



Celebrating
175 Years



August 15, 2021

Melville United Church
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Melville United Church

August 15, 2021

Presiding today Rev. Stephen Huntley

Welcome:

Announcements:

There will be a congregational meeting held August 17 at 7pm via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting is to approve the hiring of a new full-time minister for our congregation. If you are unable to use the Zoom program and would like to join another member of the congregation who is Zoom proficient, please contact Lorna Bevcar. If you would like some extra practice or Zoom training before the meeting, then please contact Lorna once more and council will arrange for some assistance.

Acknowledgment:

We live on the traditional territories of the Attawandaron, Wyandot, Mississauga, and Haudenosaunee First Nations. These are treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit ("Between the Lakes Treaty"). They are also part of the crown grant to the Six Nations ("Haldemand grant"). Grateful for their stewardship of this land, we humbly seek to live together in pursuit of justice and right relations.

Call to Worship:

Hymn: Joyful, joyful we adore you **VU 232**

- 1 Joyful, joyful we adore you,
God of glory, life and love;
hearts unfold like flowers before you,
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,
drive the gloom of doubt away;
giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day.
- 2 All your works with joy surround you,
earth and heaven reflect your rays,
stars and angels sing around you,
centre of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain,
sound their praise eternally.
- 3 You are giving and forgiving,
ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living,
ocean depth of happy rest!
Source of grace and fount of blessing,
let your light upon us shine;
teach us how to love each other,
lift us to the joy divine.

4 Mortals join the mighty chorus
which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us,
joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward,
victors in the midst of strife;
joyful music leads us sunward
in the triumph song of life.

Opening Prayer:

Ministry of Music: There is a Hope by Stuart Townsend & Mark Edwards (Performed by Spirit Sings)

Scripture: 1 John 4: 7-17

Dear friends, let us practice loving each other, for love comes from God and those who are loving and kind show that they are the children of God, and that they are getting to know him better. ⁸ But if a person isn't loving and kind, it shows that he doesn't know God—for God is love.

⁹ God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into this wicked world to bring to us eternal life through his death. ¹⁰ In this act we see what real love is: it is not our love for God but his love for us when he sent his Son to satisfy God's anger against our sins.

¹¹ Dear friends, since God loved us as much as that, we surely ought to love each other too. ¹² For though we have never yet seen God, when we love each other God lives in us, and his love within us grows ever stronger. ¹³ And he has put his own Holy Spirit into our hearts as a proof to us that we are living with him and he with us. ¹⁴ And furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now tell all the world that God sent his Son to be their Savior. ¹⁵ Anyone who believes and says that Jesus is the Son of God has God living in him, and he is living with God.

¹⁶ We know how much God loves us because we have felt his love and because we believe him when he tells us that he loves us dearly. God is love, and anyone who lives in love is living with God and God is living in him. ¹⁷ And as we live with Christ, our love grows more perfect and complete; so we will not be ashamed and embarrassed at the day of judgment, but can face him with confidence and joy because he loves us and we love him too.

Message: "Unexpected Love"

Main Idea: "If we love others God lives/dwells in us."

Kate and I. Our main holiday took us up to our cottage in Haliburton. The cottage has been in our family since the 1950's and is a favourite destination, not just in the summer but throughout the year – 3 Seasons. So was excited like so many people are in the summertime to "get away" and relax and play.

One thing that was different on this trip and that was we needed to take two vehicles, as we had quite a load of firewood and other articles for the cottage. Taking two vehicles, the truck and car felt like a waste or excessive, but it was necessary evil. We had been planning for a number of weeks and when the day came to leave for the cottage all was accounted for and ready except for one thing, we couldn't agree on our travel plans.

I thought we should drive together, if there was an accident or car trouble, we 'd be in better shape to deal with any unexpected trouble. Seems to me to be the wise thing to do. Kate, however, disagreed. She did not want to travel together because she didn't like following another vehicle, she found it stressful. After some lengthy disagreeing with one another we were at a stalemate. I was right and she was wrong!

Have you ever been there? As I reflected on this sermon it occurred to me in the history of married bliss and working out disagreements, this stance, **"I am right and you are wrong!!"** is the giant of marital disagreement or worse! Examine your own relationships and see for yourselves! Conflict usually has this ingredient. We don't always vocalize these thoughts – unless you really want to create trouble, but by and by this is where relationships can end up. Someone has to give in. Fortunately for us we worked things out.

As we began our trip, we agreed to meet at a favorite pit stop for coffee, then following that we would go our separate ways, the trip was just over 3 hours. After we left the coffee shop, we came to an intersection where we agreed to part ways, she would go north, and I east. (both directions ultimately necessary to arrive at our destination.) As I turned to merge with traffic going east, I looked back in my rear-view mirror to see how she was going, she was parked waiting for the light to turn green and exuberantly waving at me. As I drove off a **wave of love unexpectedly** washed over me. I knew everything would be Ok.

Unexpected love, perhaps it's the best! It seemingly comes out of nowhere. Yet why should we be surprised when the Lord of love, God him or herself, showers us with love unexpectedly. Think of it! When and where we're you when you first experienced the love of God? Maybe you found it a church, or a retreat somewhere, perhaps God's love was evident to you through a love relationship. And so on and so on. My point is, it was likely unexpected.

Why unexpected? Not sure. But the biblical witness seems to strongly suggest this. Think about it... For God so loved the world that he gave His only Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not die but have eternal life." What about the Apostle Paul on the way to Damascus to persecute Christians? He was suddenly blinded and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" The rest is history! A slave driver writes about love in Amazing Grace. In our reading today, John states it directly, "7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

Disagreement or conflict in marriage, friendship or in any relationship is bound to come, I think closeness encourages this. Put two or three, four people together and sooner or later, conflict can occur. It's not wrong to find ourselves in conflict big or small, what isn't acceptable however, is that we allow it to fester, or perhaps hold a grudge and say and keeping a record of wrongs.

Ephesians 4:26 " Be angry, and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your anger. ... If you become angry, do not let your anger lead you into sin, and do not stay angry all day.

Love is unexpected. CS Lewis earlier in the 20 centuries wrote a book called, "The Four Loves." It is a classic and one of the best books ever written on the subject of love. Lewis stands large in the Christian community as one of the Faith's premier apologists. Lewis himself found love

unexpectedly later in life. He was one of the great writers of the twentieth century with books, including "Mere Christianity", "Surprised by Joy" and "The Problem of Pain" and the much beloved, "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" and many more.

Lewis began the book saying, quote: "When I first tried to write this book, I thought that the maxim, "God is love," would provide me with a very plain highroad through the whole subject (love)." He soon discovered, unexpectedly, that it was a lot more complicated than he thought. At first he thought that love could be divided between "Gift-love" and "Need-love." The typical example of Gift love, Lewis writes, would be "that love which moves someone to work and plan and save for the future well-being of the family which he/she would die without sharing or seeing; of the second, "Need-love", that which sends a lonely or frightened child to its mother's arms."

"There is no doubt which was more like Love Him-self. Divine love is Gift -Love, on the other hand, what can be less like anything we believe of God's life than Need-love. Yet, Lewis comes to observe a paradox, he writes, "no one can call a child selfish because it turns to comfort to its mother; nor an adult who turns to his or her fellows for "company." Those, whether children or adults, who do so least are not usually the most selfless...Since we really do need each other (it is not good for people to be alone) it is a bad spiritual symptom: just as a lack of appetite is a bad medical symptom because people really do need one another." End of quote.

Four Loves – AFFECTION, Friendship, Eros, Agape. BRIEFLY

Affection or "Storge" – in Greek

Affection is the love of "parents to offspring; but also, of offspring to parents" We often think of family when it comes to love, nurture, home, warmth, comfort are some of the words. Family is so very often held up as the epitome of love. Yet, if this is true, why are there so many unhappy and broken families? Could it be that the love of affection is the cause as well as the cure? Many children can be smothered by an overbearing parent who says, I always did it for love.

Friendship: This is an unexpected love! Many people, especially today would not consider friendship to be a love, oh yes, besides a wife/husband we need a few friends. But the very tone and admission suggests it isn't really all that important. yet who would like to go through life with a friend!? That is why there are so many friendless today.

To the Ancients it was the highest of the loves. The reason...because it was the least natural, the least organic.

Misunderstanding/Unexpected: The friendless say, "I just want a friend" Friendship has to be about something, has to point to something, like golf, hockey, knitting, painting, music and so on. - Lovers look each other in the eye. Friends look outward to something. "A friend in need is a friend indeed", while true is not the point. It is rather a distraction until they can get back to what the friendship is really about.

Eros: Not sex, but the act of "falling in love." The caricature of the love struck – (the figure with the bow and arrow) is correct. He/she is loves contemplative, they are not really interested in sex, they just want to go on "thinking of her/him". It isn't to later that when the sexual is aroused that it appears. OF course, without eros there would be no one on earth!

Difference between friends and lovers? Lovers look into each other eye/friends look outward to the love they share together.

Agape: Divine love, unexpected love. Loves the loveless.

Love very often comes to us unexpectedly. Where have you been surprised by love? when or where was it unexpectedly?

I leave you with a challenge! That is to find someone to show love unexpectedly. Could it be the neighbour next door or down the street who is often grumpy or distant? Could it be someone you have conflicted with? How about sharing the love of God you have received to someone else? Love is something if you give it away, give it away, give it away. Love is something if you give it away, you end up having more.

Hymn: Your Love Is Amazing **MV 26**

Prayers:

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*

Offering Prayer:

Hymn: O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go **VU 658**

- 1 O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
that in thine ocean depths its flow
may richer, fuller be.
- 2 O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
my heart restores its borrowed ray,
that in thy sunshine's blaze its day
may brighter, fairer be.
- 3 O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,

and feel the promise is not vain
that morn shall tearless be.

- 4 O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
and from the ground there blossoms red
life that shall endless be.

Blessing/Sending Forth: