



October 4, 2020

Melville United Church

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Melville United Church
Oct 4, 2020
18th Sunday after Pentecost

Worship prepared today by Rev. Marion Loree
Message by Ruth Cooke

We acknowledge with respect the history, spirituality and culture of the Indigenous peoples with whom Treaty 4 - also known as the Haldimand Tract - was signed and the territory wherein our church resides, and we acknowledge our responsibilities as treaty members.

Welcome

My name is Marion Loree and I am the minister at Melville United Church in Fergus, Ontario. We gather in community today - some of us here in person and some of us on-line and some by the printed word. Today is October 4, 2020.

This past Thursday, October 1st marked the day I returned to my ministry duties from a combination of sabbatical leave and vacation. I have been gone four months and I am happy to be back and to say hello again. Being that I only started back on Thursday, I asked that someone else do the preaching today so this service is a joint effort between myself and Ruth Cooke who will offer a message for us a little later.

Right now I invite you to join us in this time of worship - a time in which we search together for hope and meaning and ways to strengthen our faith. A time for recognizing and acknowledging the still small voice within each of our hearts.

Announcements:

Joys and Concerns:

Sharing the Light *(take a moment to light a candle and centre yourself to prepare to enter in to a time of worship and prayer. As you light the candle repeat the following words)*

I light a candle

in the name of the God who creates life,
in the name of the Christ Presence who loves life,
in the name of the Spirit who is the fire of life.

Call to Worship:

Come join God's family here in this place.

We are grateful to be here.

Come, open your heart and let God's love flow through you.

We give God thanks for our lives.

Come, let us worship God together.

Words of Wisdom: by Katherine Anne Porter

Don't sidestep suffering. You have to go through it to get where you're going.

Opening Prayer:

We gather as those who wonder and wander;
 we participate and pull back;
 we are faithful at times and frail at others.

May life giving ways be opened for us and within us.
 Some know what it is to struggle,
 to be broken but not crushed,
 to despair yet be held by unseen love.

May life giving ways be opened for us and within us.
 As a river carries life within its flowing channels,
 may we encounter, this day, the spirit of the One
 in whom is life and love for all.

May life giving ways be opened for us and within us.
 Amen.

Prayer of Confession:

Our prayer of confession today will be a bit different than we may be used to. Rather than me speaking a prayer with prescribed sentences and thoughts, I will say single words. Each word will be followed by a time of silence. I invite you to be attentive to the thoughts and feelings that arise with each word and allow these responses to guide your own silent prayer of confession.

Distance, separation, division, broken-hearted.

Harm, neglect, pollution, extinction.

Disregard, ignore, injustice, impoverish.

These things we pray.. Amen.

Words of Affirmation:

Hear now these life-giving words:

receive, welcome, reconcile, enfold;

restore, conserve, beautify, care;

attend, share, compassion, love;

forgiven, forgiven, forgiven, forgiven.

May these words take root within us

and become the living reality

among and through us. Amen.

Ministry of Music: In the Garden - a duet by Colleen Weber and Allison Cooke

Scripture: Psalm 137

(How can we sing in exile?)

By the rivers of Babylon - there we sat down and there we wept when we remembered Zion.
 On the willows there we hung up our harps. For there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

How could we sing a song of God in a foreign land?

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither! Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy.

Remember, YHWH, what the children of Edom did the day Jerusalem fell, when they said, "Tear it down! Tear it down to its foundations!"

Brood of Babylon, you devastators! Happy shall they be who pay you back what you have done to us!

Message: How Can We Sing in Exile? -by Ruth Cooke

Preparation for Prayer: *As we prepare our hearts and minds to enter into a time of prayer I invite you to sit comfortably and quietly for a moment. Breathe deeply a few times paying particular attention to your breath as it moves in through your nostrils and fills your lungs. Picture your breath as a light entering your body and filling it with love and relaxation. Then when you exhale imagine the breath taking all your tensions and worries with it as it leaves your body. Do this a few times until you feel relaxed then move on into the prayer time.*

Prayers:

Holy Presence, in you we live and move and have our being. Without the life force that you are we would not be. We know this and feel this in the deepest recesses of our hearts and we are grateful.

Let us feel your presence in this place called Melville United Church as we tentatively gather in this space once again. Let us feel you with us as we face our fears about being safe while gathered together physically. Let us feel you with us giving us the wisdom to know if it is the right thing to do at this time.

We so miss being together. We so miss the personal contact that being community is all about but our concern for one another must take precedence. Let us feel you with us as we work to overcome our reluctance and resistance to letting go of old ways that may present dangers right now.

We pray today for all those who have been adversely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic - those who have lost jobs and income, those who have become ill, those who have lost loved ones, those who find isolation very difficult, and those who work to care for all these.

We pray today for our brothers and sisters of Harcourt Memorial UC and for all those who work on our behalf in other parts of our country and the world trying to care for and keep other people safe and healthy.

And we pray for ourselves as, in a moment of silence, we offer the cares, the joys and the concerns that are upper most in our minds. Hear the prayers of our hearts.....

Today we pray for _____

Great Mystery, as we continue to learn to live in a world of Covid-19 restrictions, remind us that we never do it alone for you are with us, always.

We offer these and all of our prayers in the name of our brother Jesus the Christ who taught us to pray together saying...

Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done,
 on earth, as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread,
 And forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil:
 For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory
 forever and ever. Amen.

Offering:

If you would like to do your part by making a monetary donation to Melville United Church there are a number of ways to do that.

1. *1. Cheque (post-dated cheques are welcome): made payable to: Melville United Church - which can be mailed to the church at P.O. Box 41, Fergus, ON N1M 2W7 or put in the mail slot beside the parking lot door.*
2. *Donate online through the Canada Helps web-site
<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/melville-united-church/>*
3. *Call Lynda, to arrange Pre-Authorized Remittance payments (PAR).*
4. E-transfer directly from your bank. E-mail to secretary@melvilleunited.com

Thanks to all of you who continue to contribute so much to make Melville the caring community of faith that it is. You are a blessing.

Offering Prayer:

Stir within us, spirit of the living God,
 that our lives may carry the Spirit of your law.
 May our finest offerings
 flow through these gifts into the world you love. Amen.

Reading: If You Will Trust in God to Guide You

VU 286

- 1 If you will trust in God to guide you,
 and hope in God through all your ways,
 God will give strength, whatever betide you,
 and bear you through the evil days.
 Who trusts in God's unchanging love
 builds on the rock that will not move.

- 2 God will embrace your pain and weeping,
 your helpless anger and distress.
 If you are in God's care and keeping,
 in sorrow will God love you less?
 For Christ, who took for you a cross,
 will bring you safe through every loss.
- 3 Sing, pray, and keep God's ways unswerving;
 so do your own part faithfully,
 and trust God's word; though undeserving,
 you'll find God's promise true to be.
 God never will forsake in need
 the soul that trusts in God indeed.

Blessing:

Go with ways of wisdom for the Holy One:
 faithfulness, loyalty, reverence, stillness, respect.
 Go with ways of wisdom for community:
 mutuality, honour, generosity, truthfulness, contentment.
 Go in the wisdom of Christ that enables all creation to flourish
 in the ways of love:
 forgiving, healing, restoring, creating, life. Amen.

Postlude:

Prayer of the Week:

Holy Presence, immerse us in the river of your love that we may move forward without fear into new ways and new days. Carry us on a journey of growth as a community of your people. Increase our resolve to heed your loving wisdom and to rejoice in your promise of new life as we do. Amen.