

**Melville United Church**  
**December 24, 2016**  
**Family Christmas Eve - 5:00 pm**



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

**Welcome/Life & Work of the Church**

**Prelude Carol: O come Little Children - Youth Choir**

**Candle Lighting**

**Call to Worship**

Did you come for some hope? Maybe some peace and Joy? Needing to know you're loved? May these doors open wide enough for you. You made time for Christmas tonight.

**Holidays are all around us, noisy and bright. Christmas whispers from inside our hearts, and tugs from the crisp cold stars to our longing spirit.**

Come in, find your place in the warmth, sing the songs of the night, rest among friends who reach for light and hope. No one here is perfect or perfectly holy, not all familiar or frequent. Tonight, if only strangers meet, that is enough.

**This night, different from all other nights, is our Christmas. There is room for all and for me.**

**Advent candle liturgy**

Throughout December, we lit a candle each week for our Advent waiting.

The first candle we lit is for hope that God's light will shine in the world, in all dark places.

The second candle we lit is for peace in our hearts, in our homes, and our world.

The third candle is for Joy that comes from living fully with thankfulness.

The fourth candle is for love that reaches out from one to another, beyond any barrier.

And tonight? Can we finally light the last candle?

One candle remains, at the center of all that is, and now the time has come. Tonight, we light the Christ Candle. This flickering light says "Christmas is here, in dark places and busy places and tired places and happy places, and to all the people who long for a spark of life and hope. Christmas is here. Jesus is born.

**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	Jen Auger
Minister of Music:	Matthias Schmidt
Church Secretary:	Gerri McCullough
Custodian:	Robert Mitchell
Chair of Church Council:	Allan Hons
Pastoral Care	Alison Rainford, Rev. Marion Loree
Chair of Pastoral Care & Prayer Chain Captain	Alison Rainford
Secretary's Office hours:	8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. T., T. & F.
E-Mail:	secretary@melvilleunited.com
<a href="http://www.melvilleunited.com">Web Site:</a>	<a href="http://www.melvilleunited.com">www.melvilleunited.com</a>
Pastoral Care Numbers	519-826-9385, 519-835-8605 519-843-3841

**December 24, 2016**

Carol - VU 6 A Candle is Burning

**Opening Prayer**

**Star of Wonder, God of love,**

**Tonight, if only strangers met, it would be enough, for what power of love waits for perfection and preparation? May we find this room to be a place of sanctuary and friendship, where heaven might touch us, gently, startlingly, leaving us always and forever changed. Awaken us, in our living and dreaming, to our place in a real and present Christmas story. In the name of Jesus, born as light in the world, we pray, Amen.**

Carol - VU 36 Angels from the Realms of Glory

**Meet Abigail: (Inkeeper's daughter)**

Carol - VU 69 Away in a manger

Reading: Luke 2:1-20

**Abigail & her Dad** (Innkeeper's Child)

Carol - VU 71 Twas in the Moon

**Message: Christmas is Now**

Carol - VU 67 Silent Night

**Prayer of the People, Prayer of Jesus**

Youth Choir: I May not go to Bethlehem tonight - J. Smallman

**Abigail & her Dad** (Innkeeper & Child )

Carol - VU 59 Joy to the World

**Sending and Blessings**

**Parting Song:** VU 43 Go Tell It on The Mountain

**Postlude:** Hallelujah Chorus by G. F. Handel.

**Welcomers:** Mary Lloyd, Isobel Glennie, Ralph Rainford