



***The United Church of Canada
100th Anniversary Worship
Building Community by Honouring the Past
and Embracing the Future***

*Eleven churches worshipping together
Sunday, June 8, 2025 at Melville United Church, Fergus
at 10:30 am*

Presider: Rev. Tom Watson

We Gather

Postlude

Colleen Weber

Announcements/Welcome/Connecting

Ann Faris, Metz United

Land Acknowledgement

Grand Valley United

As we mark 100 years of ministry in the United Church of Canada, we pause to acknowledge that we gather on the traditional territory of the Petun, Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, AttiWonderonk, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation peoples.

This land is covered by the Simcoe Patent – Treaty 4 and the Haldimand Treaty.

We recognize that the church has not always honoured the sovereignty, wisdom, or dignity of Indigenous peoples.

In this milestone moment, we give thanks for the enduring presence and stewardship of the First Peoples of this land, and we renew our commitment to the work of truth, reconciliation, and right relations.

Hymn – VU#315 Holy, Holy, Holy

Call to Worship

*Rev. Heather Leffler
Rockwood and Stone United*

As your church is named, please stand or raise your hand with members of your congregation and then be seated as a group.

As we gather for worship today, we come from the Townships of East Luther, Wellington North, Centre Wellington, and Guelph Eramosa – each with a deep history of faith and community.

Together, we remember and give thanks to the Holy One who has called us to follow Jesus and be the church in our communities.

First Presbyterian Church of Eramosa was founded in 1832. Their current church was built in 1860. In 1938, they became Barrie Hill United, carrying forward the legacy of faith in their community.

Speedside, a congregational church, was organized in 1845. Their distinctive limestone, octagonal church was built in 1880, standing as a testament to the faith of those early settlers.

Breaking away from St. Andrew's in Fergus, Melville Presbyterian began in 1846. The building in which we worship today was built in 1899. Members of the Fergus Congregational Church joined Melville in the early 1900s, and Wesley Methodist Church, which opened in 1870, joined at the time of union.

The land for the Eramosa Methodist Episcopal Church was purchased in 1846. The current Stone United building was dedicated in 1862, a solid foundation for generations of faith.

Arthur Methodist Church was first served by a missionary from Mount Forest in 1854. The congregation purchased the land for their current building in 1892, providing a lasting home for their community.

St. John's Garafraxa Presbyterian met in homes until 1855. They moved from their original frame building to the current stone church in 1859. Belwood Methodist, Carmel Methodist, Victoria Methodist, and Belwood Congregational Churches joined St.

John's at the time of union, weaving their stories into this shared family of faith.

Rockwood United Church began as a mission of the Wesleyan Mission in 1856. Their current building, dedicated in 1867, stands as a beacon of faith in their community.

Mimosa Presbyterian Church gathered in 1864, first meeting in the Balmsville Meeting House. Their current building was completed in 1886, reflecting the enduring strength of their faith community.

The Methodist Church in Grand Valley dedicated its original building in 1873. The second church, built in 1896, stood on the current location. Grand Valley United's present church was dedicated in 1987, a space for worship and community life.

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Metz worshiped in members' homes before 1885. They met in the Orange Lodge for 54 years before their current church was built, a testament to their perseverance and faith.

Hope Springs United became a new family of faith in 2022, bringing together Alma, Bethany, and Elora United Churches – each with deep roots in their communities, living, worshiping, and serving since the early 1800s.

Together, we have answered the call to become The United Church of Canada – a diverse and faithful body committed to
*celebrating God's presence, living with respect in Creation, loving and serving others, seeking justice, resisting evil, and proclaiming Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.

**from A New Creed, 1968, alt.*

In 2019, we came together as the Western Ontario Waterways Regional Council, uniting our voices and efforts to connect, support, and transform our ministries, serving the One we know as Holy Mystery and Wholly Love.

Today, as we celebrate the 100th Anniversary of our church,
*we offer worship as an outpouring of gratitude and awe,

and as a practice of opening ourselves to God's still,
small voice of comfort and God's rushing whirlwind of challenge.

**Through word, music, art, and sacrament, in community and in
solitude, God changes our lives, our relationships, and our world.**

We sing with trust.

**from A Song of Faith 2006*

Gathering Music – Come, Now is the Time to Worship

Prayer of Approach

Rev. Jeff Davison, Mimosa United

Holy and Everlasting God,
As we gather on this sacred ground,
we remember the generations who have come before us,

**those who dreamed and laboured, built and believed,
prayed and praised.**

We give thanks for the stories of faith
that have brought us to this moment,

and for the sacred trust we hold as your church in this place.

In this hour of worship, draw us into the mystery of your presence,
that we might glimpse your vision for our lives and our world.

As we honour the past, may we also be open
to the newness you invite us into –

new dreams, new challenges, and new acts of love and justice.

Come, Holy One – breathe your Spirit upon us,
renew our hearts,

and guide us into the future you have already prepared.

In Christ's holy and powerful name, we pray.

Amen.

***Introduction to the Prayer of Confession** *Rev. Shelley Smith,
St. John's United Belwood and St. Paul's United Metz*

The act of Confession is a way that we admit to dampening
the movement of the Spirit in our lives and the world.
During the Prayer of Confession, we reflect on the ways
that we limit the movement of the Spirit.

***Prayer of Confession** *Rev. Shelley Smith*

Gracious God,
Time and again, you send us the gift of your Spirit.

Time and again, you send us the gift of your dreams.

Time and again, you love us back into being.

And time and again, we turn away from you.

Gracious God, forgive us for all the times
we have twisted or forgotten your Good News,

**for all the times in which we have confused unity
with "sameness",**

for all the times we have failed to let your Kingdom
inspire our living,

We are sorry.

For the times we have tried to be the church without you,

**for the times we have doubted your presence and
power to work in us,**

for the times we have believed the lie that there is not enough,
and we are not enough,

forgive us.

Take all the ways that we have missed the mark as individuals and
as a denomination,

**and in your mercy, help us to move into the future
you have for us.**

Open our hearts, God.

May your Spirit ignite your dream in us again!

This we pray in Christ's holy and powerful name. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Rev. Shelley Smith

We remember God's mercy and grace
that allows us to begin again.

Dear Ones of God, receive these words and take heart:
God poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost,
healing hearts and divisions,
empowering the church to move forward in Christ's spirit.

Thanks be to God.

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Hymn – MV#1 Let Us Build a House

We Listen

Gospel Reading – John 17:1, 2, 6, 17-23

Arthur United

This reading was read in the Inaugural Service of The United Church of Canada on Wednesday, June 10, 1925 at the Mutual Street Arena in Toronto.

¹ After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you,

² since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him.

⁶ “I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word.

¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

²⁰ “I ask not only on behalf of these but also on behalf of those who believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

Reflection – Honouring the Past

Rev. Tom Watson

Anthem – On Eagle’s Wings

Reflection – Embracing the Future

Lisa Leffler, Stone United

We Respond

Invitation to Offering

Rev. Jen Auger, Hope Springs United

Our offering today will be for the Mission and Service Fund of our United Church of Canada. If you would like a receipt, please include your contact information. Melville United Church will submit the offering on behalf of our cluster.

As we gather in this sacred space, we remember the generations who have come before us – those who built churches, shared the gospel, and lived their faith boldly.

**We, too, are called to continue this legacy,
offering our gifts in gratitude for all that God has done
and in trust for all that God will do.**

In this spirit, let us bring our offerings for Mission and Service – the work of our hands and the gifts of our hearts – to support God’s work among us and through us.

Offering – Hymn to Freedom *Oscar Peterson*

Hymn – VU#541 Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow

Offering Prayer

Rev. Jen Auger

Generous God, we offer these gifts as a sign of our gratitude and our commitment to your work in the world.

**May they be used to heal, to welcome, to encourage,
and to build up the Body of Christ.**

Just as you breathed life into the early church,
breathe your Spirit into these gifts,
that they may bear witness to your love and justice,
now and always.

In Christ’s name, we pray. Amen.

Children’s Choir – I am the Church

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

*Rev. Kevin Steeper
Barrie Hill and Speedside*

Holy One, we are your people, gathered as your church.

From the beginning, you have been with us,

and for a century, we have walked together
as The United Church of Canada.

As we stand at this threshold,

we remember that we live and move and have our being in you.

Gracious God, we give thanks for the many ways
you have moved among us:

for the gifts of faith, hope, and love that have sustained us,

for the strength of communities that have carried us,

**and for the Spirit that continues to guide us
into your unfolding future.**

We offer our prayers of gratitude now, in word or silence...

*You are invited to offer your prayers of gratitude,
either aloud or in the silence of your heart.*

Yet, even as we give thanks, we acknowledge our challenges:

the times we have struggled to be one as you are one,

the times we have held back from your call to unity,

**and the moments when fear has kept us
from trusting your Spirit.**

We offer our prayers of petition for ourselves, our church and the
world, in word or silence...

*You are invited to offer your prayers of petition,
either aloud or in the silence of your heart.*

Empower us, loving God, to live boldly,
unafraid of where you are leading us.

May we be alive with your Spirit's power,

united in purpose and committed to your Kingdom.

**Awaken us to your presence, even now,
that we may be your resurrection people,
living for Christ's way in the world.**

In his holy and powerful name, we pray the prayer he taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

**Thy kingdom 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 kingdom, the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn – VU#509 I the Lord of Sea and Sky

Commissioning and Blessing

Rev. Kevin Steeper

Three-fold Amen

Closing Music – I Will Walk

Thank you to
our hosts Melville United Church
our Choir and Musicians ...
Betty Weinstein
Brad Halls
Colleen Weber
Kara Shaw
John Wilkie, Choir Director
Metz Band and Friends
Suzanne Flewelling
our Ministers, Readers and Volunteers
the Waterloo Presbytery Extension Council UpFund