the table of Jesus the Christ, the family feast of the whole people of God. All who seek to be nourished and sustained in the journey of faith and long to live justly and in peace with their neighbour, are welcome here.

May God be with us.

**God is here among us.**

Let us open our hearts to God

**We open them to God and to one another.**

Let us give thanks to God.

**It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Prophets call to us,....

.... And so, with voices gentle, and loud, timid, and strong, we declare to the universe in song:

**O holy, holy, holy God,** (MV 203)

**O God of time and space.**

**All earth and sea and sky above  
bear witness to your grace.**

**Hosanna in the highest heav'n  
creation sings your praise.**

**And blessed in the One who comes  
and bears your name always!**

We give thanks, God of peace and promise....

.... we join with all the company of heaven and earth to sing the mystery of our faith:

**Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,** (MV 204)

**Christ will come again!**

**Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,  
Christ will come again!**

At this time we also remember....

**The Lord's Prayer - sung****VU 960**

Even in this Advent season, ....

..... May they make us whole.

**Amen, amen, O Holy One!** (MV 205)

**Hosanna and Amen!**

**Amen, amen, O Holy One,**

**Hosanna and Amen!**

**Breaking of the Bread & Pouring of the Cup**

Jesus said: "I am the bread of life,

**whoever comes to me will never be hungry;**

**whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."**

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come for all things are now ready.

**Sharing the Elements:**

The body of Christ - the bread of life.

The blood of Christ - the cup of blessing.

**Post Communion Prayer:**

**We give thanks that bread broken brings wholeness;**

**that wine poured out replenishes;**

**that time spend with the Risen Christ**

**and one another is gift and grace. Amen.**

**\*Hymn:** Hark the Glad Sound

**VU 29****\*Blessing:**

May the candle of Hope burn brightly in your hearts.

**May we be the signs of hope to others.**

May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace.

**We go to be the hands of God in the world. Amen!**

**\*Parting Song:** People Look East - vs 1                      **VU 9**

**1 People, look east. The time is near  
of the crowning of the year.**

**Make your house fair as you are able,  
trim the hearth and set the table.**

**People, look east and sing today:  
Love the guest is on the way.**

**Postlude:** Improvisation on Lift Up Ye Gates

**Prayer of the Week:**

God of hope, lead us as we travel once again the holy road to  
Bethlehem. When the journey wearies us, we are thankful for your  
unfailing presence, wisdom and encouragement. Grant us courage  
and comfort, confidence, and challenge on the way. Amen.

**Partners in Prayer:** Elora Canadian Reformed Church

**Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference:** First, Sherkston

**Prayer Tree Captain:** Alison Rainford

**Welcomers:** Eleanor Johnston, Graeme Chalmers,  
Joan and John Cuming

**Counters:** Gary and Jane O'Leary