

Melville United Church  
Sunday, May 28, 2017  
Ascension Sunday



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The Ascension

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

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\* Congregation please stand as you are able.

**Bold print invites congregational response.**

Presiding today: Ruth Cooke

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Sharing the Light**

**Prelude/Centering Time**

**Call to Worship:**

We come listening for you to speak.

**We come, O God, wondering what will be.**

We come crying out to you.

**We come, O Spirit, laughing in our joy yet still afraid.**

We come, O Risen Christ, as we look around and worry.

**We come waiting for your voice in our hearts.**

We come at your invitation.

\*Hymn: Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee VU 232

Opening Prayer:

**Loving, creative God, we come as those who enjoy control.**

**We like to know what is going to happen so we can plan ahead.**

**We don't like it when surprises throw a wrench into our plans.**

**It scares us-even terrifies us-when we ponder the future.**

**What will remain? What will disappear? What will change?**

**The shifts in our world, in our lives and in our church  
squeeze our hearts with apprehension.**

**Will we lose what we have worked so hard to build?**

**We reach out to you, O God, in the midst of our fears.**

**Hold us. Comfort us. Strengthen us. Enliven us.**

**In the Name of the Risen Christ we pray. Amen.**

Prayer of Confession:

**We snuggle into your welcoming embrace, O God, seeking healing wholeness in confession.**

**We admit it, O God.**

**We're scared, wanting to squirrel ourselves into safe, predictable places.**

**We're unwilling, unable at times to trust you.**

**"Change happens," we nod sagely, "But only if we can control it, okay?"**

**Then your Spirit breathes where it wills, uncontrollable by its very nature.**

**We turtle and try to protect what we have, even as we are blown in new directions.**

**Will we ever learn to trust in faith?**

**Can we ever learn to trust in you?**

*(Silent Prayer)*

**Amen.**

**Word of Assurance:**

The risen Christ meets you with open arms,  
inviting you to accept the abundance of God's grace,  
to enter into the healing hug of transformation,  
to be born afresh into new ways of living.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Chorus:** Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Give Thanks *(chorus only)* **VU 179**

**Hallelujah, hallelujah.**

**Give thanks to the risen Christ;**

**Hallelujah, hallelujah!**

**Give praise to God's name.**

**Theme Conversation:**

**Hymn:** In the Bulb There is a Flower **VU 703**

**Old Testament Reading:** Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 *(From The Message)*

"God, how long do I have to cry out for help before you listen? How many times do I have to yell, 'Help! Murder! Police! before you come to

the rescue? Why do you force me to look at evil, stare trouble in the face day after day? Anarchy and violence break out, quarrels and fights all over the place. Law and order fall to pieces. Justice is a joke. The wicked have the righteous hamstrung and stand justice on its head."

"What's God going to say to my questions? I'm braced for the worst. I'll climb to the highest tower and scan the horizon. I'll wait to see what God says, how God will answer my complaint. And then God answered:

"Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming-it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time."

**New Testament Reading:** Revelation 21:3b-5a *(from NRSV)*

"See, the home of God is among mortals. God will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God's own self will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new."

**Gospel Reading:** Luke 24:44-53 *(The Living Bible)*

Then he said, "When I was with you before, don't you remember my telling you that everything written about me by Moses and the prophets and in the Psalms must all come true?" Then he opened their minds to understand at last these many Scriptures! And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah must suffer and die and rise again from the dead on the third day; and that this message of salvation should be taken from Jerusalem to all the nations: There is forgiveness of sins for all who turn to me. You have seen these prophecies come true.

"And now I will send the Holy Spirit upon you, just as my Father promised. Don't begin telling others yet-stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven."

Then Jesus led them out along the road to Bethany, and lifting his hands

to heaven, he blessed them, and then began rising into the sky, and went on to heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem filled with mighty joy, and were continually in the Temple, praising God.

**Meditation: Holy Shift!**

**\*Hymn:** I Feel the Winds of God **VU 625**

Offering:

**Ministry of Music:** D. Besig - Every Day is a Gift from the Lord

**Offering Song:** What Can I Do? **MV 191**

**What can I do? What can I bring?**

**What can I say? What can I sing?**

**I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer.**

**I'll bring my love. I'll do my share.**

**\*Offertory Prayer:** (Unison)

**Take what we offer, O God, as you take us -  
our lives and our living, our love and our loving -  
blessing us for your mission and ministry.**

**Transform us into agents of healing for an aching world  
as we share the gifts with which you have blessed us.**

**Amen.**

**Prayer Prelude:** Be Still and Know **MV 77**

**Be still and know that I am God.**

**Prayers of the People:**

**Prayer of Jesus:**

**\*Hymn:** We Have This Ministry **VU 510**

**\*Blessing/Sending Forth:**

Go from this place in Christ's name, inspired by the call into transformation.

**We go as people empowered by the Spirit.**

Go into the world as Disciples of Christ, branches of the true vine.

**We go as people blessed by God's grace.**

Go into your "ordinary" lives, filled with Christ's new wine of promise.

**We go as people claimed by love, seeking to claim love for others in service.**

**\*Parting Song: Melville Benediction**

**Postlude**

**Prayer of the Week:** God of All Places, All Times, All Peoples: Be with your church as we discern our place in a changing world. Help us to proclaim the Good News of Jesus the Messiah, wherever we are, whatever we are doing, to whomever we are with. Amen.

**Partners in Prayer:** Central Pentecostal Church

**Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference:** St. David's - Queenston

**Prayer Tree Captain:** Alison Rainford

**Welcomers:** Ruth Sproule, Eleanor Johnston,  
Dick Haas

**Counters:** Ruth Sproule, Eleanor Johnston