



June 2, 2024

Melville United Church
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Melville United Church
June 2, 2024
Pride Sunday / Stories from The Heart

Melville Social Justice Team
Ministry of Music: Colleen Weber

Prelude

Welcome

A Moment for Pride

It is a privilege to lead worship this morning. May it be a meaningful and spirit-filled time for all of us!

On June 10, 1925, The United Church of Canada was born after much consultation, compromise, and listening for the Spirit. In 1988, The United Church of Canada decided that sexual orientation would no longer be a barrier to membership in the United Church and hence to candidacy for ministry. In 2009, gender identity was added to that decision. Today we celebrate Pride in many United Churches across the country.

Some of us come today celebrating and knowing lots about Pride. Some come today celebrating and knowing a little about Pride. And some of us come today not sure what to expect but here to learn what we can. So, let's begin with a bit of background.

Pride is a positive stance against discrimination and violence toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and gender-fluid people. Pride is also a chance to promote self-affirmation, dignity, equality, and fundamental human rights, and to celebrate in a safe environment.

Announcements

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

- **The Newsletter has arrived.** If you have not received yours either electronically or in paper form, please contact Lynda Rivet in the office or Ralph Rainford. Thanks, enjoy!
- **Broadview subscriptions are now due!** To renew your subscription or to sign up, please see Ralph Rainford. The cost is \$30.00. A great magazine at a reasonable cost.
- Fun, Funds and Fellowship's message to all: Our weekends have been very successful, seeing money going into Melville's coffers, week after week, thanks to your donations, our committee is having on-going Garage Sales, which started Friday and Sat, May 3rd and 4th, 8-4pm. Friday and Saturday June 7 & 8 we may not be including Plants and Baking!!! Please donate any items that you don't need, to our efforts. We are using the Chapel and the Heritage Hall on the main floor, so you may leave your items inside the Chapel, in the aisles, or in the Heritage Hall (leaving the left side vacant for the Quilters on Thursdays). We will

also be selling Melville's frozen Meat Pies, when available. For info: call Lorna Bevcar 519-787-0570.

- **Thyme with God Garden.** Welcome to the 2024 season... it feels good to be back in the garden! We have planted potatoes, spring greens and snap peas so far and the fun is just beginning. :) Feel free to join us on Mondays at 6pm for conversation, watering, planting, harvesting and a little bit of weeding during the growing season. See you in the garden!
- **Rides needed for seniors:** Can you help? Rides to Friday Morning Coffee (10 - 11am), and Sunday Service (11am - Noon). Please speak to Lorna Bevcar
- **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 Bells Are Back in Town.** The Bells of Westminster **Tuesday, June 4th 7:00 pm.** Westminster United Church 247 Broadway, Orangeville. Free will offering.
- Thank you for your donations to the **Food Bank** there is an **ongoing need** of nonperishables, toiletries, or a gift card. Baskets are in the sanctuary.

Lighting the Christ Candle

Acknowledging the Territory (*video*)

In Our Voices: Land Acknowledgement <https://melvilleunited.com/2024/01/19/land-acknowledgement>

Call to Worship

God, Creator of us all, we gather together today and welcome your Spirit as we celebrate the diversity and value of all people.

Blessed are those who embrace one another with joy.

Lighting of the Red Candle

We light the red candle, symbolizing life in all its richness. Come, let us worship, learn, and celebrate together.

Opening Hymn: Let Us Build a House MV 1 verses 1, 4, 5

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

4 Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach, and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

- 5 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and visions heard and loved and treasured, taught and claimed as words within the Word. Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers of faith and songs of grace; let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

Opening Prayers

One: Creating God—God beyond Gender,

**All: who makes no mistakes,
who surprises us always,
who molded the first person both male and female,
who molded the first non-gendered human
who loves all creation.**

One: Help us love the diversity of your creation.

All: Help us accept all varieties of gender in ourselves and in others.

One: Help us celebrate those who are different from us

**All: That we may learn to love each other as you love us,
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, both human and divine.**

One: Creating God—God of Mercy,

**All: As we have acknowledged the diversity in this amazing world,
with an underlying spirit of mystery, we also admit that, at times, we have forgotten
the wonders of that diversity. We have longed for things to be familiar. We know that
the great religious traditions have and still do cause harm and pain to those who
express their being in ways different than the majority.**

We know, too, that we individually, both intentionally and unintentionally, have rejected and shunned those who are not like us.

For this we are truly sorry and ask your patience as we learn and strive for ways to be more inclusive and celebrate all in this wondrous world.

Amen.

*—Used by permission of Rev. Cindy Bourgeois, Wesley United Church, Regina, Sask. For more information, see the devotional *The First Gender Reassignment Surgery from the United Church of Christ**

Lighting of the Orange Candle

We light the orange candle, symbolizing healing.

As scripture assures, “If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.” (Psalm 139:9–10 NRSV)

Celebration of Music I was born This Way by Metropolitan United Church

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQNFT9jAa1w>

Time With Children

Hymn: Draw the Circle Wide MV 145

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

Let our hearts touch far horizons,
so encompass great and small;
let our loving know no borders,
faithful to God's call.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

Let the dreams we dream be larger,
than we've ever dreamed before;
let the dream of Christ be in us,
open every door.

Draw the circle wide. Draw it wider still.
Let this be our song, no one stands alone,
standing side by side, draw the circle wide.

Scripture: John 15:12-13

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

Lighting of the Yellow Candle

We light the yellow candle, symbolizing sunlight.

Hymn: Open My Eyes, That I May See VU 371

- 1 Open my eyes, that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.
 Silently now I wait for thee,
 ready, my God, thy will to see.
 Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

- 2 Open my ears, that I may hear
voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wavenotes fall on my ear,
everything false will disappear.
 Silently now I wait for thee,
 ready, my God, thy will to see.
 Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

- 3 Open my mouth, and let me bear

gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare
love with thy children thus to share.
 Silently now I wait for thee,
 ready, my God, thy will to see.
 Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Reflections

Pride Stories: Three Stories from LGBTQIA2S+ People, Allies, Family, and/or Friends

Story 1 -Erik and Rob (couple) video https://youtu.be/lw_QYflwkzo?si=9mqznlLzANHy50UD

Lighting of the Green Candle

We light the green candle, symbolizing nature.

Sung Response: Deep in Our Hearts MV 154, verse 1

Deep in our hearts there is a common vision;
deep in our hearts there is a common song;
deep in our hearts there is a common story,
telling Creation that we are one.

Story 2 – Bob and Joanne (family)

Lighting of the Blue Candle

We light the blue candle, symbolizing harmony.

Sung Response: Deep in Our Hearts MV 154, verse 2

Deep in our hearts there is a common purpose;
deep in our hearts there is a common goal;
deep in our hearts there is a sacred message,
justice and peace in harmony.

Story 3 – Martha (ally)

Lighting of the Purple Candle

We light the blue candle, symbolizing Spirit.

Sung Response: Deep in Our Hearts MV 154, verse 3

Deep in our hearts there is a common longing;
deep in our hearts there is a common theme;
deep in our hearts there is a common current,
flowing to freedom like a stream.

Offertory: Gathering of Our Gifts

Our offerings will be received now as an expression of our gratitude for all our blessings.

Offertory Hymn: What Can I Do MV 191

**What can I do? What can I bring?
What can I say? What can I sing?
I'll sing with joy. I'll say a prayer.
I'll bring my love. I'll do my share. (x2)**

Mission Story

Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

We continue with the prayers of the people, beginning with our personal prayers as we pray in silence. I will give some spoken words which will be followed by reciting the Lord's Prayer.

Gracious and loving God, holy mystery, wholly love, we gather our personal reflections and corporate yearnings in these our silent prayers.

Empowering God, may your Spirit guide us in our personal celebrations and concerns. As a body of faith-filled people, may we also be guided in the celebrations and concerns of the gathered body. We celebrate the Pride stories we heard today and are grateful for the movement of your Spirit of love and inclusion both within the United Church and Canadian society. We pray that all people who feel excluded by families, faith communities, and society because of who they are may experience your love in their lives. We pray for peace and respect for all in this community, this country, and this world.

We pray for political leaders at all levels as they struggle to make the world a better place. We pray that the teachings of Jesus and those of other world faiths will work together to meet the challenges of our world today.

And here at Melville, we pray for wisdom and careful consideration of the topics as we discuss them together in the days and months ahead.

For those amongst us who have personal challenges, have family members who need support, or anyone who is under stress, we pray that God's gentle Spirit will bring peace, spiritual and physical healing.

In all of these celebrations and concerns, we are grateful that we can turn to the one who guides us in our lives, saying together...

..the Lord's Prayer

Hymn: My Love Colours Outside the Lines MV 138

- 1. My love colours outside the lines,
exploring paths that few could ever find;
and takes me into places
where I've never been before,
and opens doors to worlds outside the lines.**
- 2. My Lord colours outside the lines,**

**turns wounds to blessings, water into wine;
and takes me into places
where I've never been before
and opens doors to worlds outside the lines.**

**3, 4 We'll never walk on water
if we're not prepared to drown,
body and soul need a soaking
from time to time.
And we'll never move the grave-stones
if we're not prepared to die,
and realize there are worlds outside the lines.**

Commissioning

This morning we have lit candles:

Red for life in all its forms,
Orange for healing,
Yellow for sunlight and all kinds of light,
Green for nature in all her diversity,
Blue for harmony, and
Purple for the Spirit which guides us all.

We are called to practice this rainbow of colours in our lives—in the conversations and interactions in our lives at home, at work, and at play—as we go out into our community and the world to share the message that God's love is for everyone!

Sung Blessing: Go Make a Difference *by Steve Angrisano and Tom Tomaszek*

Go make a dff'rence, we can make a diff'rence
Go make a diff'rence in the world
Go make a diff'rence we can make a diff'rence
Go make a diff'rence in the world

We are the hands of Christ, reaching out to those in need
The face of God for all to see
We are the spirit of hope, we are the voice of peace

Go make a dff'rence, we can make a diff'rence
Go make a diff'rence in the world
Go make a diff'rence we can make a diff'rence
Go make a diff'rence in the world

Postlude

—This worship service was created by Linda Hutchinson. Linda is the Eastern Canada Affirming Ministries Coordinator for Affirm United's [Affirming Ministries Program](#), and an active member of Sydenham Street United Church in Kingston, Ont. She and her partner, Bruce, are advocates

for celebrating the presence of the LGBTQ community in the life and work of the United Church and society.

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Welcomers: Alison Rainford, Barb Gregory

Counters: Eleanor Johnston, Phil Brown

Worship Schedule

June 9	3 rd Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Jeff Hawkins
June 16	Indigenous Day of Prayer/Communion	Rev. Tom Watson
June 23	5 th Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Felicia Urbanski
June 30	6 th Sunday after Pentecost	TBA