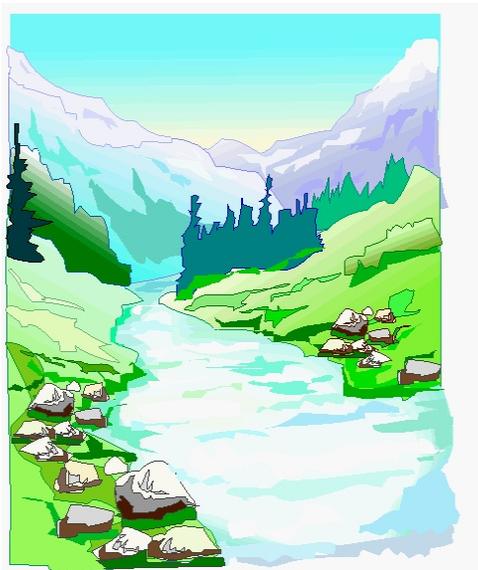


**Melville United Church**  
**Sunday September 10, 2017**  
**Welcome Back Sunday**



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

**Bold print invites congregational response.**

Presiding Today: Marion Loree & Jen Auger

**Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Sharing the Light**

**Call to Worship/Gathering:**

As we continue with the Season of Creation, today, we recognize four elements of creation: Forest, Land, Wilderness, and River. Each element is unique as it claims its role in God's amazing creation. Over the next few weeks we will celebrate Creation as we relate these elements to our own personal lives.

These seeds represent the forests of creation. A seed might grow into anything... a tree for shade, a flower for fragrance or beauty, a vegetable or fruit to nourish and sustain.

**It is a gift of God for all creation.**

This soil represents the land. Soil gives stability. We can build on it, and we can build in it. It nourishes the plants that give us life.

**It is a gift of God for all creation.**

These stones represent the wilderness; a place that is untamed and wild. Where nature reigns and time stands still.

**It is a gift of God for all creation.**

This water represents the river - that sustains, nourishes, cleanses.

**It is a gift of God for all creation.**

These are all elements of Creation.

**Elements of life, for life.**

Come, let us join our hearts in praise and worship.

**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

Alison Rainford

& Prayer Chain Captain

Secretary's Office hours:

8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. T., T. & F.

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[www.melvilleunited.com](http://www.melvilleunited.com)

Pastoral Care Numbers

519-826-9385, 519-835-8605

519-843-3841

**\*Hymn:** Praises Singing (Tune VU 312) -words by Scott Kearns

Praise, my soul, the wondrous beauty  
to discover everywhere:  
painted sunset, morning glory,  
cooling rain, and breezes fair.  
Praises singing, praises bringing,  
for the wonder that we share.

Praise, my soul, the sense of myst'ry,  
knowledge we have yet to find,  
much awaiting our discovery,  
life's details of every kind.  
Praises singing, praises bringing,  
for the questing, searching mind.

Praise, my soul, the deep compassion  
freely offered, freely giv'n,  
care that reaches past the barriers,  
care that takes the stranger in.  
Praises singing, our lives bringing,  
joined with all we share a part.

Praise, my soul, the sense of justice,  
seeing others equally,  
full respect for rights and honour,  
full respect for dignity.  
Praises singing, our lives bringing,  
t'wards a whole humanity.

**Opening Prayer:**

Creator, even as we look to the heavens for your light,  
**we plant our feet firmly on the ground.**

We know your love comes through warm sunlight, refreshing rain,  
and life emerging from the earth.

**We see your creativity in the complexity of the onion,  
the beauty of the roses, and the fiery colours of fallen leaves.**

We taste your spirit in the sweetness of the food we eat and the clear  
water we drink.

**Open us to the many ways in which your goodness and abundance  
emerge from the land.**

Healing One, we sometimes have failed to honour the boundaries that  
have been set for us and all creation,

**and we are sorry.**

We hear the earth cry out for the suffering of your children,

**and we are sorry.**

We bear collective responsibility for contaminated land, polluted waters  
and dirty air, **and we are sorry.**

Loving Creator, we are seeking ways to redeem and protect this  
beautiful creation.

**We recommit ourselves to this work and ask that we be motivated,  
enabled and equipped to restore and renew Mother Earth. Amen.**

**Words of Assurance:**

As we acknowledge systemic injustices in the world, we create space in  
our spirits to act for change, space for God to move in with love and  
empower us as we embrace the needs of the world.

**We open ourselves to God's ever-present spirit of grace and  
transformation as we engage with hope and justice for all creatures  
and places. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**Theme/Message Time:** Creation

**Forest:**

Readings: (Cedric Wright -Earth Prayers)

Consider the life of trees.

Aside from the axe, what trees acquire from mankind is  
inconsiderable.

What mankind may acquire from trees is immeasurable.

From their mute forms there flows a poise, in silence;  
a lovely sound and motion in response to wind.

What peace comes to those aware of the voice and bearing of trees!  
Trees do not scream for attention.

A tree, a rock, has no pretence, only a real growth out of itself,  
in close communion with the universal spirit.

A tree retains a deep serenity.

It establishes in the earth not only its root system but also

those roots of its beauty and its unknown consciousness.  
 Sometimes one may sense a glister of that consciousness,  
 and with such perspective,  
 feel that humans are not necessarily the highest form of life.

Psalm 104:16-17

The trees of YHWH drink their fill - those cedars of Lebanon, where  
 birds build their nests and, on the highest branches, the stork makes  
 its home.

Sharing:

Song: (based on) Called By Earth & Sky - MV 135

**Refrain:**

**Called by earth and sky,  
 promise of hope held high.  
 This is our sacred living trust,  
 treasure of life sanctified,  
 Called by earth and sky.**

**Precious these forests, endless trees,  
 deep creature's dream,  
 forests of healing, shading the earth,  
 the place of life and rebirth.**

**Repeat refrain:**

**Land:**

Readings: (*Hildegard of Bingen - Earth Prayers*)

The earth is at the same time  
 mother,  
 she is mother of all that is natural,  
     mother of all that is human,  
 She is the mother of all,  
 for contained in her  
 are the seeds of all.

The earth of humankind  
 contains all moistness,

all verdancy,  
 all germinating power.

It is in so many ways  
 fruitful.

All creation comes from it.  
 Yet it forms not only the basic  
 raw material for humankind,  
 but also the substance  
 of the incarnation  
 of God.

Psalm 24:1-2

The earth is God's and all that is in it; the world, and those who live  
 upon it. For God founded it upon the seas, planted it firm over the  
 waters beneath.

Sharing:

Song: Called by Earth & Sky - MV 135

**Refrain:**

**Called by earth and sky,  
 promise of hope held high.  
 This is our sacred living trust,  
 treasure of life sanctified,  
 Called by earth and sky.**

**Precious this land, that grows our food;  
 deep rich and firm,  
 anchor for roots of flowers and trees  
 and plants that feed the world.**

**Repeat refrain**

**Wilderness:**

Readings: (*Gary Snyder - Earth Prayers*)

Ah to be alive  
 on a mid-September morn  
 fording a stream

barefoot, pants rolled up  
 holding boots, pack on,  
 sunshine, ice in the shallows,  
 northern Rockies.

Rustle and shimmer of icy creek waters  
 stones turn underfoot, small and hard on toes  
 cold nose dripping  
 singing inside  
 creek music, heart music,  
 smell of sun on gravel.

I pledge allegiance.

I pledge allegiance to the soil  
 of Turtle Island  
 one ecosystem  
 in diversity  
 under the sun -  
 With joyful inter-penetration for all.

Sharing:

Song: Called By Earth & Sky - MV 135

**Refrain:**

**Called by earth and sky,  
 promise of hope held high.  
 This is our sacred living trust,  
 treasure of life sanctified,  
 Called by earth and sky.**

**Precious the wildness, a mystery to us,  
 Vast fragile land.  
 Wisdom for living, rooted and strong,  
 Nature's faithful song.**

**Repeat Refrain:**

**River:**

Readings: (*Thich Nhat Hanh - Earth Prayers*)

Water flows from high in the mountains.  
 water runs deep in the Earth.  
 Miraculously, water comes to us,  
 and sustains all life.

Psalm 104:1,5-12

Bless YHWH, my soul!  
 YHWH, my God, how great you are!  
 You fixed the earth on its foundations so it can never totter,  
 and wrapped it with the deep as with a robe,  
 the waters overtopping the mountains.  
 At your rebuke the waters bolted,  
 fleeing at the sound of your thunder,  
 cascading over the mountains, into the valleys,  
 down to the reservoir you made for them;  
 you imposed boundaries they must never cross  
 so they would never again flood the land.  
 You set springs gushing in ravines,  
 running down between the mountains,  
 supplying water for wild animals  
 and attracting the thirsty wild donkeys;  
 the birds of the air make their nests by these waters  
 and sing among the branches.

Sharing:

Song: Called By Earth & Sky - MV 135

**Refrain:**

**Called by earth and sky,  
 promise of hope held high.  
 This is our sacred living trust,  
 treasure of life sanctified,  
 Called by earth and sky.**

**Precious these waters, flowing strong,  
 deep ocean's dream,  
 waters of healing, rivers of rain,  
 the wash of love again.**

**Repeat Refrain:****Psalm 95: 1-6**

Come, let us sing joyfully to God! Raise a shout to our rock, our deliverance! Let us come into God's presence with thanksgiving, and sing our praises with joy. For YHWH is a great God, the great Ruler, above all gods. O God, in your hands are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks are yours. Yours is the sea, for you made it, the dry land as well, for your hands formed it. Come, let us bow down in worship; let us kneel before YHWH, our Maker.

**\*Hymn:** Let All Things Now Living **VU 242**

**Offering:**

**\*Offering Hymn:** For the Gift of Creation **VU 538**

**For the gift of creation, the gift of your love,  
and the gift of the Spirit by which we live,  
we thank you and give you  
the fruit of our hands.**

**May your grace be proclaimed  
by the gifts that we give.**

**\*Offertory Prayer:**

**Giver of life, just as our ancestors were, we are but sojourners living on Earth for a time. May our gifts contribute to the flourishing of the creation and a larger vision for life and wholeness, for this generation and for those to come. Amen.**

**Children's parting prayer:**

**Dear God,  
Help our lips to praise (*touch lips*)  
Help our hands to serve (*hold our hands*)  
Help our hearts to love. (*Fold hands across chest*)  
Amen.**

**Joys and Concerns:**

**Prayer Prelude:** Holy Sacred Spirit **MV 15**  
Holy sacred Spirit,

breathe your breath on us.  
Holy sacred Spirit,  
breathe your life in us. (Repeat)

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

**\*Hymn:** Touch the Earth Lightly **VU 307**

**\*Blessing:**

We came as individuals joined together as part of God's wonderful creation.

**We go as people willing and happy to care for creation, finding joy in its beauty.**

Go and be at peace with the earth.

**We go with God. Amen.**

**\*Parting Song:** You Shall Go Out with Joy **VU 884**

**Postlude:****Prayer of the Week:**

God of Earth, you formed us from the dust, and to dust we shall return. We are sojourners passing through Creation. May we be gracious guests and mindful stewards as we seek to bring forth the healing and renewal of your good creation. Amen.

**Partners in Prayer:** Maranatha Reformed Church, Fergus

**Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference:** Arkell

**Prayer Tree Captain:** Alison Rainford

**Welcomers:** Doreen and Larry Broome,  
Lynne Lamb, Lorna Ziegler

**Counters:** Lynne Lamb, Richard Wright