

Melville United Church
Sunday, December 20, 2015
4th Sunday of Advent

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** 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:

God has done great things for us.

Glory to God in the highest!

God is doing great things for us.

Glory to God in the highest!

God will do great things for us.

Glory to God in the highest!

Come, let us worship together in song.

***Hymn:** VU 29 - Hark the Glad Sound

Opening Prayer:

O God, you are with each one of us.

**You are with the young, the elderly,
the disenfranchised, the war weary,
the content, and the discontent.**

You give freely and exuberantly to all of us.

**No matter who we are,
no matter what stage of life we are in,
we each receive your gift.**

We gather to receive your gift with gratitude and songs of praise.

**We gather to live in the fullness of life,
which you have given to us. Amen.**

Prayer for Inner Healing:

It's what it's all about, isn't it God?

Love, alive, carried in the womb,

ready to be born,
to live, to grow, to be!

**We're like Jesus' parents,
wondering if we've done all we can to get ready.**

But, even if we haven't,

**even if we've missed something,
your love is with us,
and with all the world.**

Help us to live that love

**in ways that change the world
as much as this birth-to-be!**

In Jesus' name, in the Creator's love,
in the Spirit's dance, we ask it.

Amen.

Words of Assurance:

As Mary, the mother of Jesus, sang: "My soul proclaims your greatness,
O God, and my spirit rejoices in you." God's spirit of love resides in each
of us - rejoice in it and share it lavishly and without reservation - there
is plenty to go around.

Thanks be to God. Amen!

Chorus: Jesus Came Bringing us Hope MV 33

Jesus came bringing us love.

Jesus came bringing us love.

Jesus came bringing us love.

Hallelujah forever more! (Repeat)

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

(Three candles are lit)

East Side:

-to the tune of Santa Claus is
Comin' to Town

**Oh, with hearts open wide,
with hands open, too;
living God's love each and every day, through -**

All: **Jesus people, walking Christ's Way.**

West Side:

**Opportunities here,
opportunities there,
using our talents, God's gifts we will share -**

All: **Jesus people, walking Christ's Way.**

East Side:

**This Advent flame is burning,
to brighten day and night,
invites us to discipleship -
to shine out the Christ light!**

West Side:

**Oh, with hearts open wide,
with hands open, too;
living God's love each and every day, through -**

All: **Jesus people, walking Christ's Way!**

(The fourth candle is lit)

Prayer:

Love is alive, in every heart;
as Jesus' birth draws near!

We're opening our lives, inviting others in.

Now we light this flame, remembering God's love -
For you, for me, for all!

The Christ child is coming. He is near.

He will teach us of God's love.

Let us take the light of love out into the world.

We will share this love that lives in us!

Candle-Lighting Hymn: Hope is a Star vs 4 VU 7

**Love is a flame that burns in our heart,
Jesus has come and will never depart.
When God is a child there's joy in our song.
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong.
And none shall be afraid.**

The Melville United Church Choir Presents:

Go Tell It! - A Christmas Musical

-arr. Jack Schrader

Prayer:

Holy Presence, our hearts are warmed by the season of Christmas, by the sights and sounds, the joy and the lights, the gifts and the gatherings, the family times, the traditions and tearful nostalgia. Some of us, however, enter into this season with fearful anticipation of the stresses it can bring. Our memories of Christmases past may not be pleasant or this may be the first Christmas without loved ones. We pray that this musical retelling of the Christmas story, the story of your infinite love for all humankind, will captivate and comfort our hearts that we will be filled with your Spirit of Love and be inspired to "go tell it." Amen.

Angels from the Realms of glory

Come, Messiah, Come

How Great Our Joy

Still, Still, Still

Mary, Did You Know?

Silent Night

Christmas Medley

Go Tell It!

Offering:

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:**

God of hope, peace, joy and love, we give thanks for all your rare and wondrous gifts. As we have received so abundantly, we give as we are able, not only gifts to our families and friends, but also gifts to help your church and your world. Bless these gifts and bless us as that all will know you care. Amen.

Joys and Concerns:

Prayer Prelude: Wait for the Lord VU 22

Wait for the Lord, God's day is near.

Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart! (Repeat)

Prayers of the People:**Prayer of Jesus:**

***Hymn:** VU 35 - Good Christian Friends Rejoice

***Blessing:**

Go from here in love.

Go from here expectantly.

The time is almost upon us.

Listen, can't you almost hear the angels singing?

We go, to be the hands of God-who-is-love.

May all the blessings of love and friendship be yours.

Amen!

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

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: J. S. Bach - In Dulci Jubilo

Prayer of the Week:

Teach us to sing your praise, O God. Teach us to sing with notes formed by hopes and acts of justice. Teach us to sing with harmonies shaped by love's wide embrace. Teach us to sing of Love's birth and rebirth for all creation. Amen.

Partners in Prayer: Faith Evangelical

Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference: Grace, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Prayer Tree Captain: Alison Rainford

Welcomers:

David Gohn, Isobel Glennie,

Karen Smillie, Isabel Weaver

Counters:

Mary Lloyd, Brenda Ecclestone