

**What's Important About Christmas?
A White Gift Service
Dec. 17, 2017**

**Welcome & Life and Work of the Church
Sharing the Light**



Prelude: Improvisation

Call to Worship:

Opening Prayer

Ashley: Loving God, we are so busy this time of year that sometimes we find it hard to slow down and make time for worship.

All: Open our hearts to wonder and joy.

Ella: Loving God, sometimes we get caught up in wondering how many presents are going to be under the tree and we forget what really matters.

All: Open our hearts to wonder and joy.

Ashley: Loving God, we worry about so many things that may or may not really matter and we forget to spend time with those we love.

All: Open our hearts to wonder and joy.

Ella: Loving God, we want Christmas to be perfect but we don't always know what a perfect Christmas really look like.

All: Open our hearts to wonder and joy.

Ashley: Loving God, in this time of worship may we touch again the wonder and joy of the Christmas mystery so that we can learn again what is really important.

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 |
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| Secretary's Office hours: | 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. T., T. & F. |
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December 17, 2017

All: Open our hearts to wonder and joy. Amen.

Sing VU9 People look East

Prayer for Inner Healing

Everyone is invited to write one or more unrealistic expectations they have of themselves or others on the piece of scrap paper and then bring/send that expectation forward during the prayer and shred it.

Words of Assurance

Sing VU 7 Hope is a Star (vs. 3)

Prayer for Illumination

Reflection: Children and Youth tell the story of Christmas (based on Luke)

Sing VU16 "Mary, Woman of the Promise"

Story con't

Sing "Magnificat"

Story con't

Candle Lighting Liturgy

All: Mary and Joseph, where are you going? Can we go too?

We are walking to Bethlehem.

We have been asked to be earthly parents to God's child.

This will be the hardest thing we have ever done.

It is scary. It has been hard to believe.

Some of our family and friends still don't believe us.

But that's ok. What an amazing, joyful opportunity we have.

We get to be the first to welcome God's son to the world.

We get to love him and are for him.

Yes, please come along with us and help us welcome our son.

**All: Thank you Mary and Joseph, for your faith
and your gift of joy.**

We will join you on this Advent adventure.

Three candles will be lit in our advent wreath

Sing MV 90 Don't Be Afraid

Story con't

Sing VU 56 Jesus our Brother

Story con't

Anthem Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

(with Catie Johnston and angels)

Story con't

Anthem Oh What a Wonderful Gift? *(Linnea Good)*

Prayers of the People

Adult: Holy God, help us to say Yes to when you call to us. Show

us what you would like us to do and give us the courage to answer your call.

All: Help us to say Yes

Child: Holy God, help us to build community. Help us to love one another even when that's hard to do.

All: Help us to build community.

Adult: Holy God, help us to reach out to those who are on the margins in our society: the homeless, the hungry, those without winter clothes, those who are sick, those who are lonely or sad.

All: Help us to reach out.

Child: Holy God, help us to turn your world upside-down so that the people whom the world thinks are least important feel most loved and cared for.

All: Help us to turn the world upside-down. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

Offering Response MV 115 Behold, Behold

Offering Prayer (together)

Loving God, accept these gifts we offer. Help us to use them to reach out to others and turn the world upside-down for you. Amen.

Sing VU 59 Joy to the World

Sending & Blessing

Child: Are you less stressed now?

Adult: A little. It helps to remember what's most important.

Child: Yes it does.

Adult: Then let us go forth this day remembering what we've learned:

Child: We go forth this day:

All: To say Yes to God

To build community

To reach out to others

To turn the world upside-down.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Sing MV 221 I am Walking the Path of Joy

Postlude: J. S. Bach - Toccatta on In Dulci Jubilo(Good Christian Friends Rejoice)

Thank you families, kids and youth for all of your help making worship this morning meaningful. Special thanks for:

Story script: Beth Kerr, Trinity U.C., Portage la Prairie, Man.

Storytellers: Ashley Bell, Aurora Sampson, Ella Ogilvie, Liam Ogilvie

Baby Jesus: Kayden Sampson Ward

Choreographer: Catie Johnston

Music: Matthias Schmidt

Angel tutus: Susanne Schmidt-McQuillan, Megan Smith

Co-ordination: Martha Duncan

Partners in Prayer: Centre Wellington Food Bank

Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference: First, Cambridge

Prayer Tree Captain: Alison Rainford

Welcomers: Dorothy Collin, Joyce Keizerwaard
Doreen and Larry Broome

Counters: Karen Smillie, Richard Wright