

**Melville United Church  
Sunday November 12, 2017  
23<sup>rd</sup> Sunday After Pentecost**



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

**Bold print invites congregational response.**

Presiding Today: Marion Loree

**Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Sharing the Light**

**Call to Worship:**

The earth comes from God and has its being in God.

**We also belong to God and have our being in God.**

Open your doors, all who seek to follow God's way.

**We open our doors to God -**

**the doors of our church, our homes, and our hearts.**

May the presence of Spirit be felt in our midst.

**We join together to worship the Spirit of love.**

\***Hymn:** Here We Gather *(Alt. Words - Scott Kearns-melody*

*-Holy Manna- VU 460)*

**Here we gather, here we come together**

**Seeking wisdom, seeking truth.**

**Minds are ready, hearts are open**

**To receive what each can give,**

**Drawing deep from wells of knowledge**

**Sharing insights old and new,**

**As we gather, as we come together**

**Finding wisdom, finding truth.**

**As we gather, as we come together**

**Seeking comfort, seeking strength,**

**minds are ready, hearts are open**

**To receive what each can give.**

**Needs and fears expressed and honoured**

**care extended warm and free,**

**As we gather, as we come together**

**Finding comfort, finding strength.**

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.
E-Mail:	secretary@melvilleunited.com
<b>Web Site:</b>	<a href="http://www.melvilleunited.com">www.melvilleunited.com</a>
Pastoral Care Numbers	519-826-9385, 519-835-8605 519-843-3841

**November 12, 2017**

**In the Spirit let us travel,  
Open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel,  
celebrate the space we gain:**

**There's a place for deepest dreaming,  
There's a time for heart to care,  
In the Spirit's lively scheming  
There is always room to spare!**

**Opening Prayer:**

God, the leaves turn, the world turns, our lives turn,  
**but we gather here this morning to stop for one brief hour,  
to focus on Spirit.**

And so, let us feel your presence here today.

**Let us feel ourselves being gathered -  
gathered into the great love story of the universe.**

Let us feel you within us, around us, through us.

**Let us experience you in the silence,  
in the words, in the music, in the prayers.**

Let us feel you in each other. Blessed be.

**Amen.**

**Prayer for Inner Healing:**

O God, we confess that the spirit of wonder has not always inspired our living.

**Open our eyes, to appreciate the mystery at the heart of creation.**

We confess that the spirit of service has not always informed our living.

**Teach us to be sensitive to the needs of others.**

We confess that the spirit of support has not always motivated our living.

**Fill us with the desire to strengthen and uphold one another.**

O God, give us the insight to recognize you in the blessings we find.

**Give us the faith we need to see this journey through. Amen.**

**Words of Assurance:**

We will not remain unmoved if our hearts are truly open to God's healing love.

We can trust that God is with us on the journey. We are not alone - ever!

**These are words of good news indeed! Thanks be to God!**

**Theme Conversation:**

**Hymn:** This Little Light of Mine

**This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine. I'm gonna let it shine.  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.**

**Hide it under a bushel (NO!). I'm gonna let it shine.  
Hide it....**

**Don't let anyone (*blow*) it out. I'm gonna let it shine.  
Don't let...**

**See the light spreading round the world. See all the faces shine.  
See the....**

**Children's Prayer:**

**Dear God,  
help our lips to praise (*touch lips*)  
help our hands to serve (*hold out hands*)  
help our heart to love (*fold hands across chest*)  
Amen.**

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:1-13 (*The Inclusive Bible: the First Egalitarian Translation*)  
(*Parable of attendants and lamps*)

"Then again, the kingdom of heaven could be likened to ten attendants who took their lamps and went to meet the bridal party. Five of them were wise; five were foolish. When the foolish ones took their lamps, they didn't take any oil with them, but the wise ones took enough oil to keep their lamps burning. The bridal party was delayed, so they all fell asleep.

"At midnight there was a cry: 'Here comes the bridal party! Let's go out to meet them!' then all the attendants rose and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise ones replied, 'Perhaps there won't be enough for us; run to the dealers and get some more for yourselves.'

“While the foolish ones went to buy more oil, the bridal party arrived; and those who were ready went to the marriage feast with them, and the door was shut. When the foolish attendants returned, they pleaded to be let in. The doorkeeper replied, ‘The truth is, I don’t know you.’

“So stay awake, for you don’t know the day or the hour.”

**Scripture:** Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25 (*The Inclusive Bible: the First Egalitarian Translation*) (*Joshua challenges the people to choose God.*)

Joshua gathered together all the tribes of Israel at Shechem, and called a summit of the elders, leaders, judges, and officials of Israel. Once they presented themselves before God, Joshua said to the whole assembly, “This is the word of YHWH, the God of Israel:

‘Long ago your ancestors, including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates and worshiped other gods. But I took your ancestors Sarah and Abraham from the land beyond the Euphrates and led them through the entire region of Canaan.’

Joshua then said, “I now call upon you to revere and serve YHWH completely and sincerely. Cast off the gods that your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt, and worship YHWH alone. If you do not want to worship YHWH, then make the decision today whom you will worship, even if it is the gods of your ancestors beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites in whose country you live. As for me and my household, we will worship God.”

Then the people responded, “Far be it from us to abandon YHWH to worship other gods. It was YHWH our God who brought us and our ancestors up and out of the land of slavery. YHWH performed those great signs before our eyes. YHWH protected us on the entire journey and among all the peoples whose lands we passed through. YHWH drove out before us the Amorites and all the people dwelling in the land. We too will serve YHWH, who is our God.”

Joshua said to the people, “You will not be able to serve YHWH. This is a God most holy, a jealous God, a God who doesn’t forgive your transgressions and your sins. If you desert YHWH and serve foreign gods, after all God has done for you, you will bring disasters - fatal ones - upon yourselves.”

But the people protested, “No! We will serve YHWH!”

Then Joshua said “you are your own witnesses that you are choosing to serve YHWH.”

“Yes, we are witnesses,” they replied.

“Now then,’ said Joshua, “throw away the alien gods among you and turn your hearts to YHWH, the God of Israel.”

Then the assembly said to Joshua, “We will serve and obey YHWH our God!”

On that day Joshua ratified the covenant with the people and drew up statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

**Reader:** David Gohn

**Responsive Reading:** Psalm 78 vs 1-7

(*paraphrase - James Taylor, Everyday Psalms*)  
(*Tell me a story*)

If I say, “Once upon a time,”

everyone knows a story is starting.

I do not know the meanings of my stories;

I merely pass them on as they were passed to me.

Only you can decide what they mean to you.

**This is our story. This is where we came from.**

When you hear this story, you must also tell it,  
so that others may also know where they came from.

**Our story is not limited to our own lives.**

We belong to a long line of travelers,  
snaking in single file through history;

**we bear with us the beliefs, the convictions,**

**the experiences bequeathed to us**

**by those who passed this way before.**

From Abraham and Sarah, from Rachel and Jacob,  
from David and Bathsheba, from Mary and Jesus,  
we learn our family story.

**Only by knowing where we have come from**

**can we know where we are going.**

Only by knowing who we are

can we know that God is with us.

**Message:** Five Things the Church Should Stop Saying

**Hymn:** One More Step Along the World I Go

**VU 639**

**Offering:**

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

**\*Offertory Prayer:**

**Holy Presence, your great love fills us, spilling over into energized service. Our hearts and lives are full and we must share what has been given to us. May the offerings of time, talent, skills, and money we present today be symbolic of everything we eagerly share. May they provide a blessing to us and to everyone whose lives they touch. 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:** Teach Me, God, to Wonder **VU 299**

**\*Blessing:**

As we go from this place of worship,  
may we never stop noticing

**the many advantages we enjoy every day.**

May our "thankful hymns of praise"  
go beyond the doors of our church

**and lead to lives of action and compassion.**

With Creator Spirit accompanying us,

**may we be open to the beauty of God's world.**

Open to the cries of those in need,

**and open to face new challenges**

**as we embrace the future together.**

Go, knowing God is with you now and always.

**Amen.**

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

**Postlude:**

**Prayer of the Week:**

God, kindle a flame within my heart  
to keep me alert and vigilant,  
ready always to seek and follow the ways of wisdom. Amen.

**Partners in Prayer:** St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Elora

**Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference:** Delhi

**Prayer Tree Captain:** Alison Rainford

**Welcomers:** Bob Zirk, Isobel Glennie  
Joan and John Cuming

**Counters:** Richard Wright and Art Russell.