



February/March Newsletter 2024

Our Mission

We live as a loving, inclusive faith community actively welcoming and responding to needs within and outside of our church.

Greetings Members of Melville

Sharing an update on Council work and happenings around Melville.

Welcome to 2024 at Melville. As always there is more going on here than just a Sunday worship service.

We continue to navigate Rev. Lynda's leave with a host of engaging supply ministers whose diverse perspective offer something new each Sunday.

Numerous community groups continue to make use of our building, helping us to reach and positively impact the lives of hundreds of families throughout Centre Wellington.

While we can't be sure of when the development next door will be started or completed, at some point, we will be able to welcome new neighbours to our downtown and a paved parking lot.

Good things are happening here at Melville and we should be proud to share our story with the world.

Allan Hons, Chair of Church Council

Our **Annual Meeting** will be held on **Sunday, April 14th** in the Sanctuary after the worship service. Following the meeting we will adjourn to the Heritage Hall for lunch. We invite everyone to attend this celebration of the work and witness of Melville for 2023.

On February 7th, Council held its monthly meeting. Here are the highlights from our meeting. Kaillie Rawn, our treasurer presented the 2024 Budget. Council approved the budget and it will be presented to the Congregation for final approval at the Annual Meeting.

Martha Duncan continues to bring leadership to our Kids' Church. At this time, we are actively seeking someone to take over from Martha as she has been looking forward to stepping down.

We are looking for Melville people to act as a Host to the many renters coming to use our facilities. For more details, please speak to Ralph Rainford. Help is needed.

Council spent more time on discussing "The Remit". This, if passed by the United Church of Canada will bring positive changes for the Indigenous people of the United Church of Canada. Council will be voting on The Remit at their next meeting March 6.

The Centre Wellington Mobile Market is a non-profit, volunteer run group that works to decrease food waste while fighting food insecurity in our area. Melville is supporting their good work by providing free access to our kitchen to prepare the meals.

From the Stewardship Committee:

In preparation for the Annual Meeting, Stewardship is putting together the Slate of Officers for the many committees at Melville as well as Council members. The list for 2023 is on the bulletin board in the photo copy room across from the Office. If you are interested in becoming more involved, please speak to any Committee Chair or to Ralph Rainford.

The Sunday morning worship service is looking for volunteers to be welcome and counters. Please speak to Ralph Rainford if you are interested. On site training is available. Great benefits!



There probably has never been a church anywhere that had all the money they would ever need. Melville is very fortunate. No, we do not have millions of dollars, but we do have many generous and supportive people. At this time, we do not have sufficient funds for the capital projects (windows, re-pointing the stone work and roof work), but we are managing to pay the day-to-day bills. If you feel the urge to make a donation, increase your weekly giving, go on PAR or increase your PAR amount. The Finance Committee will be grateful.

From the Property Committee:

Funding for Stained Glass Windows:



Melville has received a \$5,000 grant from the UP Fund (from the former Waterloo Presbytery Extension Council) to assist with the repair of the two-medium sized (10'x14') stained glass windows in the Sanctuary. These windows, which face the parking lot and go up through the balcony

floor, have bowed inwards considerably and have missing and failing reinforcing bars.

The work this year will include removal of the stained-glass pieces to straighten the joints and re-leading the joints for re-installation, and will cost approximately \$13,900. Currently the work does not include the exterior frame, painting and storm glazing.

Boiler

Investigation has begun for options to replace the boiler. It is estimated that it should be replaced within the next approximately two to five years.

Electric Stove:

In December the Centre Wellington Mobile Market donated a new electric stove, with a larger oven, for Melville's main kitchen in lieu of rental fees. A few months ago, they also brought in a refrigerator and a small freezer of their own. This group provides a unique service to the community by making use of surplus food supplies and preparing meals for those in need.

Our previous white domestic electric stove from the main kitchen has been donated to a young couple who needed it.

Social Justice and Outreach: – Jane O'Leary

Throughout 2023, Melville's Social Justice & Outreach Team provided education, communication, actions and funding to address needs within our congregation, our community and beyond. We are grateful to be part of a congregation that continues to give generously of their time, talents and dollars to respond to local and global issues.

In the Fall, \$2,160 was raised to sponsor Christmas for children and families in our community. Adding \$1,000 from our team budget, we were able to sponsor 12 children across five families. This wonderful response made it possible to provide gift cards for the

children ages 1 to 17, gift cards for a family treat, and a small gift card for Mom or Dad or caregiver.

In December, any remaining contributions and budget dollars were donated to the CW Food Bank \$279, and The Grove Hub – Fergus \$300.

Mission and Service:

Melville's Mission & Service contributions reached \$16,826.86 for 2023. A great achievement!

Black History Month:

In support of Black History Month, the Social Justice & Outreach Team delivered the February 4th service. Martha Duncan prepared the reflection on Slavery in Canada. Thousands of Africans were captured and transported to Great Britain, France, the French Antilles, and North America in the 17th century. It is estimated that more than 4,000 Black men, women, and children were held in slavery in what is now Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick as early as 1628. Following the theme "It only takes one voice to initiate change", the congregation learned of Black men and women who risked greatly to bring about change. Please see the *bulletin*, located on Melville's website, to read the reflection and find multiple links to these amazing stories of courage that led to change.

Working Towards Becoming an Anti-Racist Denomination (from the UCC website)

The dream of a racially just community is not quickly or easily attainable. Racial justice will never be fully achieved by attending one workshop or preaching a single sermon. "Racial justice" is also not a simple action that we can check off our "to-do" lists. But because racism is so deeply embedded in our churches and communities, dismantling racism will be an ongoing effort. Anti-racism, therefore, demands energy and attention from all parts of

the church. The work of becoming an anti-racist denomination is a journey and process that requires continuous reflection and action.

Melville has long been a community of people interested in learning and evolving. All that we learn, and all that are then able to give, benefits both the giver and the receiver. So many people are hurt struggling from situations not of their own making. Thank you for actively living our mission and working towards right relations with all people. It matters.



Search for long-term supply:

Late in 2023, Council initiated the creation of a **Search Team** to find a long-term supply minister. As Council has shared, Rev. Lynda started long term leave late in September, and it could last up to two years. Jane O'Leary agreed to seek out team members. A very positive update was delivered to Council at their February meeting.

The Search Team has six members; Jane O'Leary, Heather Halls, Lara Johnston, Chris Hopewell, Alison Rainford and David Ogilvie. At their initial meeting in January, they agreed to meet weekly through February to review/update the documents prepared during the last search (2021), and become familiar with the search process. They will also participate in online training provided by WOW Regional Council. There's a lot to figure out!

Our thanks to all of the team members for taking on this task. Thanks also to Karen Smillie, Kaillie Rawn and Lynda Rivet for the support and knowledge they will be providing. Team Chair, Jane O'Leary, will provide updates to Council and the congregation as the work progresses.

Mid-day Music:



Brad Halls continues to present his talents on the piano every Wednesday from noon to 1:00 pm in the Sanctuary. We are very grateful to Brad for sharing his talents. All welcome.

Cards:



Pastoral Care is looking for someone to continue sending cards for special occasions within our congregation.

We thank Lorna Bevcar who is stepping down from this task.

Grape Vine:



We continue to reach all who are connected to Melville. If you are on the "Grape Vine" you will receive your newsletter electronically. For others it will be sent Royal Mail. This is a considerable cost.

We ask you to help us by contacting Lynda Rivet in the Church Office at 519 843-1781 and having your name added to the Grape Vine. We appreciate your help in this matter.

From the Secretary of Council:

I started this monthly newsletter in December. Comments I received were all good. When you receive good news, it makes you want to carry on. It has been decided that we will do a newsletter every other month. So here it is.

Susan Barth has graciously agreed to take over putting this together and for this I am very grateful. Thank you, Susan. Enjoy what is contained here. Offer help if you are able. Come and worship with us on Sunday morning. Above all enjoy life!

Worship and Music Update:

You might want to know who will be presiding at the Worship Service over the next few weeks.

February 4 Social Justice and Outreach
- Martha Duncan

11 Rev. Jeff Hawkins

18 Rev. Tom Watson - Communion

25 Rev. Felicia Urbanski Lent 2

March 3 Rev. Marion Loree Lent 3

10 Rev. Tom Watson Lent 4

17 Rev. Tom Watson Lent 5

24 Rev. Felicia Urbanski - Palm Sunday

29 Rev. Tom Watson - Good Friday

followed by hot cross buns in the Parlour

31 Rev. Jeff Hawkins - Easter Sunday

April 7 Rev. Marion Loree - Baptism

14 Social Justice and Outreach

- Annual Meeting and lunch

21 Rev. Jeff Hawkins - Earth Day

Ministry and Personal

As you know, Reverend Lynda went on Long Term Disability last September. She continues to work on her physical and mental health. Getting healthy again takes time, there are good days and not so good days. Progress is not always easy to measure but she is very grateful to have competent and compassionate professionals to help guide her through her recovery.

Lynda misses everyone at Melville and wishes us well. We pray for Lynda and her family to return to good health.