



*Celebrating
178 Years*



December 10, 2023

Melville United Church

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Faith Formation & Youth

Ministry of Music Team

Office Administrator

Custodian

Chair of Church Council

Chair of Pastoral Care & Prayer Chain Captain

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Melville United Church
December 10, 2023
Advent II White Gift Sunday

Presiding: The Youth of Melville
Music Ministry: Suzanne Flewelling

Prelude

Welcome

Announcements:

If you are worshiping with us for the first time, welcome! Please join us for refreshments and conversation in the parlour after the service.

- Melville is looking for a new **Kid's Church Leader**. If you are someone you know has a passion for helping kids lead a just and spiritually enriching life, then please contact Lynda in the office at 519-843-1781 or secretary@melvilleunited.com. We'll be in touch.
- **The Newsletter is out.** Our latest Melville newsletter should be in your home by now. Some went out on the grapevine and others were hand delivered or sent by Royal Mail. If you usually receive yours electronically and it has not arrived, please check your spam file and or trash. If you cannot find it, please contact the church office and inform our administrator Lynda and we will make it right. If you are not on the grapevine, please help us to keep our postage costs down by adding your name. Questions or concerns, please see Ralph Rainford.
- **Church envelopes** are ready for pickup at the back of the church. If you don't see your envelopes or would like some, please contact Lynda in the office secretary@melvilleunited.com or 519-843-1781
- **Memory Angels:** Our Memory Angels will be decorating the Sanctuary this season, in memory of our loved ones. Those who have had Angels in the past can renew your Angel with a minimum donation of \$5 each. Those who are new to this can have a handmade Paper Angel decorate the Sanctuary, with an inscription on the skirt, dedicating this Angel in memory of your loved one, from you, for a minimum donation of \$5. Your year-end statement will include this donation. The Angels stay at Melville safely packed away, until the next season. These Angels bring comfort and meaning to the Melville families during the season, knowing we are remembering our loved ones. Please contact Patty Duncan.
- **UCW meat pies** are available now. \$5 each. Buy after church or contact Marg 519-843-3274 OR margfrayne@hotmail.com
- The music series "**Mid-Day Music at Melville**" presented by pianist Brad Halls returns on **Wednesday, December 13 from 12 noon to about 1:00 p.m.** at Melville United Church in Fergus. On December 13 and again on December 20, Brad will take a break from his musical trip through the history of the Broadway musical, to celebrate the music of Christmas. On December 13 enjoy secular and sacred favourites such as *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*, *I Wonder as I Wander*, *I've Got My Love to Keep Me Warm* and several others. An entirely different list of songs will be presented on December 10 including *Joy to the World*, *Winter Wonderland*, *Silent Night*, *I'll Be Home for Christmas* and more. Christmas is certainly a "sing-along" season, and lyric sheets will be provided to encourage everyone to join in many of the selections. After Dec. 20, "Mid-Day Music" will take a two-week break over Christmas and New Years, and our regular Broadway repertoire will return on Wednesday, January 10, 2024. There is no admission

cost for these concerts, but a voluntary donation to Melville United Church to help keep the heat on and the piano tuned is always appreciated.

- The **Learning Disabilities Association of Wellington County** is seeking individuals for the Reading Rocks program, where volunteers will work one-on-one with children to enhance their essential reading skills. The program runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm at JD Hogarth Public School, spanning from February 5th to April 10th. Training is provided, and those interested can contact Lynda at LDAWC@gmail.com for more information or fill out the volunteer tutor application at <https://form.jotform.com/203084991501251>
- **Friday or Sunday Coffee Time** – We encourage people to sign up to host either a Friday or a Sunday Coffee Time. It is not difficult! We'd be pleased to show you how. Sign-up sheets are at the Parlour Door. Please speak to Lorna Bevcar or Marg Frayne.
- The **Food Bank** is in need of donations, more than ever. Please consider bringing donations of nonperishables, toiletries, or a gift card, to church. Baskets are located in the sanctuary. **Items most needed are:** pasta sauce, Chunky soup (Habitant), small canned soup, pasta side dishes, canned vegetables, canned tomatoes, canned fruit, cold cereal, peanut butter, juice, jam, canned salmon, and canned pasta (beefaroni, etc.).

Land Acknowledgement

Let us take time to acknowledge the peoples who have lived on and stewarded these lands since time immemorial.

God, help us to be thankful, and to become better neighbours and stewards that we might continue to honour these lands.

Lighting the Advent Candle (Advent 2):

In this season of expectant waiting, we fear the conflict all around us as we long for peace. So many wars. So much destruction. Too many deaths. Too much loss. So much money wasted. So many lives spent.

Too much tragedy spread.

God's goodness commands us to work for peace.

We revere the goodness that celebrates uniqueness, that enlivens pleasure, that preserves treasures between strangers, between friends, between enemies.

As we come close to each other, we notice in each face the reason for harmony while peace flames into resolve.

(The second Advent candle is lit.)

Sung Response: "A Candle is Burning" verse 1 (VU #6)

A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright, A candle of hope in December's dark night, While angels sing blessings from heaven's starry sky, Our hearts we prepare now for Jesus is nigh.

Call to Worship:

One: The day of the Lord brings grace and blessing.

All: We come to this day with hearts prepared for praising.

One: The day of the Lord brings judgement and pardon.

All: We come to this day with souls set on praying.

One: The day of the Lord brings wisdom and light.

All: We come to this day with minds eager to listen for God's will.

One: In our praising, praying, listening, and responding,

All: We come to worship God.

Let There Be Peace on Earth an Advent Prayer of Confession and Healing:

As we witness to fear, in the news and in our streets,

we make space for hope in our lives.

With broken hearts, faltering steps, and a desire for healing,

we make gestures of peace with each other.

As we greet strangers, neighbours, and friends,

we make a place for joy in the chaos of our concerns.

Awaiting a future announced and promised by the Living God,

we make room for love in our habits, hearts, and homes.

Holy One, you make the crooked ways straight and mend the broken soul.

On this day, as we offer simple gifts in the face of profound need, remind us how your grace grows in our giving and receiving. Inspire the rebirth of love—in our world and in our lives— as we dedicate ourselves to your justice and mercy.

Amen.

Hymn: There Was a Child in Galilee (Dreaming Mary) MV 134

There was a child in Galilee
 who wandered wild along the sea.
A holy child, alone was she,
 and they called her Dreaming Mary.
And she dreamed, rejoicing in her saviour;
 she dreamed of justice for the poor.
She dreamed that kings oppressed no more
 when she dreamed, that Dreaming Mary.

One holy day an angel came
 with voice of wind and eyes of flame.
He promised bless-ed would be her name
 when he spoke to Dreaming Mary.
Then she spoke, rejoicing in her saviour.
 She spoke of justice for the poor.
She spoke that kings oppressed no more
 when she spoke, that Dreaming Mary.

And did she dream about a sone?
 And did he speak, the angel one?
We only know God's will was done
 in the son of Dreaming Mary.

Then she prayed, rejoicing in her saviour.
 She taught him justice for the poor.
She taught that kings oppressed no more
 when she taught, that Dreaming Mary.

Then Jesus grew in Galilee,
 they wandered wild along the sea.

Now he calls to you and me
to dream with Dreaming Mary.
And we dream, rejoicing in our saviour.
We dream of justice for the poor.
We dream that kings oppress no more
as we dream with Dreaming Mary.

Time with Children: Gifts Hidden in Plain Sight

Scripture Reading: Psalm 85:8-13 *Read by Sydney*

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
for God will speak peace to the people,
to the faithful, to those who turn to God in their hearts.
Surely God's salvation is at hand for those who fear God,
that God's glory may dwell in our land.
Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.
The Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
Righteousness will go before him,
and will make a path for his steps.

Scripture Reading: Corinthians 8:7-12 NIV

But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you[a]—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. And here is my judgement about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.

Ministry of Music: O Day of Peace That Dimly Shines VU 682

Theme Presentations *The Legend of the white Gifts as told by Phebe Curtiss *Presented by: Luke (Narrator), Jack, Jazlynn, Emma, Isabella and Carter*

***A White Gift Drama** By Joan Berge, Bright-Chesterfield Pastoral Charge, Bright, Ontario
Presented by: Grace (Narrator), Chantel, Isley and Rowan

Offering, and Presentation of White Gifts Offering Refrain: VU 55, v.4

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

If I were a wise man, I would do my part;
Yet, what I can, I give him—give my heart.

Prayer of Dedication:

All things come from you, Creating God, and with joy we offer our gifts in return. Bless us, and what we do here, that we and all your people might experience the renewal of life you reveal in Christ Jesus. Open our hearts and minds to receive your continual gift of transformation this day, and always. Amen.

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

- Birthdays
 - Gerri McCullough celebrates on Wed Dec 13th
 - Eleanor Johnston celebrates on Sat Dec 16th

Prayers of The People and The Prayer of Jesus

God of Hope, you hear our silent prayers and urgent cries. Hear us now as we pray for your world and its people.

God of Hope, hear our prayer.

God of Peace, on this day we pray

for the people of Bethlehem, of Israel and Palestine; for Ukraine and *other places suffering conflict*; for refugees who have nowhere to lay their heads; and for those who feel alone, lost, tired and frightened.

We pray for those who suffer at the hands of systemic racism, bigotry and misogyny. Restore us in right relationship, we who are created in your image, which is plural and good.

We pray for those who live your peace with justice and who, by example and at risk to themselves, shine a light on the chasms that divide us.

Grant your people strength and patience as, together, we seek your promise of life renewed.

God of the morning star, guide us in the ways of mercy and justice.

God of Peace, hear our prayer.

God of Joy, on this day we pray

for those who will spend this day alone;

for those whose tables will have an empty place this year; for those in care home and hospital; and for our loved ones who live now in your eternal joy..

Grant your people courage and wisdom, as we seek your promise of wholeness. God of heaven and earth, of anticipation and promise, be with us and heal us.

God of Joy, hear our prayer.

God of Love, open our hearts, that we might receive you and hear your voice. Open us to the possibility of true change, in us and in others.

Remind us of your promise, made again to every generation, of your enduring love. May things on earth be as they are in heaven.

God of Love, hear our prayer.

We pray these things in the name of the One who comes, Jesus Christ, who taught us when we pray to say:

**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.**

Hymn: Prepare the Way of the Lord VU 10

Prepare the way of the Lord!
Prepare the way of the Lord!
Make a straight path for him, make a straight path;
prepare the way of the Lord!

Minute for Mission

Hymn: All Poor Ones and Humble VU 68

- 1 All poor ones and humble and all those who stumble,
come hastening, and feel not afraid;
for Jesus, our treasure, with love past all measure,
in lowly poor manger was laid.
Though wise men who found him
laid rich gifts around him,
yet oxen they gave him their hay,
and Jesus in beauty accepted their duty;
contented in manger he lay.
Then haste we to show him the praises we owe him;
our service he ne'er can despise;
whose love still is able to show us that stable,
where softly in manger he lies.
- 2 The Christ Child will lead us, the Good Shepherd feed us
and with us abide till his day.
Then hatred he'll banish; then sorrow will vanish,
and death and despair flee away.
And he shall reign ever, and nothing shall sever
from us the great love of our King;
his peace and his pity shall bless his fair city;
his praises we ever shall sing.
Then haste we to show him the praises we owe him;
our service he ne'er can despise;
whose love still is able to show us that stable,
where softly in manger he lies.

Benediction

As we go about our annual journeys in this Advent season... May we hold tightly to each other...
Keeping alive faith and hope for each new day that comes... And trusting the gracious spirit of
God to guide us always. Amen.

Shalom, My Friends....(sung)

Postlude

The United Church of Canada, 2020 3

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Worship Schedule

December 17	Advent 3	Rev. Jeff Hawkins
December 24 th 11:00 am	Advent 4	Rev. Felicia Urbanski
December 24 th 7:00 pm	Advent 4	Rev. Ruth Brown
December 31st	1 st Sunday after Christmas	Rev. Jeff Hawkins