



***Celebrating  
176 Years***



**October 17, 2021**

**Melville United Church**

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**Melville United Church**  
**October 17, 2021**  
**World Food Sunday**

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Presiding today - Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint

**Welcome**

*My name is Lynda Goy-Flint and I join in ministry with you here at Melville United Church in Fergus, Ontario. We gather in community today – October 10, 2021 virtually and in person. We will continue to offer both in-person and on-line services with printed copies being distributed to those without internet access who are unable to attend in person.*

*As we gather today, we mark World Food Sunday and the 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost.*

**Announcements**

- The Centre Wellington Ministerial Association has become aware of incidents of violence at Centre Wellington District High School against LGBTQ and Black, Indigenous and People of Colour students. The recent violence is mostly happening off school property on the paths leading between the high school and Zehrs and between the high school and Sportsplex. Teachers are not able to monitor these locations because they are not on school property. A request has been made to have area churches to recruit 4-5 adults for each lunch hour to walk the stretch of land near the high school and to simply be a physical presence onsite where these attacks tend to take place. If you would be available for a lunch hour or two per week, from 11:30 to 12:30, please let me know.

*I invite you to join us now for a time of worship and contemplation.*

**Acknowledgement** *Peter Chynoweth, **Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2021**, p.25. Used with permission.*

Land is sacred and holy.

Our relationship to the land is sacred and holy.

Our relationship with each other on this land is sacred and holy.

It calls for respect and appreciation.

And so we offer our appreciation, our thanksgiving, and our respect that we can gather in this place and on this land

as a result of the welcome that comes through the Haldimand Treaty and the Simcoe Patent - Treaty No. 4,

which allow for peaceful and respectful living on this land.

Thanks to the

Petun,

Haudenosaunee,

Anishinabewaki,

Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation,

Odawa and

Mississauga people

who have lived on and walked these lands for thousands of years.

We acknowledge that we are connected with the people who have lived here for all these years because of the treaties.

Because we are treaty people, we must honour the responsibilities that come with it.

May we be people who remember this with gratitude and respect.

**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)*

There once was someone who said such wonderful things and did such amazing things

teaching

healing

helping

loving

inviting everyone to join in

that people wondered who he was.

Finally they just couldn't help it. They had to ask him who he was.

When they asked him who he was, he said, "I am the light of the world."

So we light this candle to remember and remind ourselves that the Light of the World,  
and the love, healing and welcome offered are with us here in this time

**Call to Worship:** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

We gather on sacred ground

**On the rich earth that nourishes us**

Under the great awning of sky that replenishes us

**To once again listen to the voice**

That warms our hearts say,

**"Come, follow me."**

**Hymn: Will You Come and Follow Me**      **VU 567**

**Will You Come and Follow Me**

- 1      Will you come and follow me  
         if I but call your name?  
         Will you go where you don't know  
         and never be the same?  
         Will you let my love be shown,  
         will you let my name be known,  
         will you let my life be grown  
         in you and you in me?
  
- 2      Will you leave yourself behind  
         if I but call your name?  
         Will you care for cruel and kind  
         and never be the same?  
         Will you risk the hostile stare  
         should your life attract or scare?  
         Will you let me answer prayer  
         in you and you in me?

- 3 Will you let the blinded see  
if I but call your name?  
Will you set the prisoners free  
and never be the same?  
Will you kiss the leper clean,  
and do such as this unseen,  
and admit to what I mean  
in you and you in me?
- 4 Will you love the 'you' you hide  
if I but call your name?  
Will you quell the fear inside  
and never be the same?  
Will you use the faith you've found  
to reshape the world around,  
through my sight and touch and sound  
in you and you in me?
- 5 Christ, your summons echoes true  
when you but call my name.  
Let me turn and follow you  
and never be the same.  
In your company I'll go  
where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow  
in you and you in me.

**Invitation to Pray** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

Friends, in John 4:34 Jesus says, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work."

Food is the source of our energy. What Jesus was saying is that the will of God energizes him to live out his mission. As we pray, we turn to God to replenish our sense of call and purpose. Let us pray:

**Opening Prayer:** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

God, the stories of our faith remind us that you are manna from heaven and water from rock.

**You are the miracle of the loaves and fishes.**

You are our Bread of Life.

**In this hour, fill us up with your Holy Word. Energize us with your songs.**

Make us thankful, aware, and inspired:

**thankful for the universe that feeds us,**

**aware that food is a sacred gift given to all and yet still withheld from many,  
and inspired enough to make a difference. Amen.**

**Ministry of Music:** “For the Beauty of the Earth” with a setting by Wayne Oquin on the piano.

**Call to Reconciliation** *The United Church Publishing House, Celebrate God’s Presence: A Book of Services for The United Church of Canada. Copyright 2000. Used with permission.*

We are people of worth and value.

When we honestly acknowledge the shame  
and guilt of our lives,  
God’s mercy and grace are there,  
ready to be received when we are ready to accept.

**Prayer Seeking Forgiveness and Reconciliation** — *Posted on Waiting for Water: Liturgy for The Easter Journey 2013 <http://storage.cloversites.com/waitingforwater/documents/Liturgical%20resources%202013%2010%2018%2012.pdf>*

O God, so often we take you for granted.  
We take for granted that you will answer our prayers,  
that you will heal us and make us whole.  
We take for granted that you love us.  
Forgive us for not appreciating  
your grace and presence in our lives.  
Help us to be more thankful.  
Give us faith to see you in everything  
and everyone around us,  
so that we may be truly grateful.  
In Christ’s name we pray. Amen.

**Words of Assurance** *Canadian Foodgrains Bank, So That All May Flourish: A worship resource for World Food Day. Used with permission.*

Give praise to God,  
who accompanies us on our journey,  
who hears our cries and anguish,  
and who remains faithful and answers our prayers.

Give glory to God,  
who brings life out of death  
and joy out of sorrow!

**Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**“...In the Midst”** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

Share your favourite grace. Invite the children and members of the congregation to share their grace. Consider sharing an energizing camp-style grace.

Invite discussion about why we say grace. (*To recognize that God’s creation gives us the food we eat, to give thanks for the people who grow our food and prepared it, to remember that food is sacred, because when we are about to do something important like eating it’s good to pause, etc.*).

Explain that when we pause to say grace, we are reminded how fortunate we are to eat. Not everyone in the world has enough to eat. As a church, we try to help those among us who don’t

have enough to eat. Generous people from across the whole church give money to Mission & Service, and thanks to that money, we help feed people among us who are hungry, teach people how to grow their own food, give people skills to get jobs so they can pay for food, and support things like community gardens all across Canada and around the world.

Show the Gifts with Vision catalogue on a computer screen or print out copies of specific gifts. Explain that each of the organizations in the catalogue is a Mission & Service partner. Highlight a couple of gifts that children might be interested in, like Operation Backpack, which gives children food every Friday so they get enough to eat over the weekend and are ready to learn on Monday. Or Food for the North, which makes sure families living in northern Manitoba, where groceries are very expensive, eat healthy food.

Explain that saying grace reminds us that food is a sacred gift from God, and because it is a sacred gift, everyone has a right to eat well. Through our Mission & Service, we try to make sure everyone can eat the wonderful food that comes from our Creator God.

If the children have given to Mission & Service or a Mission & Service project, thank them.

**Hymn: For Food in a World**

**VU 552 (sing 3 times)**

For food in a world where many walk in hunger,  
for friends in a world where many walk alone,  
for faith in a world where many walk in fear,  
we give you thanks, O God.

**Scripture:**

**Prayer** *The United Church Publishing House, **Celebrate God's Presence: A Book of Services for The United Church of Canada.** Copyright 2000. Used with permission.*

God, the words you speak have power:

power to create,  
power to disturb,  
power to heal.

Help us to hear your Word for us today. Amen.

**Isaiah 58:9b–11**

*Your light shall rise in the darkness*

If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger,  
the speaking of evil,  
if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.  
The Lord will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.

**Scripture: Psalm 136 (VU850)**

*God's work in creation and in history*

Introduction: Jewish friends refer to Psalm 136 as “the Great Hallel,” and it is traditionally recited during the Passover meal. It speaks of God as the creative power that redeems and sustains us, not only delivering us in difficult times but also blessing us with food and life. For centuries, it has been adapted into forms of grace spoken before meals. Let’s share with gratitude.

- 1 We give thanks unto you, O God of might:  
**for your love is never ending.**  
We give thanks unto you, the God of gods:  
**for your love is never ending.**
  
- 2 In your wisdom and love you shaped the skies:  
**for your love is never ending.**  
You spread out the earth upon the sea:  
**for your love is never ending.**
  
- 3 You have filled all the skies with glory and light:  
**for your love is never ending.**  
The sun for the day and moon for night:  
**for your love is never ending.**
  
- 4 From of old you have led your people in faith:  
**for your love is never ending.**  
You have shown your compassion, strength and love.  
**For your love is never ending.**
  
- 5 You delivered the ones who called unto you:  
**for your love is never ending.**  
From bondage to freedom, you brought them forth:  
**for your love is never ending.**
  
- 6 You have opened the sea  
and brought your people through:  
**for your love is never ending.**  
Brought them into a land that flows with life:  
**for your love is never ending.**
  
- 7 You remember your promise age to age:  
**for your love is never ending.**  
You show mercy on those of low degree:  
**for your love is never ending.**
  
- 8 You give food and life to all living things:  
**for your love is never ending.**  
We give thanks unto you, the God of all:  
**for your love is never ending.**

**Scripture: Matthew 13:1-9** (NRSV)

*The parable of the sower*

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.  
Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there,  
while the whole crowd stood on the beach.  
And he told them many things in parables, saying:  
“Listen! A sower went out to sow.  
And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path,  
and the birds came and ate them up.  
Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil,  
and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil.  
But when the sun rose, they were scorched;  
and since they had no root, they withered away.  
Other seeds fell among thorns,  
and the thorns grew up and choked them.  
Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain,  
some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.  
Let anyone with ears listen!”

May God bless to our understanding these readings from scripture. Amen.

**Prayer** *The United Church Publishing House, **Celebrate God's Presence: A Book of Services for The United Church of Canada.** Copyright 2000. Used with permission.*

In our struggle to hear your Word broken open, O God,  
bless even our doubts, our wonderings,  
our wanderings, our soul-struggles,  
life's deep questions, and deeper mysteries.  
Teach us to love our questions  
as well as our answers. Amen.

**Sermon: Live Your Mission** *The United Church of Canada, **World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service.** Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

Do you know what it's like to put every ounce of ability and energy into something and have it flop miserably? Do you know what it's like to do your best and find that your best just isn't good enough? Do you know what it's like to wait for something good in your life to grow and then wait...and wait...and wait?

That day when Jesus was sitting in the boat in the middle of the sea, he was speaking to a worn-out crowd that felt just like that. His followers had been working hard—really hard—to share the good news, but the message wasn't sinking in. Here they were, going from town to town, sharing Jesus' life-saving message that justice is attainable, that there are key values like kindness and generosity that, if lived out collectively, could save the world.

Yet despite their important message, everywhere they went, they brushed up against people who were too preoccupied, too bored, too self-centred, or too stressed to listen. Each time a door slammed in their face, their discouragement ramped up. It wasn't supposed to be like this.

Even though Jesus was sitting in the middle of the sea, it's like he could see into the very hearts of those gathered that day. And in that calm, reassuring voice of his, he told them stories to help them understand themselves and make sense of their life. One of them was the parable of the sower:





Some seeds will fall on the path and the birds will eat them.  
Some will fall on rock and the sun will scorch them.  
Some will fall on thorns and be choked out.  
But some will fall on good soil and bear an unbelievable crop.

The Parable of the Sower was a pep talk of sorts. It wasn't the kind you would hear in a locker room, though. It wasn't about how great Jesus' followers were or how they would succeed at every turn. It was realistic: Some of the work you do is going to feel like a waste of time. Some of it will even be sabotaged. But keep going. Because there will be success. Trust me. Live your mission.

This, friends, is a millennia-old message we still need to hear. Especially on World Food Sunday. 690,000,000 people will go to bed hungry tonight.



Think about that. 690,000,000 people aren't asking, "What will we eat for dinner?" No. 690,000,000 people are asking, "**Will** we eat dinner?" And they ask that question night after night. As they said in Newfoundland, there were plenty of meal times, but not so many meals.

Hunger is so pervasive you'd think that the whole earth was made of dust. That no crops could grow anywhere. But we know there's nothing wrong with Mother Nature; the problem lies in the choices we make for her.

Poverty, land grabbing, climate change, the commodification of food and water, conflict and political instability.... The causes of hunger are so complex, so intertwined, so systemic, it's natural to wonder how you and I are really ever going to make a difference.

It's like we are standing on that shore right along with Jesus' disciples and there are problems as big as the sea itself in front of us.

And even Jesus is sitting there admitting that addressing hunger isn't easy. He doesn't sugarcoat the outcome of our work: some seeds just aren't going to land where we need them to or create the results we want.

But, he says, some seeds will fall on good soil and the result will be phenomenal.  
So live your mission.

Jesus got in the boat that day and rowed into the sea so he could look at the whole crowd at once, so his voice would carry across the water to each and every one of them, so they would take his parable to heart and hear him say: Live your mission.

Friends, one of the ways we live our mission as a United Church is by sharing what we have through our collective Mission & Service.

As a United Church we endorse the principles of food sovereignty: the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. We believe food is a sacred gift from God. Manna from heaven. No one should go hungry.



That's why from coast to coast in Canada, our generosity supports community kitchens and meal programs, food cupboards, shelters, job training programs, community gardens, and healthy food programs. Internationally, we send food in times of crisis, distribute seeds, fund agricultural training programs and micro-lending programs, and support projects that help small-scale farmers access equipment they need and, in some instances, build infrastructure so they can transport their food to market. We work with partners like ACT Alliance and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to move beyond the charity model by helping to work toward long-term systemic change through respectful partnerships.

It's true that we aren't going to solve all the problems in the world, but for some people our support means the world.

You might remember a story the United Church's Philanthropy Unit shared not long ago about a young Canadian named Jesse.





When he was 12 years old, Jesse had a traumatic brain injury. His life instantly changed because his brain didn't function the way it once did. By the time he was 17, Jesse had been hospitalized 32 times. Through the ups and downs, his mother took care of him. She was his rock. And then, sadly, three years ago she died of cancer. Without his mother, Jesse's life spiralled out of control. Two years ago, he survived the painfully cold winter sleeping in a storage unit. Then he went to Stella's Circle, a Mission & Service partner, where he was fed, received help to find a home, and is now completing a greenhouse technician college program. Today, Jesse is leading a new social enterprise that grows food for sale.

This, friends, is what happens when seeds of generosity fall on good soil.

Another story, this one stretching from Canada to Japan and then on to Kenya.

<https://youtu.be/vFB1OKVhTjg>

690,000,000 people may be going hungry tonight. But Jesse and Emmanuel and all the people in their communities that they support and the thousands of people that Mission & Service partners help aren't among them.

That's because they are amazing people, and they are supported by amazing people like you.

This is what happens when we live our mission.



Living God's mission is like planting seeds—each seed contains the basic material needed to pull off a miracle. And like Jesus says, when they hit good dirt, miracles grow.

Thank you for your mission and service. Thank you for taking Jesus' stories into your heart and letting them transform your lives. Thank you for standing on the shoreline like disciples have for millennia listening to the Parable of the Sower.

Now, let's get to work planting seeds. Let's live our mission.

Amen.

**Hymn: Soil of God, You and I            MV174**

Soil of God, you and I, stand ready to bear  
Seed of faith nourished by God's tender care.  
Growing in everyone for ere God is found.  
All stand together, we are...Holy ground.

Soil of God, you and I, now ready to be  
Part of God's promise, for others to see.  
Open to everyone for here God is found.  
All stand together, we are...Holy ground.

Soil of God, you and I, now called to rebirth,  
Joining as partners with all of the earth.  
Living in harmony for here God is found.  
All stand together, this is...Holy ground.

**Joys and Concerns**

**Preparation for Prayer**

Let us practice the art of Praying with our Eyes Wide Open, that in seeing the world and those within it we are called to tend we may be *opening the eyes of our hearts to all in need around us* (Lamont Koerner '81 MDiv God Pause for Thursday, September 16, 2021 from Luther Seminary):

**Prayers** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

Creator God,

Bless farmers, fishers, gatherers, hunters, migrant workers...all agricultural workers here in Canada and around the world.

Bless those who transport, distribute, and prepare our food.

Bless those pouring their heart and soul into fostering and protecting clean water, healthy soil, and biodiversity.

Bless those advocating for safe, healthy, culturally appropriate food.

Bless those challenging systems that treat food as a commodity rather than a sacred right.

Bless those working hard to understand where their food comes from and to have a healthy relationship with it.

Bless those who share what they can so no one goes hungry.

Bless the breakfast programs, community kitchens, shared gardens, food banks, and agricultural training programs we support through Mission & Service.

Bless our UCW meat pies, and the potential for church suppers, barbecues, luncheons, teas, and fellowship time.

Bless our contributions to the foodbank.

Bless our garden and gardeners whose efforts yielded produce we share with the foodbank.

*(Consider adding words of blessing for your congregation's specific food-related ministries.)*

Bless our home kitchens, our tables, and all who gather around them.

Bless us as we bow our heads in thanksgiving for your abundant grace.

Bless us now as we pray in the way of Jesus, saying, "Our father..."

**Lord's Prayer**      Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

## **Moment for Mission**

**Offering Invitation** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

Our generosity matters. With God's help, our offering makes a difference in peoples' lives every day. Let us give generously as we worship God through sharing our gifts, tithes, and offerings.

## **Offering**

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

1. By leaving your offering envelope on the offering plate at the back of the sanctuary.
2. 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.
3. Donate online through the Canada Helps website  
<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/melville-united-church>
4. Call or email Lynda, to arrange Pre-Authorized Remittance payments (PAR).
5. E-transfer directly from your bank. E-mail to [secretary@melvilleunited.com](mailto: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. May you be blessed

**Offering Prayer** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

Generous God, we offer our gifts in response to your call to care.  
We offer them with gratitude and love,  
trusting that you will use them to feed bodies, minds, and hearts.  
We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

**Hymn: Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples**

**VU 507**

- 1 Today we all are called to be  
disciples of the Lord,  
to help to set the captive free,  
make ploughshare out of sword,  
to feed the hungry, quench their thirst,  
make love and peace our fast,  
to serve the poor and homeless first,  
our ease and comfort last.
- 2 God made the world and at its birth  
ordained our human race  
to live as stewards of the earth,  
responding to God's grace.  
But we are vain and sadly proud,  
we sow not peace but strife,  
our discord spreads a deadly cloud  
that threatens all of life.
- 3 Pray justice may come rolling down  
as in a mighty stream,  
with righteousness in field and town  
to cleanse us and redeem.  
For God is longing to restore  
an earth where conflicts cease,  
a world that was created for  
a harmony of peace.
- 4 May we in service to our God  
act out the living Word,  
and walk the road the saints have trod  
till all have seen and heard.  
As stewards of the earth may we  
give thanks in one accord  
to God who calls us all to be  
disciples of the Lord.

**Commissioning** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

These words of commissioning come from 1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." Do it all for the glory of God.

**Change the Light**

Watch. I am going to change the light and I invite you to change your light.

I'm not going to put it out, **just** change it.

See how it is only in one place?

*\*Change Light\**



Can you see it?

Now everywhere you go today, the light will go with you.

**Blessing** *The United Church of Canada, World Food Day Service Highlighting Mission & Service. Copyright 2021. Used with permission.*

And may God who is our Creator,

and Jesus Christ who is our Redeemer,

and the Holy Spirit who is our Sustainer

inspire us to live our mission this day and forevermore. Amen.

**Household Prayer: Morning** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year B, Volume 2. Copyright 2015.*

Dear God,

help me to follow after your ways

as I go throughout my day. Amen.

**Household Prayer: Evening** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year B, Volume 2. Copyright 2015.*

Gracious God, thank you for keeping me covered throughout the day.

Grant me peace and rest in your safety.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.