



June 15, 2025

Melville United Church

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Melville United Church
Sunday, June 15, 2025

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

Prelude

Welcome

Good morning! Welcome to worship at Melville United Church. How wonderful to be together—both in person here in the sanctuary and online.

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

I light a candle

in the name of the God who creates life,
in the name of the Christ Presence who loves life,
in the name of the Spirit who is the fire of life.

Call to Worship

Today is Father's Day!

A day to honour our Dads!

Another day to remember, and honour, those parents who have brought us into being.

In our worship, we will give thanks for them.

Hymn — Faith of Our Fathers VU 580 (verses 1, 2, 4)

1. Faith of our fathers, living still
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;
O how our hearts beat high with joy,
Whene'er we hear that glorious word:
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to you till death.

2. Faith of our mothers, daring faith,
Your work for Christ is love revealed,
Spreading God's word from pole to pole,
Making love known and freedom real:
Faith of our mothers, holy faith,
We will be true to you till death.

4. Faith born of God, O call us yet,
Bind us with all who follow you,
Sharing the struggle of your cross

Until the world is made anew.
Faith born of God, O living faith,
We will be true to you till death.

Gathering Prayer:

Today, we lift up all fathers—those who guide, nurture, and love with strength and wisdom. We thank You for the fathers who lead their families with kindness, patience, and integrity. May they find joy in their role, knowing the depth of their impact and the love they inspire. Bless those who have lost fathers, that they may find comfort in cherished memories. Strengthen those who long to be fathers, that they may walk in hope and faith. For new fathers, grant wisdom. For experienced fathers, grant grace. For fathers who have gone before us, grant peace. Amen.

Reflection

Hymn - Jesus, Friend of Little Children VU 340

1. Jesus, friend of little children, be a friend to me;
Take my hand and ever keep me close to you.
2. Teach me how to grow in goodness, daily as I grow;
You have been a child, and surely you must know.
3. Never leave me, nor forsake me, ever be my friend,
For I need you, from life's dawning to its end.

Children's Time

Ministry of Music — A Father and His Son *words and music by Scott Mains*

Gospel Reading: I Corinthians 13 (selected verses) *reader John Cuming*

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am just a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith so strong that I can remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

If I give away all my possessions, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful.

Love does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends.

Sermon: "Life in Our Town...The People We Love"

June has long been a traditional time for weddings. For the sharing of love and commitment. So this morning, being mid-June, I'm going to tell you a story about love and a wedding.

Well, it's been a busy week in our town. Middle of June. Lots of things happening. Farmers have planted crops and now enter what is known as the 'nail-biting' period—that period of anxiously awaiting the growth and production of crops upon which their continued livelihood depends.

What perils of pestilence or weather are ahead are as yet unseen and unknown. But the farmers soldier bravely on. Because that's their calling in life—to be a farmer.

The council in Our Town has decided to hold the Communities In Bloom campaign again this year, and is encouraging everybody to make a special effort to plant beautiful flowers in their yards. This is an extra incentive not only for avid gardeners such as Bridie Stevenson, but for everybody, to get on board and showcase the community so that it looks sparkingly attractive when tourists pass through in the summer.

A Communities In Bloom Committee has been set up and, sometime in August, the committee will make the rounds and judge the gardens and award 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prize ribbons.

So, it won't be long before everything from delphiniums to dipledenias, from petunias to polemoniums will be in full bloom.

In preparation for lawn-seeding, Casey stocked up on Scott's Turf Builder lawn seed and, from what I hear, he's had quite a run on it.

In fact, lawns are growing so well that folks have already had to start mowing. Hank Vickers brought Mildred's lawn mower in to Casey's Hardware the other day for Casey to sharpen the blades. Hank noticed that when Mildred cut the lawn last week the cutting was a bit uneven. "I had her go over it a second time," Hank said, "cutting it in the opposite direction, but it still didn't look quite right."

Casey put on his goggles to protect his eyes while he worked the blades over the grinding wheel. He said, "Looks as if this blade hit a few rocks, Hank."

"Yep, most likely," replied Hank. "I told Mildred to be sure and rake the lawn free of stones before she cut it the first time, but I guess she missed some."

Casey kept working. "You haven't considered helping Mildred with the lawn, have you, Hank?" To which Hank replied, "Well, yes, I have considered that. And I certainly would were it not for the fact that Mildred needs the exercise. I noticed she got a little...well...flabby...over the winter. So it's good for her to be able to get out there and work it off."

Casey just smiled and kept grinding.

Now, since last Valentine's Day Jake Williams and Frieda Nugglesworth have been seeing quite a bit of each other. As a matter of fact, they have become the talk of the town. People speculating, as they are wont to do, about what it means that the two of them have become almost inseparable.

One morning at coffee at Al's, the old guys had finished solving the problems of the larger world so the talk shifted to things closer to home. And to Jake and Frieda.

"Can't see zem two gettin' hitched," said Eddie Pletschyk. "Not at zere age."

"No, I can't either," said Milt Prosser, "but the way them two are carryin' on, they might just as well sell one of their houses and move in together. Every day, and every evening, either Jake's over at Frieda's place, or Frieda's over at Jake's."

"Can't prove it none," said Bill Partlow, chuckling, "but I think it's not only day and evening, sometimes overnight too."

"Well, ya can't blame old Jake for making hay while the sun shines, so to speak," said Milt Prosser, "but the last thing this town needs is some kind of scandal."

"Hmmm," said Fred Barlow, "seems to me I remember you spending a lot of time at Wilma's house when you were courtin' her, Milt."

"That's different Fred!" replied Milt. "We were young and innocent back then. Not old and..."

"Yeah," said Fred Barlow, "you were young alright, Milt, but I don't think you were all that innocent. Remember that time Wilma's daddy caught you and Wilma down at the..."

Milt Prosser's face got a bit red. "Now don't go rakin' up old stuff, Fred. Wilma's daddy's long dead and gone. 'Sides, that was years ago. Nobody needs old skeletons to come trippin' out of closets."

Just then Pastor Willy Flugel—Willy's the pastor over at The Church of The Reluctant Apostle—walked over to the table with his coffee. Nobody had noticed him come in. As he sat down he said, "What's this I hear about skeletons and closets, fellas?"

Oh, nothing the preacher needs to hear about," said Milt Prosser. "We were just jokin' around." "I see," replied Willy, "well the joking around did sound interesting."

Turns out things aren't that much different in Our Town than they are anywhere else. Folks like to shield the minister from stuff that might...well, might be too tender for his sensitive knowing...or maybe even taint his impressions of the people who live there. So, best to keep some things...as Milt Prosser said...hidden away in the closet.

Now, I need to take you back to an evening in late May. Jake Williams and Frieda Nugglesworth had slipped over to the city for an evening supper at a restaurant called Chez Henri, a restaurant that Jake had grown quite fond of when he lived in the city.

Quite a lovely place, Chez Henri. French cuisine. White tablecloths. Dining by candlelight. Jake and Frieda had escargot for a starter. Roast duckling with almond sauce for a main course. Glacé au Four—much like baked Alaska—a Chez Henri specialty, for dessert.

They lingered afterwards, chatting over a liqueur. Frieda had a Bailey's, Jake a Drambuie.

Finally, Jake said, "Frieda, I want to tell you a story that I heard about a month ago."

"Oh, what was that?" asked Frieda.

"Well, you know that I used to listen to Stuart McLean's Vinyl Café every week?" asked Fred.

"Yes, I know you did," replied Frieda.

"Well," said Jake, "I bought a CD collection of all the old episodes of The Vinyl Café, and I've been thinking about one episode ever since I heard it."

With that Jake related the story. It was in the part of the show called The Vinyl Cafe Story Exchange, where listeners sent in their stories, and was a story submitted by a Beth Barnes from Toronto.

It was her 30th birthday. To celebrate her birthday, she and her boyfriend had gone on a wonderful weekend get-away to a spa somewhere. They began to notice a silver-haired

woman...woman in her early 60s with striking silver hair, stylishly dressed...and she was always alone.

She sat in the quiet zone reading magazines, alone. She dined by candlelight, alone. At breakfast time, she pored over a book while eating, alone. She might have been there, they speculated, enjoying a time of solitude, away from her family, except that she seemed to have an air of sadness about her. She didn't look lonely or upset; in fact, she looked elegant. But alone. Stoically alone.

When they passed each other, or made eye contact, she'd nod and smile, as if they were old friends. But they had no communication other than that.

The morning they left, Beth Barnes' boyfriend went to pay their bill. The clerk handed him a folded piece of white paper. It was a note from the silver-haired woman. The note read:

"I've had the pleasure of bearing silent witness to the joy that you two experience in being together. You clearly share something special. And rare. Seldom does a man look at a woman with such depth of emotion. Or she at him with eyes shining with love. Very few belong together. Seems that you do. Keep holding hands. Always. Always.

"From a stranger old enough to be your mother. Fortunate enough to have once been truly in love. And wise enough to know the real thing when I see it."

The phrase stuck with Beth Barnes and her boyfriend. "Very few belong together but you two do." When they were married, just over a year later, they used the theme for their wedding. "Very few belong together, but you two do." And to this day, Beth Barnes keeps the note from that silver-haired woman, tucked away in a small box in her closet.

"What a beautiful story!" said Frieda.

"I thought you'd like it," replied Jake, "and it leads me to say something."

Jake looked down, took a sip of his Drambuie, then looked up again. He had a bit of a lump in his throat. And there was the glint of a tear in his eye. He looked at Frieda. "Frieda, I think that the two of us belong together. And I would be honoured if you would become my wife."

Frieda said, "Oh my goodness, Jake." She took a deep breath. It wasn't the glint of a tear that came to her eyes; they were filled. To overflowing. Not sad tears. The kind borne of deep, deep joy.

Frieda reached over and took Jake's hand. "Yes, Jake," she said, "I would be honoured to be your wife."

The two of them sat there holding hands, for a long, long moment. Then Jake said, "And to think Frieda, that this all began because of three bushels of zucchini landing on the wrong doorstep back last fall." They laughed so hard they both cried some more.

Finally, Frieda said, "What do we do now?"

"I don't know exactly" replied Jake, "at least not at this moment...but whatever it is we'll do it. And we'll do it together."

With that they relaxed a bit, finished their liqueurs and asked the waiter for their bill. After they had paid and were getting up to leave, the owner, Henri, came over himself and said, "If you don't mind me saying so, you both look very happy this evening."

"You bet we are, Henri," replied Jake. "You just bet we are."

On the way back home, Jake said, "I guess, Frieda, the first thing we should do is go see Pastor Willy Flugel about marrying us."

"Yes," replied Frieda, "and we'd better do it right away. He goes on vacation at the end of the month."

"Yep," said Jake, "how be I call him tomorrow for an appointment?"

"Good idea," replied Frieda. "You think he'll be surprised?"

"No more'n anybody else," replied Jake. And they both laughed.

And so the wedding was planned. It took place at The Church Of The Reluctant Apostle. Pastor Willy Flugel officiating. There had never been a wedding in our town quite like it before.

Bert Nelson from The Bugle was there to take pictures.

Frank and Myrtle Birstead gave out wedding bulletins.

Jack and Lula Cameron and Milt and Wilma Prosser ushered folks to their seats.

Some of members of The Lodge stood out on the sidewalk, as sort of an honour guard. To escort the happy couple into the church when they arrived.

Jake and Frieda came to the church in a truck. A 5-ton steak truck. It belonged to the farmer from whom Jake ordered the zucchini over at the market in the city last September. Seemed fitting. After all, it was that truck that made the zucchini delivery to the wrong house.

The truck was all polished up, had streamers blowing from the racks at that back. It was driven by the farmer. He was quite neatly dressed. Had on a little peaked chauffeur's cap, wore white gloves. When they pulled up in front of the church, he got out and opened the door for Jake and Frieda, and then stood guard by the truck while the service took place.

The best man was Casey, from the hardware.

Bridie Stevenson—Frieda's neighbour...the woman whose garden played an integral part in the great zucchini caper—was the maid of honour.

Jake's son Garth and his wife Donna escorted Jake to the front of the church.

Garth and Donna's two children, Andrew and Abigail, walked Frieda up the aisle.

There was no ring bearer, but there was a flower girl. Marge from over at the Post Office.

Marge beamed from ear to ear as she walked up to the front of the church. Even though over 60 years old, she had never been a flower girl before. And truth be told, she was still short enough to fill the bill.

On that same Vinyl Cafe episode—the place from which Jake Williams got the story that he related to Frieda—Lynn Miles sang a song she had composed. A song called "The People You Love." Jake liked the song so much that he bought it and when he played it to Frieda they agreed that the words were lovely...so lovely that they would like the words read at their wedding.

They asked Etta Flugel if she would read them. And she did. At the end of the wedding service. Just before the Bride and Groom were announced. From the song by Lynn Miles "The People You Love," here are the words.

Life moves fast, curiously,
From the top of the mountain to the blue in the sea.
It's not about the push and the shove;
Life is about the people you love.

You can spend your days thinking you are strong and complete,
Solid and cool, fast on your feet.
You're gonna find out that isn't enough.
Life is about the people you love.

Where you gonna go when you feel all alone,
Crazy and tired, as a stone?
Where you gonna go when you run out of steam,
Lose your heart, lose sight of your dreams?

Who's gonna tell you it's gonna be all right?
Who's gonna be there in the dead of the night?
Whose hand are you gonna hold when the story gets rough?
You're gonna turn to the people you love.

So count all your blessings, count all your sheep,
Close your eyes, baby, be safe in your sleep.
Let go of whatever you're afraid of;
Life is about the people you love.
Life is about the people you love.

Jake and Frieda walked down the aisle, and out of the church. And all the guests followed. Clapping and cheering as they went. There was a receiving line on the sidewalk, between the church and the farmer's 5-ton steak truck.

Jake and Frieda shook hands with everyone as they made their way to the truck. Everybody was going over to Al's Café for the reception. I'm not sure what the main course was going to be but Alicia makes the most scrumptious grape pie so I know that would be on for dessert. Alicia Westbrooke—everybody calls her Al—has operated Al's Café for as long as anyone can remember, and is one excellent cook.

Pastor Willy Flugel stood at the church door and watched in silence as they all made their way to their cars. "I guess," thought Willy to himself, "this is why I've been in this minister business all these years. To be part of moments like this. To see people enjoying themselves, surrounded by people they love."

When everybody had departed, Willy closed and locked the church door, went to the front of the sanctuary and blew out the candles, turned off the lights and went to his office.

Etta had gone on with the Birsteads to the reception. He would follow along shortly as he didn't want to miss out on the grape pie—one of his favourites. But for now, Willy had a few minutes to himself. He sat down in his chair, put his feet up on his desk, his hands behind his head, leaned back, and closed his eyes. A few moments later, he had a wide smile on his face as he drifted off into a brief and pleasant afternoon nap.

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

Sharing our Joys and Concerns

- **Birthdays**
 - Isabel Weaver celebrated on June 14th
 - Lara Johnston celebrates on June 20th
- **Anniversaries**
 - Barb and Bob Zirk celebrated on June 14th
 - Morven and Ken McCorquodale celebrates on June 17th

Prayers of the people and the Prayer of Jesus

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

Reflection

Hymn — Oh, A Song Must Rise MV 142

refrain: Oh, a song must rise for the spirit to descend
Oh, a song must rise once again
Singing out God's praises and glory, the faithful voices blend,
Oh a song must rise for the spirit to descend.

1. From the mountains to the valleys, from the desert to the sea,
A song must rise once again.
From the voices of our leaders, the voice of you and me,
A song must rise for the spirit to descend. (*refrain*)

2. From poverty and riches, from the voice of young and old,
A song must rise once again.
From the free and the imprisoned, the timid and the bold,
A song must rise for the spirit to descend. (*refrain*)

3. From ev'ry house of worship, in ev'ry faith and tongue,
A song must rise once again.
From the villages and cities a new song must be sung,
A song must rise for the spirit to descend. (*refrain*)

Benediction

May our song continue to rise wherever we are...

And may it remain strong always!

Whether we are together or alone...

May we remember that we are the people of God!

Now and forever.

Amen.

Hymn — Go Now in Peace

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.

God will go with you each hour ev'ry day.

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.

Know God will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe.

Reach out to others so all the world can see.

God will be there, within, around, above.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

Amen, Amen, Amen.

Postlude — Swing Low, Sweet Chariot — *African-American spiritual, arr. Michael G. Sinshack
(Colleen Weber and Rev. Tom Watson)*

Welcomers: Vivian and Havey Andrews

Counters: Kaillie Rawn, David Gohn

Worship Schedule

June 22 nd	2 nd after Pentecost	Rev. Linda Butler
June 29 th	3 rd after Pentecost	Rev. Felicia Urbanski
July 6 th	4 th after Pentecost	Rev. Jeff Hawkins
July 13 th	5 th after Pentecost	Rev. Linda Butler