



October 3, 2021

Melville United Church
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Melville United Church
October 3, 2021
World Communion Sunday

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 3, 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 Communion Sunday, a day to share in the gift of Christ's feast, with Christians world wide.

Announcements

- During this service we will be celebrating communion. For those joining us on-line, you are encouraged to have available bread/roll/cracker and a glass of juice/wine/water, so that you can share in communion.

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 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: *Thom M. Shuman, **Lectionary Liturgies: World Communion Liturgy in a time of pandemic (October 3, 2021)** <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>. Used with permission.*

From where we are sheltering in place,
from sacred spaces where
folks are socially distancing themselves,

**we are gathered as God's people,
called to the Table where brokenness
nourishes us with simple grace.**

From virtual communities from all over the world,
with families gathered in living spaces,

**we are gathered as God's faithful community,
serving, living, caring wherever we are.**

From neighborhoods made up of those
of every class, every race, every branch of faith,

**we are gathered as witnesses to God's hope
and peace which have not disappeared
in every place, in every person in this uncertain time.**

Hymn: For the Beauty of the Earth**VU 226**

For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies,

Refrain:

God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower,
sun and moon, and stars of light,

Refrain:

God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the joy of human love,
brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above,
for all gentle thoughts and mild,

Refrain:

God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

For each perfect gift sublime
to our race so freely given,
graces human and divine,
flowers of earth and buds of heaven,

Refrain:

God of all, to you we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

Opening Prayer: *Tony Tuck, **Gathering: Pentecost 2021**, p.28. Used with permission.*

Gracious and loving God, the author of all creation,
when you created the world, the morning stars sang and the hosts of heaven shouted with joy.
We ask, Gracious God, that you open our hearts and souls
to the very wonder of your creation
and that you help us to take care of the riches
of this good earth faithfully and honour your glorious name.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Ministry of Music: *Breathe words and music by Marie Barnett – Spirit Sings*

Call to Reconciliation *Thom M. Shuman, **Lectionary Liturgies: World Communion Liturgy in a time of pandemic (October 3, 2021)** <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>. Used with permission.*

In these confusing days, it is easy to think that there are no rules we need to follow,
but we can live, act, do whatever we want.
But Paul reminds us that, when we gain Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior,
we receive exactly what we need - forgiveness, grace, hope.
Let us confess our foolishness to God, that we might know God's healing love for us!

Prayer Seeking Forgiveness and Reconciliation Gord Dunbar, *Gathering: Pentecost 2021*, p.28. Used with permission.

The sun's glorious rays bring life and light to the world,

yet we can't forget our sunblock, for the ozone layer no longer protects us.

Out of the oceans, life emerged, and we still carry that water in our veins and in our cells,

yet the oceans hide centuries of debris, becoming the final garbage heap of civilization.

Water is life itself, essential, elemental, and expensive,

for we have considered it expendable in our greed.

With a word, you, O God, brought creation into healthy being, providing us with everything necessary to life and declaring it "very good,"

yet we have ignored the complexities of that creation, exploiting instead of living in sustainable harmony.

Forgive us, O God, and lead us into full relationship with all creation.

Forgive us, O God, and make us wholly open to an understanding of creation that inspires us to care for the earth, as you care for it.

(a time of silent prayer)

Words of Assurance Gord Dunbar, *Gathering: Pentecost 2021*, p.28. Used with permission.

Pouring out of rock and hill and spring

comes the grace of God like many waters,

drenching you in mercy, love, and peace.

Tip back your head, open your spirit, and receive forgiveness.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

"...In the Midst"

Scripture: Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12 (NRSV)

(God gave the world to humans, not angels)

God Has Spoken by His Son

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets,

but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son,

whom he appointed heir of all things,

through whom he also created the worlds.

He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being,

and he sustains all things by his powerful word.

When he had made purification for sins,

he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

having become as much superior to angels

as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs....

Exaltation through Abasement

Now God did not subject the coming world, about which we are speaking, to angels.

But someone has testified somewhere,

‘What are human beings that you are mindful of them,

or mortals, that you care for them?

You have made them for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned them with glory and honour,
subjecting all things under their feet.'

Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control.
As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them,
but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels,
now crowned with glory and honour because of the suffering of death,
so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist,
in bringing many children to glory,
should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father.
For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, saying,
'I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters,
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.'

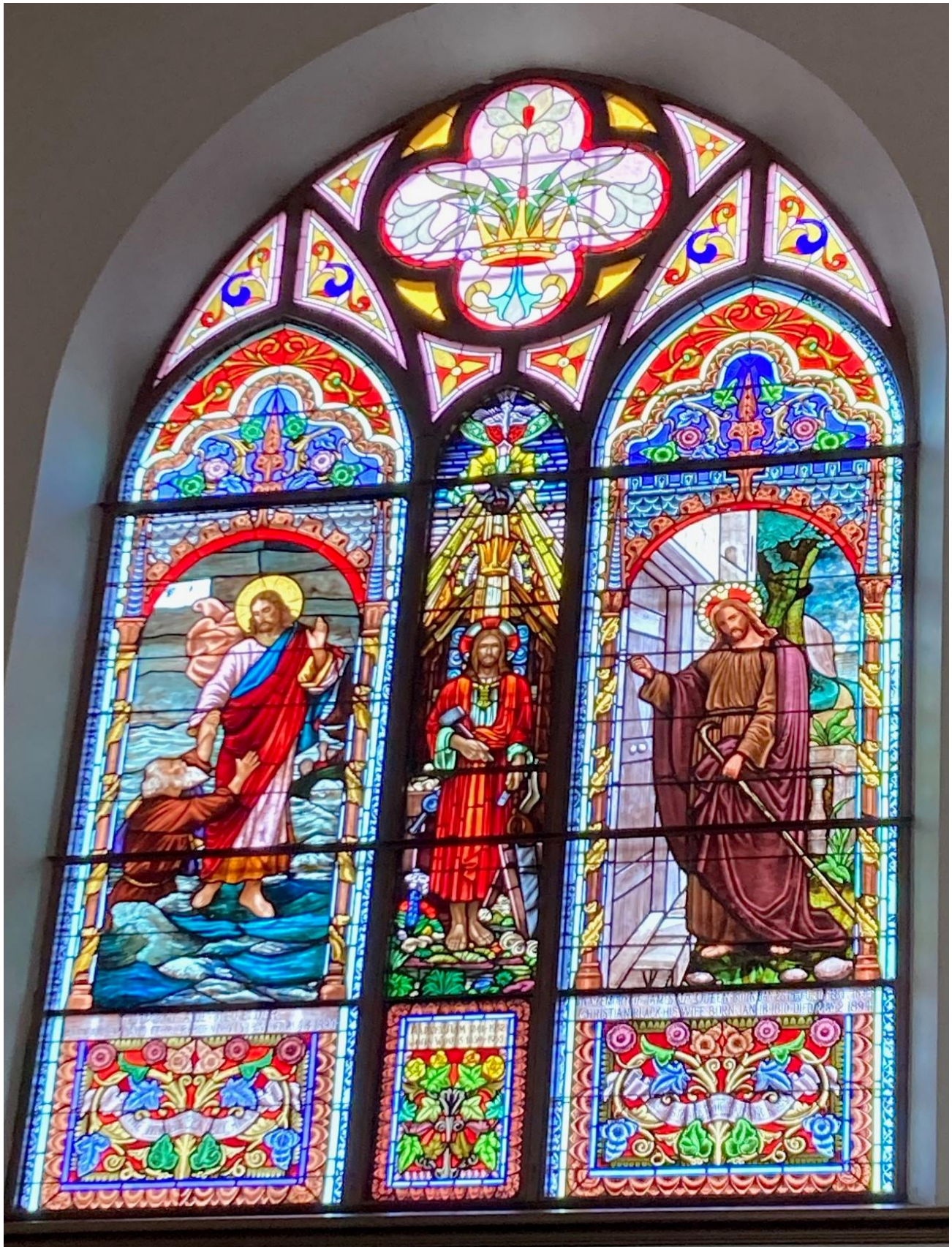
Sharing. This passage offers a definition of Christ which focuses on what he does rather than what kind of being he is. However, they depend on the preacher to translate this list of activities into more familiar terms:

- Christ worked with God to create the world.
- Christ continually cares for the whole universe.
- Christ lived among us as Jesus of Nazareth and accepted being crucified.
- Christ is just like God. When we learn what Jesus Christ is like, we learn what God is like.
- Christ forgives us.
- Just as Christ was at the beginning with God, Christ will be at the end of the world with God.
- On Worldwide Communion Sunday, Christ is the host of the sacramental meal to which the whole world is invited.

Match what the writer of Hebrews said about Christ with the symbols for Christ displayed on the paraments, in the windows, or other places in the sanctuary.



In the upper north window in the sanctuary, there is an image of Jesus holding a child and gathering with children with caring. That same caring is displayed in the image of Jesus the Shepherd coming back to the flock of sheep with the one lamb who was lost.



The east window depicts Jesus the Teacher and Saviour, walking on water and rescuing Peter who has attempted in his faith to walk on the water. The image on the right is of Jesus knocking on the door of our life as promised in Revelation 3. He is the faithful one who will continue to seek us out, but is also humble enough to knock and wait to enter in to our lives.



The west window depicts the story of Jesus the young lad at the Temple engaging with the teachers and leaders of the temples, asking questions and listening to their teachings. Here he is the humble one learning and steeping himself in the Jewish traditions.



The lower north window depicts the calling of the fishers Simon Peter and Andrew. Jesus here is the leader, the one asking others to trust in him and to follow him.



The final and most important symbol on Worldwide Communion Sunday is the presence of the loaf and cup on the communion table, Christ the Host, Christ the body and blood, given for all the world.

Hymn: O Love, How Deep

VU348

- 1 O love, how deep, how broad, how high!
It fills the heart with ecstasy,
that God, in Jesus Christ, should take
our mortal form for mortals' sake.
- 2 God sent no angel to our race
of higher or of lower place,
but wore the robe of human frame,
and freely to this lost world came.
- 3 For us he was baptized, and bore
a holy fast, and hungered sore;
for us temptations sharply knew;
for us the tempter overthrew.
- 4 For us he prayed, for us he taught,
for us great daily works were wrought,
by words and signs, and actions, thus
still seeking not himself, but us.
- 5 For us to wicked foes betrayed,
scourged, mocked, in purple robe arrayed,
he bore the shameful cross and death;
for us at length gave up his breath.

- 6 For us he rose from death again,
for us he went on high to reign,
for us he sent his Spirit here
to guide, to strengthen and to cheer.
- 7 To God whose boundless love has won
salvation for us through the Son,
to God all praise and glory be
both now and through eternity.

Scripture:

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

Lord God, as you spoke long ago *Heb. 1:1–2*
through the voices of your prophets,
speak to us here, speak to us now,
through the power of your Spirit
and the promise of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

Scripture: Psalm 8 (NRSV)

O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory above the heavens.
Out of the mouths of babes and infants
you have founded a bulwark because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the avenger.

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?

Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honour.
You have given them dominion over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under their feet,
all sheep and oxen,
and also the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea,
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Prayer *David Sparks, Summerland, B.C.*

May the words I speak and the reflection that we all share
find a response that is worthy of you,
most Just, most Loving, and most Compassionate God. Amen.

Reflection

I was driving across the island of Newfoundland, a drive that takes a surprising 9 hours from St. John's in the east to Port-aux-Basques in the west. By the time I got to the western part of the island, south of Corner Brook, it was dark outside. I was listening to CBC radio and the program was about light pollution. Now that part of the Trans-Canada Highway in Newfoundland is one of the least populated parts, so the lights on, and in, buildings were few, and streetlights were pretty well non-existent. It would have been the perfect time to observe the night sky, if it hadn't been for the clouds, and the headlights coming at me—well, and the fact that I was driving.

Light pollution is a significant problem in the developed world, and is becoming a problem for the whole planet. Due to light pollution, the night sky over many of our cities is hundreds of times brighter than a natural, starlit sky. This “skyglow” hides the stars from our sight and prevents us and all life of Earth from experiencing a natural night, even in areas hundreds of miles away from urban development.

A survey on light pollution in 2001 revealed that 63% of the world's population and 99% of the population of the European Union and the United States (and I would submit parts of Canada within a couple hundred kilometers of the US border) live in areas where the night sky is brighter than the threshold for light-polluted status.

In 1984 a massive electrical outage plunged Los Angeles into darkness and before long emergency centres began to receive calls from citizens concerned because they could see a large, silvery cloud in the sky. It was the Milky Way, which, because of light pollution, had been invisible to Los Angeles residents for decades or for some, their whole lives.

In the book *The End of the Night*, author Paul Bogard says that as we lose dark skies we are missing out on a spiritual connection. “As long as humans have looked up at the stars, we've been inspired to think of our spiritual lives, our place in creation. How much is it worth to look out into the night and be inspired to live a certain way, to feel small in the face of infinitude, to recognize...that there is no other place to go and therefore we ought to find beauty and meaning here on earth?”

Our psalm today is Psalm 8 and at the heart of it is an existential question: What are we? Specifically, what is humankind, or more particularly, **what is a single human person** in the grand scheme of God's vast and magnificent creation? What value, what significance, purpose or merit does a human being have, such that God is mindful of her? Such that God bothers to care for him? How should we measure and situate our species in relation to the cosmos that surrounds us? What sort of scale should we use?

The Psalmist is inspired to ask this question by gazing at the night sky: “When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established, what are human beings that you are mindful of them?”

Like many of us who find ourselves delightfully confounded by a star-studded sky, if we get the chance to glimpse it, the sheer expanse of the ocean, a mountain range that grazes the clouds, or the staggering diversity of the animal kingdom, the Psalmist loses his sense of scope and scale in relation to the celestial wonders above his head. Even without the benefits of modern science, he recognizes that the vastness he's observing requires a recalibration. His own measurements are useless; he needs God to show him who and what he really is.

What does he discover? He discovers two seemingly contradictory truths. Human beings are laughably insignificant. We are mere specks, fleeting and tiny in the big picture of God's grandeur. But we are at the same time glorious because God considers us partners and co-creators, caretakers and stewards of all that God has made. **We are invaluable because God decided that we are.** God is mindful of us. God cares for us. God **trusts** us. Under God's loving and attentive gaze, our place in creation has become profoundly meaningful. We have a vocation that matters. A vocation that carries consequences.

Psalm 8 is indeed a psalm for our time. Why? Because I think many of us have forgotten who we are. Or at least, we've forgotten **half** of who we are. As a culture, we have lost our capacity to hold the paradox of Psalm 8 – the paradox that we are simultaneously small and big, insignificant and grand, peripheral and essential. We've forgotten how to hold this tension, how to order our lives according to its wisdom. We tend to spend our days leaning too hard in one direction or another. As soon as we overcome our tendency toward insignificance, grandiosity steps up and knocks us flat.

How might we remember and correct our course? Perhaps the psalm itself can show us a way forward. Perhaps it can reorient us when we forget either our smallness or our grandness. Here are some thoughts:

We can begin and end with praise: The writer brackets this psalm with an exclamation of praise and worship to God: "Oh Lord, our sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" It has taken me many years to figure out why worship really matters in the Christian life. Formerly, I didn't understand why God **needed** my worship; was God really so arrogant? So greedy for compliments? So desperate for adoration?

Of course not. Praise is essential, not because God "needs" it, but because we do. **We** need to remember that God's transcendence, God's divine existence, glory, goodness and compassion are the foundation we stand on. They are the brackets within which we live, and move, and have our being. We are not in charge; God is. We are not the masters of the universe; God is.

So the Psalmist begins and ends his poem by decentering himself and centering God. It is God who is sovereign, God who is majestic, God whose name is imprinted throughout creation.

We can gaze, wonder, notice and contemplate: It is too easy in our digitized and curated lives to forget that our own experiences, emotions, opinions, and preferences aren't the only ones worth privileging. Fortunately, God has infused creation itself with the medicine we need. **"When I consider..."** writes the Psalmist. When I gaze, when I contemplate, when I position myself in the big picture of God's huge and varied world, my sense of scale shifts, the Psalmist seems to say. It is in God's handiwork—the stars, the moon, the laughing mouths of babies—that accurate proportion lies.

It's good to feel tiny at the edge of the roaring sea. Good to stand beneath a tree that has lived hundreds of years before me, and will live hundreds more years after I'm gone. Good to remember that I'm only here for a fleeting time, and that the supposed enormities of my life are **tiny** in God's patient eternity. It's good to feel small, young, and new against the backdrop of timelessness.

We can take our place in God's good order: If half of our trouble lies in forgetting our smallness, the other half lies in forgetting our grandeur. Consider all the ways in which we devalue human life, treating each other as insignificant and even expendable. Consider how quickly and viciously we judge ourselves when we fail in some endeavour or another, as if our lives have no value beyond what we can produce or perfect. Consider how seldom we bask in what we actually are: the beloved creations of God.

"You have made human beings a little lower than God and crowned them with glory and honour," writes the Psalmist. No, we are not God, but we are also far from nothing. We have a "crowned" place in God's created order, an intrinsic value that does not depend on our own achievements and accomplishments. Our place is simply our place; God has ordained it for us in love. We help no one when we shy away from the honour God has freely chosen to bestow upon us.

We can dedicate ourselves to our vocation: While our place in God's creation is a gift, it comes with a responsibility. The is where the question of our value, our significance, our tremendous **power** in relation to the rest of reality, becomes urgent. As the Psalmist puts it, "You have given human beings dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas."

We human beings don't have a good track record when it comes to honouring our vocation as stewards and caretakers of creation. We have exchanged "dominion" for **domination**, twisting our divine vocation into something mingy, greedy, short-sighted and destructive. We have stripped, extracted, exploited and impoverished in the very places where God wants us to plant, cultivate, tend and nourish. We've allowed ourselves to believe that our imprint is small and negligible when in fact it is huge and powerful enough to be catastrophic. We've neglected to see the interconnectedness at the heart of God's creative design, our dependence on the wellness of the earth, and the earth's dependence on our tenderness and generosity. In short, we've forgotten that it is no small thing to be entrusted with "dominion."

Ours is a responsibility to approach with holy fear and trembling. A responsibility that should bring us to our knees. And yet it is a responsibility that has the potential to reorient us. A responsibility that can give proper and humble shape to our "grandness." We have been crowned with glory and honour, not for our own self-aggrandizement, but for the thriving and blessing of God's good creation.

What are we? What are we that God's mindfulness rests on us? What are we that God cares for us with such intensity? So much depends on how we answer this question. So much depends on our holding tight to both our smallness and our bigness, our humility and our grandeur. May we find ways to cling to all of who we are. May we live out of the fullness of our insignificance, our crowning, our dependence, and our divine vocation, so that God's name will be honoured through our fleeting days.

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. Leave your offering in 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 Lynda, to arrange Pre-Authorized Remittance payments (PAR)
5. E-transfer directly from your bank. E-mail to secretary@melvilleunited.com

Offering Prayer:

Creator God, in all that we do, all that we say, and all that we give, may we live out your covenant to care for all creation. Bless what we give and bless us. Amen.

Joys and Concerns**Sacrament of Holy Communion****Instructions**

- Have your bread and juice/grapes ready with you
- After the Prayer of Thanksgiving I will break the bread and pour the juice I have on behalf of us all
- Then I will invite you to "Eat this in remembrance..." and "Drink this in remembrance..."

And the Table Will Be Wide: A Blessing for World Communion Sunday © Jan Richardson.
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And the table
will be wide.

And the welcome
will be wide.

And the arms
will open wide
to gather us in.

And our hearts
will open wide
to receive.

And we will come
as children who trust
there is enough.
And we will come
unhindered and free.
And our aching
will be met

with bread.
And our sorrow
will be met
with wine.

And we will open our hands
to the feast
without shame.
And we will turn
toward each other
without fear.
And we will give up
our appetite
for despair.
And we will taste
and know
of delight.

And we will become bread
for a hungry world.
And we will become drink
for those who thirst.
And the blessed
will become the blessing.
And everywhere
will be the feast.
— Jan Richardson

Hymn: One Bread, One Body

VU467

One bread, one body, one Lord of all,
one cup of blessing which we bless;
and we, though many, throughout the earth,
we are one body in this one Lord.

- 1 Gentile or Jew, servant or free,
 woman or man, no more. R
- 2 Many the gifts, many the works,
 one in the Lord of all. R
- 3 Grain for the fields, scattered and grown,
 gathered to one, for all. R

Prayer of Thanksgiving *adapted from a prayer by Thom M. Shuman, **Lectionary Liturgies: World Communion Liturgy in a time of pandemic (October 3, 2021)** <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>. Used with permission.*

May the composer of hope be with you!

And also with you!

Beloved, God has created us to live faithfully in these times.

We lift our hearts to the One

who shapes us into communities of grace and peace.

Join in singing to God, who takes away all our fears.

**We will dance with joy to the Table of peace and hope,
even if it is the table in our kitchen or living room.**

We tremble in these moments
of uncertainty, of days which seem endless,
wondering if there is any word for us.
So, remind us that you spoke
into the trembling emptiness of chaos,
and your goodness and wonder
began all those days and nights
when hope raced across the sky,
when grace bubbled up from springs,
when peace wandered the meadows.
All these gifts were, and still are,
crafted for those made in your mage,
even when we grumble in wildernesses
or live in the exile of fear and worry,
or seek to have our way, not yours.
In every moment when your people
were alone, afraid, felt abandoned by all,
you sent prophets - women and men,
to remind us of your promises and point us
to all the ways you continue to love.
Even in these months of isolation,
even in these days which seem the same,
even in these moments we are alone,
you are with us, in the life, the promises
made known in the Child you sent
to point us to the way home to you.

So, with those who trembled at
the foot of your holy mountain,
and with those who press on to follow you,
we join our voices in praise to you:

Your Word opens our eyes to all creation.

Your Word is the sweet taste of joy for empty hearts.

**Your Word helps us to endure through every
moment which seems unbearable.**

Blessed is your Word who comes in your name.

Hosanna in the highest!

Though others mock us for such trust,
we continue to believe that we know
your holiness in the hope you share, God of our hearts,
and we realize how blessed we are
by the grace we have received in your Child, Jesus.
In these times when we wonder
if anyone really cares about us,
he is the One who is your love
poured out for us, each of us.
In these days when bitter voices
would seek to seduce us with anger,
he is the gentle voice which calls
us to trust in your heart broken for us.
In the moments when people seem
not to care for the most vulnerable,
for those most at risk from this virus,
he is the living demonstration
that death has no ultimate power
but that your resurrecting love
is the final word spoken about us.

As we would seek to model his gentleness
and grace in these overwhelming times,
as we try to let his light be revealed in us,
we would speak of that mystery we call faith:

**Setting aside all he valued,
Christ became our treasure,
so we might know how precious we are to God.
Setting aside his own life,
Christ rescued us from all foolishness
so we might know the One who loves us.
Setting aside our doubts and fears,
we yearn for the promised of the return
of the grace, love, and hope of Christ.**

On the night before Jesus was taken away to his death,
he gathered his disciples (whom he called friends).
He gathered with people just like us.
He took bread from the table,
and after giving thanks to you,
he broke it and gave it to those around him, saying,
"Take this and eat it.
This is my body given for you.
Each time you eat this, remember me."
In the same way, he took a cup, saying,
"This cup is my promise in my life's blood,
poured out for forgiveness of sins.
Each time you drink this, remember me."

Now, around table and altars
in sacred spaces which echo with silence,
around nicked and initialized wooden tables
and glass topped tables in homes,
we pray, Redeemer of all creation,
that you would pour out your Spirit
on each and every place,
and on each and every person.
Whether it is bread that is broken,
or crackers that are split apart,
may these gifts remind us
that it is moments when we least expect,
for those people we usually do not notice,
that we are called
to share your grace
to listen to the lonely
to welcome the heartbroken
to embrace the vulnerable.
Whether it is a mug of tea,
a glass of wine or juice,
or even a glass of water,
may this be your grace poured into us
so that we might become
people who will not give up on justice,
people who will not let go of hope,
people who will not hoard life,
people who will trust in you always.

Help us to love as Christ loved.
Knowing our own weakness,
may we stand with all who stumble.
Sharing in his suffering,
may we remember all who suffer.
Held in his love,
may we embrace all whom the world denies.
Rejoicing in his forgiveness,
may we forgive all who sin against us.

And when this pandemic comes to an end
and we can gather once again
with our sisters and brothers around the Table,
we will know what your promised Feast
in that place, that time, that life beyond this,
where all hurtful words silenced,
where all is pain left behind,
where hope and grace are our closest friends,
and we will join our hearts and voices
with our sisters and brothers
who forever sing of your glory,
God in Community, Holy in One. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer:

We gather these and all our prayers,
and with Jesus,
we pray:

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.

Preparation

As we come to this table,

we are reminded that this is not the table

of this community of faith;

nor is it the table of The United Church of Canada,

or any particular denomination.

This is the table of Jesus Christ, the family feast of the whole people of God.

We come to this table, and participate in this meal,

not because anything we have done entitles us to be here,

not because somehow we have earned a place;

this is not the table of the perfect,

but the table of the broken.

All who seek to be nourished and sustained in the journey of faith

and long to live justly and in peace with their neighbour, are welcome here.

Breaking and Distribution of the Elements

As we join together as community

and around this table

may we know that this is:

the body of Christ broken for us:

the blood of Christ shed for us.

May they nourish our bodies for the journey ahead

and quench our thirst for peace and justice.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Come, for all things are now ready.

Jesus Christ - bread for the journey.

Jesus Christ - the wine of arrival.

Prayer After Communion

Gracious God,

**we are blessed by the selfless love of Christ,
shared with us in this feast.**

His offering is gift and grace,

and we live our thanksgiving by being a blessing.

We rejoice as your called people. Amen.

Hymn: O Lord My God (How Great Thou Art) VU 238

- 1 O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
consider all the works thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Refrain: Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

- 2 When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze.

Refrain: Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

- 3 But when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,
that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing,
he bled and died to take away my sin.

Refrain: Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

- 4 When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
and there proclaim, 'My God, how great thou art!'

Refrain: Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee,
How great thou art! How great thou art!

Commissioning *Philip Aldis, **Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2021**, p.30. Used with permission.*

By God's amazing grace, we are grounded in love:

Love for the earth and for all of creation.

Love for our neighbour and for one another.

Love for God, the author of love.

We go now to share that love in the world. Amen.

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 *Bob Root, **Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2021**, p.30. Used with permission.*

May the blessing of God,
who made us in love and for relationship
with one another and all creation;
the blessing of Jesus,
whose footprints are deep on our earth
and deep in our hearts;
and the blessing of Spirit,
who blows through us and all around us,
go with us this day, this night, and always.
Go, blessed.
Go, be a blessing. Amen.

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Lord Jesus, my brother,
bone of my bone,
stand with me this day,
and let me walk with you
all my life. Amen.

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Lord Jesus, my brother,
flesh of my flesh,
stay with me this night,
and let me rest with you
in eternal life. Amen.