



**Celebrating
178 Years**



June 30, 2024

Melville United Church

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Melville United church
Sunday June 30, 2024

Presiding: Rev. Tom Watson
Ministry of Music: Colleen Weber

Prelude

Welcome

Announcements

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 Christ Candle

Call to Worship

The story is old!

Yet as new as this morning's dawn!

For it's a story about love.

Love that stops and takes time to care.

Love that brings kindness, and healing, and hope.

Love that offers words that are like stars which guide us to new places.

When we have lost our way, or dropped the ball, or smudged the picture, or broken the mirror, or just made a mess of things...

Love finds us...and stays with us...and it is alright.

Let us sing to the God who fills our lives with love!

Hymn —Oh, Sing to Our God VU 241

1. Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing out a new song.
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing out a new song.
Oh, sing to our God, oh, sing out a new song.
Oh, sing to our God. Oh, sing to our God.

2. Oh, dance for our God and blow all the trumpets.
Oh, dance for our God and blow all the trumpets.
Oh, dance for our God and blow all the trumpets.
And sing to our God, and sing to our God.

3. Oh, shout to our God, who gave us the Spirit.
Oh, shout to our God, who gave us the Spirit.
Oh, shout to our God, who gave us the Spirit.
Oh, sing to our God. Oh, sing to our God.

Gathering Prayer (in unison):

God of all places and time...God of this place and this time...we turn to you in songs of praise.

**Especially in this summer season—this season of unmatched beauty—we sense you everywhere. In the flowers that adorn our yards and gardens. In all the wonder of our natural world. In the time we take for relaxation and restoration. And in this special place set apart. Be with us now as we worship.
Amen.**

As we sing this next hymn, I invite you to have in mind this wonderful, beautiful, land called Canada.

Hymn —Called by Earth and Sky MV 135

(refrain) Called by earth and sky, promise of hold held high.

This is our sacred living trust, treasure of life sanctified,
Called by earth and sky.

1. Precious these waters, endless seas, deep ocean's dream,
Waters of healing, rivers of rain, the wash of love again. *(refrain)*

2. Precious this gift, the air we breathe; wind born and free.
Breath of the Spirit, blow through this place,
Our gathering and our grace. *(refrain)*

3. Precious these mountains, ancient sands; vast fragile land.
Seeds of our waking, rooted and strong,
Creation's faithful song. *(refrain)*

4. Precious the fire that lights our way, bright dawning day.
Fire of passion, sorrows undone, our faith and justice one. *(refrain)*

CHILDREN'S TIME

Gospel Reading — Mark 5:21-43

When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered round him; and he was by the lake. Then one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus came and, when he saw him, fell at his feet and begged him repeatedly, "My little daughter is at the point of death. Come and lay your hands on her, so that she may be made well, and live." So he went with him. And a large crowd followed him and pressed in on him.

Now there was a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years. She had endured much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had; and she was no better, but rather grew worse. She had heard about Jesus, and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, for she said, "If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well." Immediately her hemorrhage stopped; and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease.

Immediately aware that power had gone forth from him, Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my clothes?" And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing in on you; how can you say, 'Who touched me?'"

He looked all round to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling, fell down before him, and told him the whole truth. He said to

her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

While he was still speaking, some people came from the leader's house to say, "Your daughter is dead. Why trouble the teacher any further?" But overhearing what they said, Jesus said to the leader of the synagogue, "Do not fear, only believe."

He allowed no one to follow him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they came to the house of the leader of the synagogue, he saw a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. When he had entered, he said to them, "Why do you make a commotion and weep? The child is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him.

Then he put them all outside, and took the child's father and mother and those who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "Little girl, get up!" And immediately the girl got up and began to walk about (she was twelve years of age).

At this they were overcome with amazement. He strictly ordered them that no one should know this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Sermon — "Life in Our Town...It Only Takes a Minute"

Well, it's been a busy week in our town! Now that summer has broken out in full bloom, it's always busy.

Not at all like the stretch back there in the winter, when—for the first time in history—almost the entire town went south. Everybody, that is, except for 4 people. The two widowed sisters, Edwina and Estelle, who live together over on First Street, Pastor Willie Flugel, from over at The Church Of The Reluctant Apostle, and his wife Etta—they were the only ones around.

Pastor Willie and Etta were actually hoping that Edwina and Estelle would go away too. It seemed a little empty holding church every Sunday morning with only 4 people there...3 if you didn't count Willie, the preacher. And if Edwina and Estelle didn't happen to come, that meant there was only Etta in the congregation.

Etta said, "Willie, why do we have to hold church even when there's only you and me here? Isn't it enough that I have to listen to you rehearse your sermon on Saturday night, but then have to hear it again on Sunday morning...even if I'm the only one listening?"

"Doesn't matter how many there are in church, Etta," Willie replied, "I'm still getting paid to do a job, and I will do it. Besides, don't you remember the Bible says that wherever 2 or 3 are gathered together the Lord is in the midst of them."

"Well," said Etta, "I'm sorry to have to say this, but there are some Sundays when I think the Lord went south for the winter too! Isn't there any way we can get Edwina and Estelle to go to Florida to visit somebody?"

"Actually," confessed Willie, "I've been praying about that very thing."

"Well," said Etta, "it hasn't worked. So I'm going to take a different approach. I'm going over there and offer to pay their way out of my own pocket!"

But Edwina and Estelle said No, they said they'd been to Florida about 40 years ago and didn't like it much then, so saw little point in going back now. Besides, they felt it was their duty to stay here and come to church as often as they could...to support Pastor Willie.

So it was a long and quiet winter in our town. But then, eventually, along in mid-Spring, they all returned, That's the way it is with snow birds—as dependable as the robins. One day they're back and life slips back to normal.

Although it wasn't quite normal the other day over at Al's Coffee Shop. Friday morning. The old guys were having their usual morning coffee, and discussing the affairs of the world. They were also working out their plans for after coffee, which entailed going over to Jack Cameron's and helping him erect a big tent in his back yard.

The Cameron family always holds a reunion on Canada Day weekend, and this year it's Jack and Lula's turn to host the event, so Jack rented one of those big tent canopy things from the rent-all place, so that people could be in the shade if the weather was either hot or raining on Saturday and Sunday.

But Jack figured he would need quite a bit of help to put it up—especially to hold the poles while all the ropes and pegs got put in place. So all the old guys agreed to go over after coffee and help Jack with his project.

They had just about concluded the fine details of how they would tackle things, when suddenly in walked a stranger. He made his way right over to the table where the old guys where sitting, and pulled up a chair to sit down with them.

Fellow nobody had ever seen before. Man about 60. Poorly dressed. Hadn't shaved for quite a while. Didn't smell all that nice either. Looked as if he'd been on the road for quite a spell.

"Mornin', fellows," he said, sticking out his hand. "Name's Durkens. Peter Durkens."

The old guys were a bit startled by this sudden intrusion. And uncomfortable too. They weren't used to having strangers just walk in on them like that. Hank Vickers said, "Uhh, are we supposed to know you from somewhere?"

"No, I doubt it," replied Peter Durkens, "I've been travelling around for 12 years...this is the first time I've ever come through this place...but when I saw the sign outside of town that said 'Welcome To Our Friendly Community' I thought this might be a good place to stop for a few days. So then I figured I'd drop in here and have a chat with some of the folks who live here."

"Well, Mr. Perkins, or whatever you said your name was," said Bill Partlow, "we're certainly glad you stopped by—we always like to see visitors in our town—but you've caught us at a bad time. I'm sure you can see we're having a serious discussion here."

"Oh, that's just fine. Just fine," said Peter Durkens. "I won't interrupt your discussion. I'll just sit here until that's finished...and then maybe we could all chat a spell."

Fred Bowers leaned over to Dusty Jones and whispered, "I know what this guy wants. Just

watch." And then he turned to Peter Durkens and said, "Listen, if you stopped in here hoping we'd give you some money to help you get to wherever you're going..."

Peter Durkens interrupted him in mid-sentence. "No, sir. I did not stop in here looking for a handout. I don't need money. I just came for some conversation. That's all."

"Well, that's good," said Bill Partlow. "But we're going to have to go for now anyway. We've got quite a bit to do this morning. And it's beginning to look like rain. So I think we'd better get at it. Hope you enjoy your stay here. I'll tell Al to bring you a coffee on us."

And with that, all the old guys got up and left the coffee shop, and headed over to Jack Cameron's to work on the tent.

When Frank Birstead went home for lunch, he told Myrtle what had happened. "You wouldn't believe the nerve of that guy, Myrt. Just bustin' in on us like that, Expectin' us to sit there and talk to him when we had so much else to do."

Myrtle rocked back and forth in her rocking chair for a minute or so and then asked, "Was there enough to do over at Jack Cameron's that it needed all 8 of you?"

"Well, not exactly, Myrt, but you know how it is. We had all said we'd go over to help. Besides, Jack's a good friend."

"I understand, Franklin, but, it seems to me it's too bad one or two of you couldn't have taken the time to talk with that man. Not likely you would have even had to stay that long. Sometimes it only takes a minute to be kind and friendly."

With that Myrtle got up and headed to the kitchen, to make their wieners and beans for lunch.

Well, that's the news from our town for this week. At least, from the stories that I've heard.

Now, what do you think of Myrtle Birsteads' observation: It only takes a minute?

It wouldn't have taken all that long for a couple of the old guys to stay and talk with this stranger, and make him feel that somebody cared about him.

The same goes for you and me. Most of the time, it only takes a minute to stop, and listen, and be kind to someone else.

Truth is, though, we don't always feel we have that minute. Because we have all these other pressing concerns on our plate.

It may be, as with the old guys in the coffee shop, that we feel the urgent need to go and help a neighbour with his project...or it may be something else...but there is always something else on the agenda which makes us feel as if we don't have time for interruptions.

Ask the nurse in the hospital. All these people to look after. All these pressing needs. Time, and

staff, spread so thin.

Ask the teacher in the school room. All these students. Trying to meet each of their needs. There isn't nearly enough time to spend with the student that needs extra help.

You have felt it, I'm sure. Always something else to get on to. Always something else that needs doing. Don't need a lot of interruptions today, Sure hope that phone doesn't ring this morning!

Ask the disciples in today's gospel story. So much for Jesus to do. They're already on their way to the house of Jairus to see about his 12-year-old daughter who is sick to the point of death. That's enough of an interruption in itself. Not to mention the crowds that are swelling around him—each of them bringing their particular needs to him.

But, suddenly, Jesus stops and asks, "Who touched me?"

"What do you mean, Jesus: who touched you? What a ridiculous question! Looking for some one person who touched you...in a crowd of people, all of whom are touching you? It's like looking for a needle in a haystack! If you take the time to figure that out, Jairus' daughter may die!

"The need is pressing. The time is short. There's a far bigger situation to deal with here than one person who reached out of a crowd and grabbed hold of your coat-tail! For heaven's sake, Jesus, don't be distracted!"

But Jesus stops. "Who touched me?" And the woman came and knelt down in front of him trembling, afraid—and told him her story. And Jesus said to her, "Woman, go in peace, your faith has made you well."

It didn't take very long, that encounter. Only a minute...or maybe a little more...and they were on their way. But, for the woman, who had been caught in a living hell for 12 years, it was an eternal encounter. An encounter that made the difference between dying and living.

Now the scene shifts. They are informed by a messenger that Jairus' daughter has died. And the implication is clear: "Jesus, you're stopping to speak with this woman has meant the death of someone else! And, after all, her illness was such that it made the woman ritually unclean...so you shouldn't have been bothering with her in the first place. No self-respecting rabbi would have done so! There's little point in going on to Jairus' house now."

Time is of the essence. The human condition calls for a careful ranking of critical needs. A hard lesson that comes only with maturity is that saving one life sometimes means letting another go. So choices must be carefully made.

But, once again, Jesus refuses to be bound by their agenda. "She is not dead. She is sleeping." And at the house, he took the 12 year old girl by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum! Little girl, get up." And she did.

Well, what's it all mean? A 12-year-old girl who has died lives again. A woman suffering from a defiling illness for 12 years lives again. Notice both situations involve 12. The girl is 12 years old, the woman has been suffering for 12 years.

12 was a significant number in Hebrew thought. There were 12 hours in a day, 12 hours in a night, 12 months in a year, and 12 tribes in Israel.

So, here we have two 12-year stories. Stories about half living, half dying. And the role of faith in the human story—Jairus' faith, the woman's faith, Jesus' faith? Yours, mine? And an encounter with eternity along the road? An encounter only a minute long.

"Do you know the story?" the woman in the hospital asks. An old woman. Helen by name. 12 years ago, one day while her car was stopped at a traffic light, she felt an unusual pain, when the rogue cell broke loose and settled in her liver.

"Do you know the story? The story about the woman who reached out and grabbed Jesus' coat?" Helen asks.

"Yes, I remember it."

"Well, I dreamt about that story when I was having my nap. And when I woke up, I was reaching out over the bed clothes. Reaching out to touch..." And her fingers curl and make motions in the air.

"What do you make of the story, Helen?"

"Oh, I know I'm an old used-up woman." (she winks) "But when I lie down for my nap, I feel more like Jairus' little 12-year-old girl. Weak from all the treatments. Half living and half dying.

But I lie there and watch them all come—Jairus, Jesus, the rest. And the crowds are there too. All who had heard about Jesus and have loaded up their hopes and dreams and come to see him.

"And now they're all coming to me. Walking through the hallways of the hospital. Into my room. Crowding around my bed. And even though I am dying..."

Helen reaches out. Her fingers make those funny curling motions in the air again. She is reaching out... Reaching out to touch...

Hymn: What Does the Lord Require of You? VU 701

1. What does the Lord require of you?

What does the Lord require of you?

To seek justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.

2. What does the Lord require of you?

What does the Lord require of you?

To seek justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.

3. Sanctuary Centre

What does the Lord require of you? What does the Lord require of you?

Sanctuary Left

Justice, kindness, walk humbly with your God.

Sanctuary Right

To seek justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with your God.

4. Repeat verse 3

Prelude to Prayer — O Canada VU 524

As a prelude to this morning's prayers on this Canada Day weekend, we will stand and sing "O Canada". We will then continue with the prayer "You Embrace all Peoples" (VU 525)

Prayers of the People (VU 525)

Eternal God,
whose image lies in the heart of all people,
we live among peoples
whose languages are different from our own,
whose faiths are foreign to us,
whose ways we fail to understand.
Help us to remember
that you embrace all people with your love,
that all religion is a response to you,
that the yearnings of other hearts
are much like our own, and are known to you.
Help us to recognize you
in words of truth, things of beauty,
and actions of love about us.
We pray in the name of the One who calls us
to be neighbour and friend.

The Lord's Prayer

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

- **Birthdays**
 - Rev Marion Loree celebrates on Thurs July 4th
 - David Lamb celebrates on Sun July 7th
- **Anniversary**
 - Alison & Ralph Rainford celebrate 54 years on Thurs July 4th

Offering Invitation

Offering Hymn: Praise God from whom all Blessings Flow VU 541

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures high and low;
Give thanks to God in love made known,
Creator, Word and Spirit One.

Offering Prayer

Minute for Mission

Hymn: When I Needed a Neighbour VU 600

1. When I needed a neighbour were you there, were you there?
When I needed a neighbour were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
Were you there?

2. I was hungry and thirsty, were you there, were you there?
I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
Were you there?

3. I was cold, I was naked, were you there, were you there?
I was cold, I was naked, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
Were you there?

4. When I needed a healer, were you there, were you there?
When I needed a healer, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
Were you there?

5. Wherever you travel, I'll be there, I'll be there.
Wherever you travel, I'll be there.
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
I'll be there.

Benediction

With the gift of faith as our companion...

With the encouragement of the spirit of God as a source of energy for daily life...

With the love of family and friends to support us...

We leave this place of worship to take up our daily lives.

May God go with us!

And remain with us until we meet again.

Amen.

Postlude — Long Ago and Far Away *performed by Rev. Tom Watson and Colleen Weber*

Household Prayer:

Wondrous God, I am in awe that you would choose to be born among us, revealing your divineness enlivening the ordinary things of my life.

I thank you for the gift of Jesus who walked among us, wept with the suffering and raged in anger at the injustices of his day. I thank you for the vision you etched in his heart, a fullness of righteousness for all the world.

I thank you that he called others to follow that they too might know the joy of new life. As Jesus' disciple, help me to walk in the way. Help me to carry the vision in my heart, however discouraged I get. Help me to see through eyes of faith, my life, my relationships, the world you

so love. Help me day by day, in my words and deeds to reflect your light.
Through your wisdom and Spirit, may I grow in my capacity to love you, my neighbour, and myself, as you so love. Amen.

Welcomers: Barb Gregory, John Cuming

Counters: Ruth Sproule, Phil Brown

Worship Schedule

July 7	7 th Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Jeff Hawkins
July 14	8 th Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Tom Watson
July 21	9 th Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Jeff Hawkins
July 28	10 th Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Ruth Brown