



October 9, 2022

Melville United Church

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Melville United Church
October 9, 2022
Thanksgiving Sunday
Creation Time 5

Presiding today - Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint

Welcome

I greet you in the name of the Triune God, Creator, Christ and Spirit.

We gather in community today – October 9, 2022 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. We encourage people to come out to worship in the sanctuary. There is ample room to socially distance, and you are welcome to wear masks if that is comfortable for you. For those who are joining us online or by reading, we invite you to have a candle or tea light available.

We gather on this Thanksgiving Sunday to offer our thanks to God, not only for the blessings we enjoy, but for God's providence in giving us anything, the gift of Jesus Christ and at the most basic, for giving us life.

Announcements

- You are invited to a **Zoom book study** on ***21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act*** ***Mondays at 7pm starting October 17th***. See Rev. Lynda for details and to sign up.
- **Melville's Anniversary will be celebrated October 23rd** – there will be a lunch following the service in the Chapel, with food served in the hall and the Parlour available for overflow
- **Melville Choir** is meeting again, and you are most welcome to join in! Rehearsals are on **Thursdays at 7:00pm**. Please contact Colleen Weber for more details or just come on out.
- **Photo Directory** – We have finished taking photos with the photographer. We will now take photos of the Seniors in their homes, retirement home, etc.. We will be taking photos of certain groups, i.e.: The Choir, Council, etc.. If anyone has random photos of events that have gone on at Melville in the last 5 years, please see Lorna about them, as we do have a page or two for those. Thank You!
- As more and more people find their dollar shrinking, and having to decide between rent and three meals a day, the demand for food bank assistance rises. We ask you to prayerfully consider if you are able to **support the food bank**, either with a donation of food, or financially.

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

Land Acknowledgement *Peter Chynoweth, Gathering: Pentecost 1 2022, p.33. Used with permission.*

We acknowledge that this land on which we gather for worship is the traditional land of the people of Petun,
Haudenosaunee,
Anishinabewaki,
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation,
Odawa and
Mississauga nations. We acknowledge that we live on this land as people who have agreed to share the care and use of this land as a result of treaties—the Simcoe Patent—Treaty No. 4 and the Haldimand Treaty, that outlined the rights and responsibilities associated with our place in this land. May we be people who remember this with thanksgiving and respect.

Lighting the Christ Candle: *Jim McKean, Gathering: Pentecost 2 2022, p.31. Used with permission.*

(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)

The light of Christ shines through our voice and words,
through our gestures and actions,
and through the face we present to the world.

**So let us light this candle
to remind us that we can be the Light of Christ for all.**

Call to Worship and Opening Prayer: *Gord Dunbar, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.43. Used with permission.*

Happy Thanksgiving as you come into this space—
from a digital distance or here in person—
to celebrate the abundance with which God blesses us all.

**When the leaves begin to turn colour and fall,
when the temperature gets cooler and the days grow shorter,
we lean into creation's cycle of life as God's gift.**

Come as we worship the One
who shows us the Way of self-giving love.

**We come to rejoice that God has made us for one another
and teaches us faithfulness when sharing from our abundance.**

Let us commune with God in prayer:

**In our listening, O Spirit, may we recognize your whispers of becoming.
In our praying, O God, may we discover our union in you.
In our singing, O Christ, may we delight in life's possibilities.
In our living in your name, may we dedicate ourselves to your purpose. Amen.**

Hymn: Let All Things Now Living**VU242****CCLI Lic. #1576520, CSPL201561**

- 1 Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
to God our Creator triumphantly raise;
who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
by guiding us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, pure light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night;
till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into Light.

- 2 By law God enforces, the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
the depths of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We, too, should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise:
till all things now living unite in thanksgiving,
to God in the highest, hosanna and praise.

Prayer Seeking Forgiveness and Reconciliation Gord Dunbar, *Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022*, p.44. Used with permission.

How can we not respond to such an amazing gift as that of God's grace?

We respond by opening our hearts fully and humbly to transformation, holding nothing back in our communion with our living God as we pray silently.

(a time of silent prayer)

Words of Assurance Gord Dunbar, *Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022*, p.44. Used with permission, alt.

Like the fruitfulness of this harvest season, God provides us with all we need.

Our need is sated in the overwhelming, reckless love of God for each and all of us.

We want more and ever more, yet the Source is never-ending.

The Source of this unconditional love is the grace of God revealed in the risen Christ.

There is wonder at the plenty of the gift.

There is becoming within the promise of divine grace in each moment.

There is sharing of this love called out of us, even as we receive.

Thanks be to God!

Children's Ministry:

Grateful: A Love Song to the World

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sO2o98Zpzg8>

Prayer/Blessing

Loving God,

We thank you

For all the good things

In our lives

**And for being with us
When things go wrong.
Help us to remember your love
And share it with others.
Amen.**

Hymn: We Plough the Fields

VU520

- 1 We plough the fields and scatter
the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered
by your almighty hand;
you send the snow in winter,
the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine,
and soft refreshing rain.
All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

- 2 You only are the maker
of all things near and far;
you paint the wayside flower,
you light the evening star;
the winds and waves obey you,
by you the birds are fed;
much more to us, your children,
you give us daily bread.
All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

- 3 We thank you then, O Maker,
for all things bright and good,
the seed-time and the harvest,
our life, our health, our food;
accept the gifts we offer
for all your love imparts,
and, what from us you long for,
our humble, thankful hearts.
All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
we thank you, God, O holy God,
for all your love.

Prayer of Illumination

O God, open our hearts and minds
by the power of your Holy Spirit,
that as the scriptures are read
and your Word is proclaimed,
we may hear what you are saying to us today. Amen.

Scripture: Philippians 4:4-9 *(The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation)*

The peace of God, which passes all understanding

Rejoice in the Saviour always! I say it again: Rejoice!
Let everyone see your forbearing spirit.
Our Saviour is near.
Dismiss all anxiety from your minds;
instead, present your needs to God through prayer and petition,
giving thanks for all circumstances.
Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding,
will stand guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, my sisters and brothers,
your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true,
all that deserves respect,
all that is honest, pure, decent, admirable, virtuous or worthy of praise.
Live according to what you have learned and accepted,
what you have heard me say and seen me do.
Then will the God of peace be with you.

Ministry of Music: "Every Day is a Gift from God" *music by Don Besig and words by Nancy Price
played by Suzanne Flewelling*

Scripture: John 6:25-35 *(The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation)*

Give us the bread from heaven for eternal life

When they found Jesus on the other side of the lake, they said, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"
Jesus answered them,

"The truth of the matter is,
you're not looking for me because you've seen signs,
but because you've eaten your fill of the bread.
You shouldn't be working for perishable food,
but for life-giving food that lasts for all eternity;
this the Chosen One can give you,
for the Chosen One bears the seal of Abba God."

At they this said, "What must we do to perform the works of God?"

Jesus replied,

"This is the work of God:

to believe in the one whom God has sent."

So they asked Jesus, "What sign are you going to give to show us that we should believe in you?"

What will you do? Our ancestors had manna to eat in the desert; as scripture says, 'God gave them

bread from heaven to eat.”
Jesus said to them,
“The truth of the matter is,
Moses hasn’t given you bread from heaven;
yet my Abba give you the true bread from heaven.
For the bread of God
is the one who comes down from heaven
and gives life to the world.”
“Teacher,” they said, “give us this bread from now on.”
Jesus explained to them,
“I am the bread of life.
No one who comes to me will ever be hungry;
no one who believes in me will be thirsty.
But as I told you,
you see me and still don’t believe.

Prayer

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: The Gift of Thanks



I was at the grocery store the other evening and I noticed lots of signs of Thanksgiving. There were bales of straw and pumpkins, much orange and gold, yellow and maroon. And tucked back into a corner near the florist’s display was a cart with brown paper bags, stapled across the top and priced at \$10.00. These were items you could buy for the food bank, presumably for Thanksgiving and beyond. I was glad to see them there, but dismayed that they were tucked so far out of the way. But regardless of where they were located, the fact that the grocery store had them made up reflects the sentiment of giving thanks by doing something. That something that is done may be motivated by guilt, as one looks at their cart laden with Thanksgiving dinner ingredients, but perhaps also out of thanksgiving, gratitude for all that one has received.

In our gospel reading for today, it is the day after the feeding of the 5,000. Jesus has gone off to be by himself, as he does at times, and the crowd from yesterday has been searching for him. They find him on the other side of the lake, and ask, not-so-innocently, “Rabbi, when did you get here?” But Jesus knows what they’re up to and calls them on it. “The truth of the matter is, you’re not looking for me because you’ve seen signs, but because you’ve eaten your fill of the bread.” Busted. The people are, probably for the most part, peasants, who came to see Jesus because they heard about the healing that he has done, and perhaps they themselves, or a family member needs healing. But then a meal was shared, a most unexpected meal, in a place where people would not have expected food to appear, a miracle.



There has been much thought and written about the feeding of the 5,000, one of the few stories of Jesus to appear in all four gospel accounts. One view that I came across by theologian Paul Nuechterlein, is this: It is hot in Israel at the Sea of Galilee, very hot. Present-day tourists are advised to bring water with them wherever they go, even when they are travelling in air-conditioned buses. But think of the poor peasants of Jesus’ time, travelling on foot in the scorching heat. They would definitely need water, and likely, they would not plan to travel far without bringing some food with them as well. They were well aware of the hardships of the desolate land, and would head out prepared.

So people would likely have had food with them the day they went up the mountain to see Jesus. But probably, they would have been very reluctant to take out that food and eat it in front of others, in case they were asked to share. They likely would have preferred to wait until they had started home to break out the food. But the day wore on. They were still on the mountain at a point when they needed to eat and in a place where there was nowhere to buy any food. One young boy offers up his five loaves and two fish. As Neuchterlein writes, “Probably he wouldn’t have learned about the hard facts of survival yet, where everyone needs to watch out for themselves.”

But in addition to the need for survival, there was also the matter of keeping to the purity laws of their faith, keeping kosher. The people would have been “careful not to break bread with other people in unclean situations. Eating was a religious activity. You need[ed] to be careful not to contaminate yourself by eating with the wrong people, in the wrong situations.”

People were careful. People were understandably concerned for their own physical and spiritual well-being. People were untrusting. Now about this point in my thinking in the past, I have started

to question just what was the miracle. People **had** food; they just weren't prepared to **share** food. So Jesus had the small boy's meager loaves and fishes, and in the midst of that atmosphere of scarcity, he gave thanks to God. And then he began to give out the food.



The miracle of that moment, was that Jesus offered thanks, and “his own thankful heart ... [stirred up, and opened up,] the hearts of those that were there that day, to also open their hearts in thanksgiving.” We might think that thanksgiving was just a matter of course for Jesus, but Jesus’ insistence on offering thanks for what seemed to be so very little did more than multiplying food once or twice two thousand years ago. It unlocked people’s frightened, rule-bound, self-interested hearts to share with one another. And there was enough and more for all to eat their fill.

And so the next day, Jesus repeats the lesson, not the miracle. “You shouldn’t be working for perishable food, but for lifegiving food that lasts for all eternity; this the Chosen One can give you, for the Chosen One bears the seal of Abba God...the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” Giving life—modelling thankfulness to God and in the process breaking the barriers of hardened hearts. What a gift!

And so, later on a beach after the grief of that terrible Friday, the astonishment of that resurrection morning, and the fear that they had been abandoned, when Jesus tells Peter to feed his sheep, Peter can trust that Jesus, and through Jesus, God, will not leave him to fend for himself, but will be with him in that endeavour and in all his endeavours.

So how about for us? For many of us the challenge isn't about whether we have enough food. Nor is it likely that we will be concerned about maintaining purity as we sit down for a meal with family and perhaps friends. The concerns for us may not all be the same.



Some are worried about the rapidly increasing prices of food, particularly for those who are on a fixed budget—which, by the way, applies to many more of us than might seem so at first glance. There are those of us who are concerned that other spiraling costs are making it difficult to make ends meet—the cost of gas, the increase in our rent or mortgage. For some it is the challenge of being able to **find** the things we need. Phrases like “supply chain issues” have entered our lexicon, and seem unlikely to go away any time soon. We might be waiting for medical treatment that has slowed to a crawl since the pandemic. We may not find ourselves on a mountain as the sun begins to set wondering what or how to eat. But we do face challenges that bring fear to our hearts and uncertainty to our well-being. It is hard to be thankful in the midst of such unsettledness.

But Jesus’ gift for the 5,000 is our gift too. Jesus heart-felt thanks to God is a lesson, a model and a balm for our souls. Thanksgiving, being aware of the blessings of life, and the one who blesses us, is a remarkable way of unlocking even the very frightened depths of our hearts. Rather than grasping tightly with cramped fists, we can release, and offer, and share, because God is there for us, providing, tending, nurturing in all the ways we have need.

The Bread of Life, the one who bears the seal of Abba God continues to open our hearts, to God and to one another, giving us all that we need to care for all God’s creatures, all God’s creation.



As we celebrate our Thanksgivings, as we share together with family and friends, may we know the depth and breadth and height of God's love. May we experience the unclenching of hearts made sore by Covid, and economic uncertainty, illness and loss. May we **give** heart-felt thanks and **live** heart-felt thanks with our own deep love.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.
Amen.

Hymn: Sing to the Lord of Harvest VU519

- 1 Sing to the Lord of harvest,
sing songs of love and praise,
with joyful hearts and voices
your hallelujahs raise;
 by whom the rolling seasons
 in fruitful order move;
sing to the Lord of harvest
a joyful song of love.

- 2 God makes the clouds drop fatness,
the deserts bloom and spring,
the hills leap up in gladness,
the valleys laugh and sing.
 God fills them all with fullness,
 all things with large increase,
and crowns the year with goodness,
with plenty and with peace.

- 3 Bring to this sacred altar
all things God's goodness gave,
the golden sheaves of harvest,
the souls Christ died to save:

your hearts lay down before him
when at his feet you fall,
and with your lives adore him
who gave his life for all.

Joys and Concerns

- Happy Birthday
 - Elsie Lively celebrates 90 years on Thursday, October 13th
 - Ioan Shortt celebrates 90 years on Saturday, October 15th

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 of the People

O God,
presider over the affairs of persons and nations,
move us to thanksgiving,
not because of what we have, but because of whose we are;
not because of present blessing,
but because of your continuing providence;
not because of the moment,
but because of the eternity of salvation.
Let our thanksgiving be expressed
not only in feasting, but in sharing;
not only in passive enjoyment, but in active service;
not only in annual observance, but in daily attitude.
And because your concern for wholesome living
embraces every person upon the earth,
we pray for ourselves and for others
We pray for all who are in sorrow or in pain . . .
all who are ill or alone . . .
all who live with fear, oppression, or hunger . . .
all whom the world counts as last and least
We pray for your church and its varied ministries . . .
for the nations as they strive for peace and justice . . .
for the earth, and the fragile web of life we share . . .
for our families and friends
We pray all this in the name of your beloved son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

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.

Minute for Mission: Thank God for You



You have likely been there. A million and one things to do: errands, housekeeping, food prep, work, volunteering. Sometimes we can be so busy checking off our to-do list that we forget to pause and appreciate all that God has blessed us with in life.

Enter Thanksgiving. A time to stop and catalogue what we are grateful for.

You top our list.

This Thanksgiving, the Mission & Service team of the Philanthropy Unit is pausing to give thanks for you—our donors.

Without you, we wouldn't be able to help transform so many lives.

Thanks to your support, we were able to provide 9,996 full vaccinations to those who need them most around the world.

What's more, since the pandemic struck, your generosity has helped raise over \$525,000 in emergency gifts to help Mission & Service partners deliver personal protective equipment, distribute food, install sanitation stations, and support education programs to help prevent and control the spread of the disease.

As the war in Ukraine continues to devastate lives, your generous gifts of over \$1.3 million are helping to provide emergency shelter, clean water, food, and medical attention. The recently unveiled gift of food hampers and dignity kits for refugees in Ukraine featured in the *Gifts with Vision* catalogue is adding to this total (you'll see these new gifts starting Sept. 26!).

These are just some of the tangible changes you help make possible. Behind each one of them is a changed life.

In Paul's letter to the Romans, he begins with a statement of thanksgiving: "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world."

Ultimately, Jesus charged us with helping build a better world. On behalf of those we serve, thank you for rising to the challenge.

Offering Invitation

Because God first loved us,
we are made to love one another.
For the sake of the life of the world, let us offer ourselves,
our time, and our possessions as signs of love.

Offering Hymn: We Cannot Own the Sunlit Sky (v.1) MV143 OneLicense #A-740237

We cannot own the sunlit sky,
the moon, the wildflowers growing,
for we are part of all that is
within life's river flowing.
With open hands receive and share
the gifts of God's creation,
that all may have abundant life
in every earthly nation.

Offering Prayer: *Bill Steadman, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.44. Used with permission.*

As a people who yearn for new opportunities
to put our faith into action,

we give thanks for God's presence in our lives.

As a congregation that seeks to build community
and to serve with a common purpose,

we give thanks for the Spirit's presence in our lives.

As individuals who seek to follow the teachings of Jesus
and to make a difference in our community and in the world,

we give thanks for Christ's presence in our lives.

We seek to share both hope and love
through our mission, our service, and our offerings.

Bless all that we offer, Gracious God. Thanks be to you. Amen.

Hymn: I Heard the Voice of Jesus VU626 CCLI Lic. #1576520, CSPL201561

1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
 your head upon my breast.'
I came to Jesus as I was,
 weary and worn and sad;
I found in him a resting place,
 and he has made me glad.

2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'Behold, I freely give
 the living water; thirsty one,
 stoop down, and drink, and live.'
 I came to Jesus, and I drank
 of that life-giving stream;
 my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
 and now I live in him.

3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'I am this dark world's light;
 look unto me, your morn shall rise,
 and all your day be bright.'
 I looked to Jesus, and I found
 in him my star, my sun;
 and in that light of life I'll walk
 till travelling days are done.

Commissioning *George Allan, Gathering: Pentecost 2, 2022, p.45. Used with permission.*

Go into our world again and share the bread of life with all you meet.
 Share by doing as you would have them do;
 share by offering love and mercy;
 share by extending forgiveness and understanding;
 share by loving God with all your heart
 and your neighbour as yourself.

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 it is moving everywhere, to everyone, with everyone.
 Now everywhere you go today, the light will go with you.

Blessing

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet
 walk with you on the road.
 May the Christ who serves with wounded hands
 stretch out your hands to serve.
 May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart
 open your hearts to love.
 May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet,
 and may everyone you meet
 see the face of Christ in you.

Household Prayer: Morning *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**[®] **Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2.** Copyright 2013.*

Glorious God, I praise you.
I praise you for who you are—
loving, merciful, powerful, and just.
I praise you for the ways you act in creation—
creating beauty, bringing freedom, making peace, offering healing.
Thank you for opportunities I will have today
to glorify you in my words and actions.
Thank you for this very day in which I am able to enjoy you
by participating in your activity in the world.
I pray that the enmity between people and nations
may give way to true communion.
In the name of Christ, the great Reconciler, I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**[®] **Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, Volume 2.** Copyright 2013, alt.*

Loving God, I end this day as I began it—in praise of you.
Thank you for including me in your great circle of love and care.
Thank you for being with us always.
Thank you, too, for calling me to love others
and to treat everyone as my neighbor.
Help me to notice those whose cries for mercy
so often go unheard or unanswered,
for I am joined to them by being joined to you.
I pray in awe of the life you have given me
through faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.