

Melville United Church
Sunday, October 29, 2017
Reformation Sunday

* 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:

In the midst of storm and chaos, God is with us.

Let us rejoice!

In a world of violence and fear, God shatters spears and brings peace.

Let us rejoice!

The God of our ancestors will never abandon us. Be still, and know that God is here.

Let us rejoice!

Let us worship God together.

*Hymn: God, Whose Almighty Word

VU 313

Opening Prayer:

Still our hearts, O God, and make us aware of your loving presence. Open our hearts to your teachings, that your ways might become our ways in every moment of our lives and with every beat of our hearts. Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

God, when we stand at the edge of brokenness and allow our questions of faith to distance ourselves from you and others, forgive us and free us. When the ways we live as the church limit our ability to offer compassion, forgive us and free us. When we try to be "holy" without changing the way we are with others, forgive us and free us.

(A time of silence, while we ponder our shortcomings and pray for guidance)

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:	
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.
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Pastoral Care Numbers	519-826-9385, 519-835-8605
	519-843-3841 October 29, 2017

Word of Assurance:

The face of God we seek is a face of compassion,
steadfast in love, and longing to forgive.
Receive the power of God's compassion
so that we might have the capacity for love.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

Theme Conversation:

Hymn: Jesus Loves Me

VU 365

New Testament Reading: Romans 3:19-28 (*The Message*)

We're All in the Same Sinking Boat

⁹⁻²⁰ So where does that put us? Do we Jews get a better break than the others? Not really. Basically, all of us, whether insiders or outsiders, start out in identical conditions, which is to say that we all start out as sinners. Scripture leaves no doubt about it:

There's nobody living right, not even one,
nobody who knows the score, nobody alert for God.

They've all taken the wrong turn;
they've all wandered down blind alleys.

No one's living right;
I can't find a single one.

Their throats are gaping graves,
their tongues slick as mudslides.

Every word they speak is tinged with poison.
They open their mouths and pollute the air.

They race for the honor of sinner-of-the-year,
litter the land with heartbreak and ruin,

Don't know the first thing about living with others.
They never give God the time of day.

This makes it clear, doesn't it, that whatever is written in these Scriptures is not what God says about others but to us to whom these Scriptures were addressed in the first place! And it's clear enough, isn't it, that we're sinners, every one of us, in the same sinking boat with everybody else? Our involvement with God's revelation doesn't put us right with God. What it does is force us to face our complicity in everyone else's sin.

God Has Set Things Right

²¹⁻²⁴ But in our time something new has been added. What Moses and the prophets witnessed to all those years has happened. The God-setting-things-right that we read about has become Jesus-setting-things-right for us. And not only for us, but for everyone who believes in him. For there is no difference between us and them in this. Since we've compiled this long and sorry record as sinners (both us and them) and proved that we are utterly incapable of living the glorious lives God wills for us, God did it for us. Out of sheer generosity he put us in right standing with himself. A pure gift. He got us out of the mess we're in and restored us to where he always wanted us to be. And he did it by means of Jesus Christ.

²⁵⁻²⁶ God sacrificed Jesus on the altar of the world to clear that world of sin. Having faith in him sets us in the clear. God decided on this course of action in full view of the public—to set the world in the clear with himself through the sacrifice of Jesus, finally taking care of the sins he had so patiently endured. This is not only clear, but it's now—this is current history! God sets things right. He also makes it possible for us to live in his rightness.

²⁷⁻²⁸ So where does that leave our proud Jewish insider claims and counterclaims? Canceled? Yes, canceled. What we've learned is this: God does not respond to what we do; we respond to what God does. We've finally figured it out. Our lives get in step with God and all others by letting him set the pace, not by proudly or anxiously trying to run the parade.

Psalm: Psalm 46 - Refrain 2 VU 770

Gospel Reading: Matthew 15:1-9 (*The Message*)

What Pollutes Your Life

^{15:1-2} After that, Pharisees and religion scholars came to Jesus all the way from Jerusalem, criticizing, "Why do your disciples play fast and loose with the rules?"

³⁻⁹ But Jesus put it right back on them. "Why do you use your rules to play fast and loose with God's commands? God clearly says, 'Respect your father and mother,' and, 'Anyone denouncing father or mother

should be killed.' But you weasel around that by saying, 'Whoever wants to, can say to father and mother, What I owed to you I've given to God.'

That can hardly be called respecting a parent. You cancel God's command by your rules. Frauds! Isaiah's prophecy of you hit the bull's-eye:

These people make a big show of saying the right thing,
but their heart isn't in it.

They act like they're worshipping me,
but they don't mean it.

They just use me as a cover
for teaching whatever suits their fancy."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Thanks be to God!

Meditation: "A New Reformation?"

***Hymn:** Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation **VU 325**

Offering:

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

***Offertory Prayer:** (Unison)

God, we thank you for all of the gifts you have given us. Take these gifts and bless them, so that others might come to know of your abundant love. Amen.

Joys & 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:** The Church's One Foundation

VU 332

***Blessing/Sending Forth:**

God, as we go,

Fill us with all truth and with all peace.

God, as we go,

If there is anything that is amiss within us, reform us.

God, as we go,

Where we are right, strengthen and confirm us.

God, as we go,

Where we are in want, fill us.

God, as we go,

Where we are divided and torn, mend us.

God, as we go,

Full us with your joy, that we may share it from the world.

***Parting Song:** You Shall Go Out with Joy

VU 884

Postlude:

Prayer of the Week:

God of Moses, the prophets, the disciples and Martin Luther: Be with us this day and every day. Help us to speak when we see injustice happening, both within your church and without. Grant us the courage to endure ostracism and suffering, if that be our lot, so that others who follow will have easier roads and lighter loads. We pray this in the name of Jesus, who bore all that we might be free. Amen.

Partners in Prayer: Knox Presbyterian Church, Elora

Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference: Chesley, Dobbinton

Prayer Tree Captain: Alison Rainford

Welcomers:

Mark Andrews, Graeme Chalmers
Joyce Keizerwaard, Alison Rainford

Counters:

Norman Martin and Phil Brown.