

Melville United Church
Sunday, March 11, 2018
4th Sunday of Lent



** Congregation please stand as you are able.*

Bold print invites congregational response.

Presiding today: Rev. Marion Loree

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Sharing the Light:

Lent can be a journey, together and alone.

Lent can be temptation for each and every one.

Lent can be a challenge to see with more than eyes.

Lent can be a pathway, through sunset to sunrise.

We light our candles to remind us Spirit guides us on our Lenten journey.

(Candles are lit)

Call to Worship:

Come all who need justice,

God weaves in us the path of life.

Come all who need peace,

God weaves in us the way of truth.

Come all who need comfort,

God weaves in us a sure hope.

Come all who need healing,

God weaves in us the promise of wholeness

Come all who need community,

God weaves in us the love of Christ.

Come all who need God,

God weaves us in the heart of the Divine.

Give thanks to God for God is good.

God's steadfast love endures for all time.

Come, let us worship together.

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 Team:	Rob White, Suzanne Flewelling
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

Opening Prayer: *(written by Richard Bott, Gathering, Lent/Easter 2018, page 30. Used with permission.)*

We are given life -

by Love.

We are called -

by Love.

We are gathered together -

by Love.

By God's love for us...

and by our love for God.

So, this day and all days...

We abide in the love of God,

living God's will,

loving God's way.

Come, people of the covenant,

let us worship Holy Oneness.

Let us pray:

You, Source of Life, are our all-in-all,

the ground of our being,

the rock of our faith,

the place of shelter,

in the never-ending dance

of our lives.

For those moments in which we need calm,

give us peace,

For those moments in which we need to go,

give us energy.

For those moments in which we need to simply be,

give us love.

And help us to be

your vessels of love, energy, and peace

that flow into the world.

In Christ's name, we ask it. Amen

Prayer for Inner Healing:

Imagine yourself alone at a table spread with simple food.

Imagine you are praying before you eat.

For what do you give thanks in your life at this time?

(Silent prayer)

What feels unresolved or unsettled in your life at this time?

(Silent prayer)

What relationships may need your renewed attention?

(Silent prayer)

What healing would you like to hear right now?

(Silent prayer)

God, hear our prayers.

And give us wisdom to discern the answers. Amen.

Words of Affirmation:

God is not discouraged with us.

God doesn't have an ego to be bruised by our rejection.

God waits for us

to turn and live into the love which is always there.

Thanks be to our ever-loving God. Amen!

Ministry of Music: I Call to You Music - Matthias Schmidt. Lyrics - Cody Rawn

Sacrament of Baptism

Being accepted into the Christian family of faith today is Lucas Alexander DiMarco, son of Fabio and Jaime Skylar DiMarco and Shannon Marie Buckton, daughter of Fred and Helen Buckton.

Statement of Purpose:

Presentation of the One to be Baptized

On behalf of the congregation of Melville United Church I present Lucas Alexander DiMarco and Shannon Marie Buckton for initiation into the body of Christ through baptism.

(families come forward)

Scripture: Galatians 3:27-29 (The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation)

Each one of you is a child of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus. All of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. In Christ there is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus. Furthermore, if you belong to Christ, you are the offspring of Abraham, which means you inherit all that was promised.

Profession of faith: *(by Shannon on her own behalf and by parents on behalf of their child)*

In baptism we are joined to the Christian family through the sign and seal of God's eternal love.

Do you believe in God and God's love?

Yes, I do so believe.

Do you believe that God is revealed to us in Jesus the Christ who lived and died, and who lives on in the Christian church?

Yes, I do so believe.

Do you believe that God, through the Holy Spirit, is active in the world to direct and to strengthen you?

Yes, I do so believe.

By Parents of the Child

Will you do your best to provide a Christian home for your child, encouraging him to grow in his own faith and to seek confirmation?

Yes I will, God being my helper.

Commitment of Godparents:

Recognizing that many persons nurture and influence the life of a child, will you support this child and his parents as they grow in faith together?

I will, God being my helper.

Commitment of Sponsor:

In baptism, Shannon marks an important step in her journey of faith.

Will you support her, encourage her and walk with her in the way of God's love?

I will, God being my helper.

Commitment by Congregation *(congregation stands)*

We are to receive this child and this person as part of our faith community. In so doing, we remember our calling to share life together, and to be open to the future that all our children contain. We are also called to support this family, this child and this person with love and with Christian teaching. Are you willing, as you are able to share in this responsibility?

We are willing, God being our helper.

Let us remain standing as we repeat together our statement of faith "A New Creed".

Affirmation of Faith: A New Creed

VU 918

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

**We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen
our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.**

**We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.**

Blessing of the Water:

Prayer of Blessing:

The Baptism of Shannon

**Sign of the Cross and Blessing
Laying on of Hands/Blessing**

Baptism of Lucas

**Sign of the Cross and Blessing
Laying on of Hands/Blessing**

Prayer

Lighting of the Baptismal Candles:

The candles will now be lit to represent the light of Christ which shines in you and in each one of us and to remind us that the light of God's presence is with us always.

Anyone wishing to do so is invited to come forward to welcome Shannon as the baby is introduced to the congregation and the following blessing is sung.

Sung Blessing: I Have Called You by Your Name **MV 161**

Presentation of Baptismal Certificate and Gifts

Scripture: Numbers 21:4-9 (*Inclusive Bible - The First Egalitarian Edition*)
(*A bronze serpent heals the people*)

The Israelites travelled from Mount Hor along the road to the Sea of Reeds in order to avoid Edom. But the people grew impatient along the way, and they addressed their concerns to God and Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? We have no bread! We have no water! And we are disgusted with this terrible food!"

Then YHWH sent venomous snakes among the people. They fatally bit many of the people. So the people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against YHWH and against you. Intercede for us, and ask that God remove the snakes from us."

So Moses prayed for the people. And YHWH said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it on the end of a pole. Anyone who is bitten and looks at it will live." So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then whenever the people were bitten by a snake, they looked at the bronze snake and lived.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 **VU 831** - Parts One & Two
(*God's steadfast love endures forever*)

Scripture: John 3:14-21 (*Inclusive Bible - The First Egalitarian Edition*)
(*For God so loved the world*)

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so the Chosen One must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in the Chosen One might have eternal life. Yes, God so loved the world as to give the Only Begotten One, that whoever believes may not die, but have eternal life.

God sent the Only Begotten into the world not to condemn the world,

but that through the Only Begotten the world might be saved. Whoever believes in the Only Begotten avoids judgement, but whoever doesn't believe is judged already for not believing in the name of the Only Begotten of God.

On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light came into the world, people showed they preferred darkness to the light because their deeds were evil. Indeed, people who do wrong hate the light and avoid it. For fear their actions will be exposed; but people who live by the truth come out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what they do is done in God."

Message: God's Promise - Through Good Times and Bad

Hymn: You, Creator God, Have Searched Me **MV 131**

Offering:

Offering Hymn: Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow **VU 541**

***Offertory Prayer:**

We give thanks, God of all peoples, times and places, for the many blessings we know each day. Take these, our offerings, as a sign of our true offering, which is our very lives. Transform our money, time and talent into tools that bring hope, just as you transform our anxieties and fears into love and joy. Amen.

Joys and Concerns:

Prayer Prelude: How Deep the Peace **MV 95**

Prayers of the People:

Lord's Prayer:

***Hymn:** Great is Thy Faithfulness **VU 288**

***Blessing/Sending Forth:**

I am not alone.

I know a presence around me,

in the air I breathe within me,

in the sounds I hear beyond me,

and I know their source

streams from the great love

that brings and blesses all life,

always there,

streaming from the birthplace of all things.

I am not alone.

I am loved by Love itself,

that will never let go.

I move in its delicious vastness.

I am a drifter on the sea of Love.

Give thanks to God for God is good.

God's steadfast love endures for all time.

Amen!

***Parting Song:** God, Prepare Me to be a Sanctuary **MV 18**

God, prepare me to be a sanctuary,

pure and holy tried and true;

with thanksgiving,

I'll be a living sanctuary for you. (Repeat)

Prayer of the week:

God of the ages, when pain and grief overwhelm, when terror and violence reign, when health shatters and hope crumbles, your steadfast love endures. When our lives are running smooth and joy is our companion, your steadfast love endures. Mend our broken hearts. Fill us with the joy of your being, that we might bear your life-giving love in every moment. Amen.

Partners in Prayer: Bethel Mennonite Church

Prayer Cycle for Hamilton Conference: Mount Forest, Woodland

Prayer Tree Captain: Alison Rainford

Welcomers: Doreen and Larry Broome, Karen Smillie,
Elizabeth Stinson

Counters: Karen Smillie and Larry Broome: