



*Celebrating  
175 Years*



**March 21, 2021**

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**Melville United Church**  
**March 21, 2021**  
**Fifth Sunday of Lent**

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Presiding today - Rev. Marion Loree

**Welcome**

*Happy Spring! My name is Marion Loree and I am the minister here at Melville United Church in Fergus, Ontario. We gather in community today - March 21, 2021 virtually. Because of Covid-19 restrictions in our area there are no worshipers here with me. We are in code red right now but as restrictions are lifted gradually, we will keep you informed about when in-person worship might resume. Until then, on-line services will continue to be our normal mode of operation with printed copies being distributed to those without internet access.*

*So today is the fifth Sunday of Lent. Lent, of course is the few weeks leading up to Easter. During this time we focus on the activities and teachings of Jesus as he journeyed toward the city of Jerusalem where he would end up being executed on a cross. It is believed he was resurrected in some form and appeared to some of his followers three days later and that event is what we know as Easter.*

*Today's service is sponsored by the Social Justice Team here at Melville. Last month we heard about the Community Resource Centre of Centre Wellington and some of their work. This month we will hear about some other resources that are available in our community.*

*So I invite you to join us now for this time of worship. Perhaps in our sharing you will glean something that might help you in your spiritual journey.*

**Announcements:**

**Acknowledgment:**

*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.*

**Sharing the Light:** *(If you are watching this on-line or reading it from a page I invite you to take a moment to light a candle, centre yourself and prepare to enter in to a time of worship and prayer. As you light your candle repeat the following words)*

We light a candle today to remind us  
that there is a mysterious power or presence that connects us all -  
we call it God.  
that this mysterious presence dwells within each of us -  
as it did in the person of Jesus whom we call the Christ.  
that we *cannot* be separated from this presence that is  
the Spirit of love which created us and that is part of us always.

**Call to Worship:**

Come and seek God with your whole heart:  
 meditate on Christ's teachings,  
 fix yourselves on the ways of Christ,  
 and delight in God's Love,  
 Come let us and worship God together.

**Hymn:** As Comes the Breath of Spring**VU 373**

- 1 As comes the breath of spring  
 with light and mirth and song,  
 so does your Spirit bring  
 new days brave, free, and strong.  
     You come with thrill of life  
     to chase hence winter's breath,  
     to hush to peace the strife  
     of sin that ends in death.
  
- 2 You come like dawning day  
 with flaming truth and love,  
 to chase all glooms away,  
 to brace our wills to prove  
     how wise, how good to choose  
     the truth and its brave fight,  
     to prize it, win or lose,  
     and live on your delight.
  
- 3 You come like songs at morn  
 that fill the earth with joy,  
 till we, in Christ newborn,  
 new strength in praise employ.  
     You come to rouse the heart  
     from drifting to despair,  
     through high hopes to impart  
     life with an ampler air.
  
- 4 You breathe and there is health;  
 you move and there is power;  
 you whisper, there is wealth  
 of love, your richest dower.  
     Your presence is to us  
     like summer in the soul;  
     your joy shines forth and then  
     life blossoms to its goal.

**Words of Wisdom:** Nancy Wood, Shaman's Circle

Listen! In the earth, the seeds are stirring and making noise,  
 like the birds whose song has been silenced by winter.  
 Now the snow is being devoured by sun, our elder,  
 and in the branches, the persistence of our prayers  
 is bringing the birds to life.

**Opening Prayer:**

Source of Love and all that is, draw us close to you,  
 In our inward being, stir us.  
 Create a clean heart within us.  
 Fill us with your Spirit that we may find joy  
 and gladness in your presence. Amen

**Prayer of Confession:**

At times our hearts feel empty, Loving God.  
 We expend all of our attention  
 at work, at school, at church, in community  
 until we have nothing left to give  
 and our inner beings feel like vacant shells.  
 Create a new heart in us, O God.  
 At times our hearts burn with resentment.  
 Life has been unfair  
 and we rehearse the dealings of our past  
 until forgiveness of ourselves and others is nearly impossible.  
 Create a new heart in us, O God.  
 At times our hearts are paralyzed with fear.  
 We wonder: Where is the safe and familiar?  
 How will we move forward?  
 What are we to do?  
 Create a new heart in us, O God. Amen.

**Words of Assurance:**

You can rest assured that Spirit lives deep within our hearts.  
 With the dawning of each day,  
 God creates newness without and within  
 and our spirits are restored with the joy of saving grace.  
 "You are my sacred one," is written on our hearts  
 so live this truth - now and every day!  
 Thanks be to God.

**Ministry of Music:** Word of God Speak - by Peter Kipley  
 Performed by the Spirit Sings Praise Band

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:1-12 (Psalms for Praying - Nan C. Merrill)

Create in me a clean heart  
 Have mercy on me, O Gracious One,  
 according to your steadfast love;  
 According to your abundant kindness  
 forgive me where my thoughts and  
 deeds have hurt others.  
 Lead me in the paths of justice,  
 guide my steps on paths of peace!

Teach me, that I may know my weaknesses,  
 the shortcomings that bind me,  
 The unloving ways that separate me,  
 that keep me from recognizing  
 your Life in me;  
 For, I keep company with fear, and  
 dwell in the house of ignorance.  
 Yet, I was brought forth in love,  
 and love is my birthright.

You have placed your truth in the inner being;  
 therefore, teach me the wisdom  
 of the heart.  
 Forgive all that binds me in fear,  
 that I might radiate love;  
 cleanse me that your light might  
 shine in me.  
 Fill me with gladness; help me to  
 transform weakness into strength.  
 Look not on my past mistakes  
 but on the aspirations  
 of my heart.

Create in me a clean heart, O Gracious One,  
 and put a new and right spirit  
 within me.

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 31:31-34 (The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Edition)

(I will write my law on their hearts)

“The days are surely coming, says YHWH, when I will sow Israel and Judah with the seed of people and the seed of livestock. And just as I watched over them to uproot, to tear down, and to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build up and to plant, says YHWH. In those days people will no longer say, ‘The parents ate sour grapes, but it is the children’s teeth that are set on edge.’ Rather, all will die for their own sins. And only the teeth of those who eat sour grapes will be set on edge.

“Behold, the days are coming, says YHWH, when I will establish a new covenant with

the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them up out of the land of Egypt - a covenant they broke, though I was their spouse, says YHWH. But this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says YHWH: I will put my Law in their minds and on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

“No longer will they need to teach one another or remind one another to listen to YHWH. All of them, high and low alike, will listen to me, says YHWH, for I will forgive their misdeeds and will remember their sins no more.

**Message:** Good Hearts

### **Skyline Community Hub**

A collaborative space designed to support Community Innovators and Charity Organizations within Centre Wellington. By working together, we can better build and support vibrant communities.

#### Vision -

1. Create a space that builds a network of like-minded service providers that can work together with shared resources to enhance the community of Centre Wellington. The Hub will open its doors to a variety of unique businesses and organizations that are connected by the common goal of building their community.
2. Build a space that offsets the high costs community organizations face when renting retail space. Through the generosity of Skyline, the Hub provides community organizations with subsidized rent in an effort to reduce their operating costs. The rent subsidy should allow these organizations to put more of the money they raise towards the services and programs that they offer to the community.

Location: 900 Tower St. S, Fergus (in the Giant Tiger plaza)

Included in The Hub is The BHive (Big Brothers Big Sisters of Centre Wellington), a space for youth, by youth in the community to come together and enjoy programs and services that will build their social emotional competence, mental health and well being and educational engagement and employment readiness.

More Information will be offered in the coming months about The BHive and it's connection with the **Integrated Youth Services Network (IYSN)** currently being rolled out in our area. Once fully implemented the IYSN will include 7 integrated sites. Over 30 different organizations are coming together under the leadership of the Rotary Club of Guelph to partner in a common goal to build a new standard of care, support and services for our youth.

Info - [transformingyouth.ca](http://transformingyouth.ca)

### **VON (Victorian Order of Nurses)** (video)

We may think the VON's main focus is nursing care and they do that, but the organization also provides many other Community Support Services.

Transportation is one service offered. They have wheelchair accessible vehicles as well as ordinary cars driven by volunteers to provide transportation to medical appointments, to shop for groceries or other needs. During Covid the hours have been extended to weekends and

evenings to accommodate transporting people to get their Covid-19 vaccines.

Senior Support Living provides home care to those who may have recently returned home from hospital or who are too ill to look after their own basic needs. Depending on need the support workers might provide light housekeeping, doing laundry, shopping for groceries or personal care.

Smart Living Program is also part of senior's support offering low impact exercise programs. Normally these classes are in-person at a number of community venues but during the pandemic are held via internet on Zoom.

Telephone Support is being offered during the pandemic in place of normal in-home wellness visits. Clients can receive a call once or twice a week to check in or just to hear a friendly voice.

Meals on Wheels is another program offered with hot meals being delivered Monday to Friday for the low cost of \$7.25 each or frozen meals can be delivered bi-weekly for a cost of \$5.00 each.

Contact To find out more information or to sign up for any of these programs or to volunteer call 519-323-2330 and select the program you are interested in.

### **Community of St. James** (video)

St. James Anglican Church oversees three main programs with the help of a long list of community partners.

1. Community Gardens There are some on the church property and some in other areas and they are looking for other places. They are encouraging developers to include community garden spaces in new developments. They partner with local farmers with seed exchanges and an initiative for those who live in apartments and condos called Hale Bale gardens. Each hay bale is a self-contained 'garden' which can be grown on a balcony.
2. Home Alone & Happy program allows people to stay in their homes by providing basic landscaping, gardening, or light home maintenance. Students are employed to perform these jobs which ease the burden on family members and allow seniors or disabled community members peace of mind while providing employment to students.

### 3. Centre Wellington Meals to Go

This evolved out of the community meals that were being provided every Friday in various locations throughout the community before the Covid-19 pandemic began. With the creative help of local chefs, churches and other partners meals are delivered to approximately 100 people regularly every week. There is a long list of organizations in the community who sponsor the program and arrange volunteers. Through the local hospital, temporary meal help can be arranged for those who are leaving hospital and may be requiring temporary help with meals.

Further Information or to Donate: St. James Anglican Church - 519-843-2141 or email [st.jameschurch@wightman.ca](mailto:st.jameschurch@wightman.ca)

Transportation Services - Community Resource Centre (CRC)

**Wellington Transport Services** is a network to serve residents of Centre Wellington, Wellington North, and the townships of Minto & Mapleton.

Eligibility criteria - no other means of transport, low income household, not eligible for other services such as VON.

Cost -there is no cost to the service which is provided by volunteer drivers whose mileage is funded by the County.

Types of Rides - medical, counseling, legal appointments, Food Bank, Educational upgrades, employment and others on approval.

Contact - 519-843-7003 or [transportation@communityresourcecenter.org](mailto:transportation@communityresourcecenter.org)

Volunteer drives are always needed, too.

### **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.*

### **Silent Preparation:**

**Prayers:** Beginning with Psalm 119:1-16 (Psalms for Praying - Nan C. Merrill)

Blessed are those whose ways are blameless,  
who live with spiritual integrity!

Blessed are those who honour the inner Being,  
who follow You with their whole heart,

Who enfold the world with love  
and walk on peaceful paths!

You have shown us the way of Truth,  
the way that leads to freedom.

O, that we might ever reflect the Light!

Then we shall know inner peace, as  
we surrender ourselves into your Hands.

We will praise You with a grateful heart,  
as we lean on your great kindness.

As we forsake the path of darkness,  
O have mercy on us!

How can the young keep to the straight path?

Only by learning to listen to the  
still Voice within.

With all my heart I seek You;  
let me not wander from your teachings!

Your Love is imprinted upon my heart,  
that I may walk in your Light.

Blessed are You, O Counselor;  
guide us in all that we do,

That with our lips we may bear  
witness to the truth of your Way.

With your Word in our hearts,

we delight more than with the world's riches.  
 We listen in the Silence,  
 awaiting the clarity of your counsel.  
 May we become a living fountain of joy  
 as we give thanks for your  
 bountiful blessings!

Our prayers continue as we pray for our brothers and sisters of Clinton United Church and for all those who take their helping, caring hearts to work on our behalf in other parts of our country and the world. And we pray for ourselves as we take a moment of silence to share with you the things we hold deep within which we share with no other. Hear the prayers of our hearts ..... (silence)....

God, may the law of love written on our hearts become our song as we journey. A song with words that comfort when hardships on the road burden us... a tune that lingers leaving warm thoughts with those whom we meet on the way, and with a rhythm that lilt, buoying our spirits and strengthening us to do what needs to be done.

We offer these and all of our prayers in the name of our brother, Jesus the Christ, who stands among us as we 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. *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 website*  
*<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](mailto:secretary@melvilleunited.com)

**Offering Prayer:**

As we receive, so we give, Loving Provider. Bless and grow all of our gifts of time, talent and resources to your will and purposes. Amen.

**Hymn: Come Touch Our Hearts** **MV 12 (vs1-4)**

Come touch our hearts that we may know compassion,  
from failing embers build a blazing fire;  
love strong enough to overturn injustice,  
to seek a world more gracious,  
come touch and bless our hearts.

Come touch our souls that we may know and love you,  
your quiet presence all our fears dispel;  
create a space for spirit to grow in us,  
let life and beauty fill us,  
come touch and bless our souls.

Come touch our minds and teach us how to reason,  
set free our thoughts to wonder and to dream;  
help us to open doors of understanding,  
to welcome truth and wisdom,  
come touch and bless our minds.

Come touch us in the moments we are fragile,  
and in our weakness your great strength reveal;  
that we may rise to follow and to serve,  
steady now our nerve,  
come touch and bless our wills.

**Blessing/Sending Forth:**

Infinite Wisdom longs to place truth in our inner beings;  
to make our hearts beat  
with the love and justice of God's own heart.  
With the dawning of each day,  
God creates newness without and within  
and our spirits are restored with joy.  
"You are my sacred one," is written on our hearts,  
so live now in and into this truth.  
Go with Grace. Go with Peace, Go with Love. Amen.

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

God of love, fill our hearts with your spirit so we may draw closer to you. May we follow in Jesus' way and be inspired by our encounters with Christ to share your love in the world. Amen.