

**Melville United Church**  
**Sunday December 10, 2017**  
**Advent 2**



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

**Bold print invites congregational response.**

Presiding Today: Marion Loree

**Prelude**

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Call to Worship:**

Come, people of God,  
holy creations, wholly God's,  
with our holey and ragged lives.

**We come seeking God's grace to make us whole.**

Come on this second Sunday of Advent.

**We come to continue the journey toward Christmas**

**preparing our hearts and our homes to welcome God's love.**

Come to trust, listen, believe, and imagine what is possible.

**We come to worship together.**

**\*Hymn:** Come and Find the Quiet Centre

**VU 374**

**Opening Prayer:**

God, we long for you to be with us -

**not as an echo from the distant past,**

not as a rumour spread by wishful thinkers,

**but as a presence strong and real.**

As Christ was born of Mary long ago,

**may Christ be born in us this day,**

**that we too may be bearers of peace for the world. Amen.**

<p>Melville United Church St. Andrew Street West, Fergus, ON: 519-843-1781 Team Ministry</p>	
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
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**Prayer for Inner Healing:** Psalm 85*(paraphrase by James Taylor - Everyday Psalms)**(Forgiven)*

You have forgiven us before, God.

**When we made mistakes, you took us back.**

You were angry, but you didn't take it out on us;

**you were upset, but you didn't nurse a grudge,**

Do it again, God.

**Forgive us; we didn't know what we were doing.**

Don't hold our faults against us forever -

**forever is a long, long time.**

We were not ourselves;

**we cannot be ourselves when we are cut off from you.**

Take us back into your good graces,

and let us laugh and sing again.

**We admit we have done wrong.**

We have caused hurt. We are sorry.

**Tell us what we need to do, to feel your love again. Amen.****Words of Affirmation:**

At the beginning, at the end, and every time between,  
the good news speaks to us of God's tender love.

**God comes!**

Not to punish, but to give us peace,

**not to judge, but to love us.****Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**Ministry of Music:** Waiting and Longing - Larsen & Brooks

**Theme Conversation:** Comforting Words

**Lighting of the Advent Candle:** Angels, Peace

*(First candle is lit)***Angels, what are you doing?****Can we join you?**

We have been given an important task.

We are taking a message to the shepherds.

It will be a message of peace for the whole world.

We are so excited that we can't hold our wings still.

We get to tell the world that Jesus has been born.

Please come with us and join in our song of peace.

**Thank you, angels, for your faith and your gift of peace.****We will join you on this Advent adventure.***(The second candle is lit)*

**Song: Hope is a Star - VU 7 vs 2**

**Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,**

**giving a promise of safety and worth.**

**When God is a child there's joy in our song.**

**The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,**

**and none shall be afraid.**

**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:** Mark 1:1-8 *(The Inclusive Bible: the First Egalitarian Translation)*

*(The preaching of John the Baptizer)*

Here begins the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: as it was written in Isaiah the prophet: "I send my messenger before you to prepare your way, a herald's voice in the desert, crying, 'Make ready the way of our God. Clear a straight path.'"

And so John the Baptizer appeared in the desert, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean

countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to John and were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.

John was clothed in camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist, and he ate nothing but grasshoppers and wild honey. In the course of his preaching, John said, "One more powerful than I is to come after me. I am not fit to stoop and untie his sandal straps, I have baptized you with water, but the One to come will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Scripture:** Isaiah 40:1-11 (*New Revised Standard Version*)

*(Comfort, O comfort my people)*

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from God's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of God, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of God shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of God has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of God blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

YHWH, O Sovereign One, you come with power, and rule with a strong arm! You bring your reward with you, and your recompense comes before you. Like a shepherd you feed your flock, gathering the lambs and holding them close, and leading the mother ewes with gentleness.

**Message:** Preparing the Heart for Peace

**Hymn:** Take Time to Be Holy

**VU 672**

**Offering:**

**\*Offering Hymn:** Behold, Behold

**MV 115**

**Behold, (behold,) behold, (behold.)**

**I make all things new, beginning with you  
and starting from today.**

**Behold, (behold,) behold, (behold.)**

**I make all things new, my promise is true,  
for I am Christ the way. (Repeat).**

**\*Offertory Prayer:**

**May the gifts we offer help smooth the way for those who struggle,  
help rebuild the lives of those who have fallen, and bring peace and  
comfort to many, loving God, we pray. Amen.**

**Joys and Concerns:**

**Prayer Prelude:** May We But Wait

**MV 175**

**May we but wait upon Love's word,**

**Knowing our prayer is heard. (Repeat)**

**Prayers of the People:**

**Prayer of Jesus:**

**\*Hymn:** There's a Voice In the Wilderness

**VU 18**

**\*Blessing:**

As we have felt God's presence with us here,

**may we be present to those we serve this week.**

As we know God's peace in words and ways of comfort,

**may we show God's peace in words and ways of comfort.**

As we find our home in God's Spirit of Hope and Peace

**may God's peace and hope shine in all the world.**

Go, knowing the love of God, the peace of Christ

and the companionship of the Holy Spirit is with you now - and always!

**Amen.**

**\*Parting Song:** I Am Walking the Path of Peace

**MV 221**

**I am walking a path of peace,**

**I am walking a path of peace,**

**I am walking a path of peace,**

**lead me home, lead me home. (Repeat)**

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

Comfort us, O God with a comfort that strengthens us for the world;  
with a comfort that encourages us to trust you; with a comfort that  
inspires us to be messengers of hope; with a comfort that renews our  
living and our worship. Amen.

**Partners in Prayer:** Belwood/Metz Pastoral Charge

**Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference:** Erindale, Mississauga

**Prayer Tree Captain:** Alison Rainford

**Welcomers:** Graeme Chalmers, Ralph Rainford  
Joan and John Cuming,

**Counters:** David Gohn, Phil Brown