



May 31, 2026
Trinity Sunday

Melville United Church

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Melville United Church

Sunday May 31, 2026

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

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Land Acknowledgement

Lighting the Christ Candle

Call to Worship adapted from words of VU 303

For beauty of prairies, for grandeur of trees...

For flowers and woodlands, for creatures of seas...

For all God created and gave us to share...

We join now to praise God in this house of prayer.

Hymn: For the Beauty of the Earth VU 226, tune 81

1. For the beauty of the earth,

For the glory of the skies,

For the love which from our birth

Over and around us lies,

God of all, to you we raise

This our hymn of grateful praise. (R)

2. For the beauty of each hour

Of the day and of the night,

Hill and vale, and tree and flower,

Sun and moon and stars of light,

God of all, to you we raise

This our hymn of grateful praise. (R)

3. For the joy of human love

Brother, sister, parent, child

Friends on earth and friends above,

For all gentle thoughts and mild,

God of all, to you we raise

This our hymn of grateful praise. (R)

4. For each perfect gift sublime,

To our race so freely given,

Graces human and divine,

Flowers of earth and buds of heaven,

God of all, to you we raise

This our hymn of grateful praise. (R)

Gathering Prayer

God of creation, God this beautiful, bountiful earth, with all living things we raise our songs of

thanksgiving. We gaze in wonder at majestic mountains...we contemplate with awe the boundless reaches of space...we listen with joy to the singing of birds...we marvel at all that surrounds us. Be with us now in this time of worship, as we reflect on the intricate weaving of all Creation. Amen.

Hymn: I Can Feel You Near Me God MV 48

I can feel you near me God, I can feel you near.
Yes I know you're with me God, I always feel you here.
I can feel you near me God, I can feel you near.
Yes I know you're with me God, Heaven is here.

**And I'll jump for joy, I'm singing Alleluia!
Jump for joy for you.
I will jump for joy, I'm singing Alleluia!
Jump for joy for you. (R)**

2. I can feel you loving me, yes I know you care.
God, I know you're loving me, always everywhere.
I can feel you loving me, yes I know you care.
God, I know you're loving me, I know you're there.

**And I'll jump for joy, I'm singing Alleluia!
Jump for joy for you.
I will jump for joy, I'm singing Alleluia!
Jump for joy for you. (R)**

Children's Time

Ministry of Music: How Gentle God's Commands Melody: Hans G. Nageli Arr. by Sally DeFord

Reading: Matthew 28:16–20 Reader: Millie Cumming

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Sermon: Life in Our Town...Where Are We Going?

Well, it's been a busy week in Our Town. With the recent turn in the weather, all the avid gardeners are out there in full force, tilling their little plots of ground—makes 'em feel like they were back home on the farms where they grew up.

Bridie Stevenson has sure been busy. Armed with that new laser level she bought a couple of years ago, her 8-foot rows of beans and carrots are straighter than ever. She's even mused about having a "garden tour" once things burst through the ground enough to make a showing.

For the first time in recent memory, Bridie hasn't planted any zucchini. She remembered her dad talking about the importance of crop rotation...and given that last year's zucchini had a touch of blight, she thought it would be better to lay off planting them this spring. Her neighbour, Freda Nugglesworth, is relieved to know that. She's grown weary of having to be

polite and take extra zucchini when Bridie has an overflowing crop.

Hank Vickers has been trying his best to get Mildred to start trimming the hedge. The other morning, when he went out to have coffee with the rest of the old guys at Al's Café, he said, "Mildred, it would be good to give that hedge a bit of a haircut, so I laid your trimming shears out for you on the work bench in the garage."

Mildred replied, "Thanks for your help, Hank, but I thought I'd leave it for another week and let it grow a bit more. If I cut it now, I'll just have to turn around and do it again in a couple of weeks."

"Not a good plan, Mildred," replied Hank, "if you cut it now and then again two weeks from now it would only be half as much work each time...and, besides, Mildred, I just hate to see you get all worn out from working too hard."

With that, Hank left for morning coffee. When he got back home for lunch, he noticed that the trimming shears were still on the workbench, and there was a note on the kitchen table. Mildred had gone shopping with some of the other women. Hank read the note and then mused to himself, "Hard to get through to that wife of mine. Guess she didn't take my advice. I sure love her...but I wish she had a more logical mind."

Now, they've been having an interesting time over at The Church of the Reluctant Apostle. You'll remember that's where Willie Flugel is the pastor.

The church council was wrestling with what the future might hold, so they decided to bring in a facilitator, Phyllis Turner, to lead them through a visioning process.

As a way to begin, Phyllis had them wrestle with one simple question: Where are we going?

Turned out that revealed a bit of a split among the church council members.

- Some were of the opinion that they weren't necessarily going anywhere, that they should just do what they could until they couldn't do much of anything any more.
- Others were of the opinion that the future was wide open, just as it had always been, that there were many opportunities and all they had to do was take advantage of them.

So, next Phyllis then asked them to work in table groups and make lists of their strengths and weaknesses.

At the end of that table discussion time, this was the list that was handed in to Phyllis. I'll leave it to you to judge which are Strengths and which are Weaknesses.

1. Their potluck suppers. Using the principle of the five loaves and two fish, they can feed 200 people with only 5 casseroles, 2 salads...and a mystery dessert table laden with desserts that violate all the Canada Health guidelines but surely nourish the soul.
2. Their volunteer superpowers. Need a meal delivered, props built by Friday for the annual pageant, or the church roof fixed, it'll get done...providing that somebody brings the muffins.
3. Their belief in committees. A simple decision like choosing a new carpet colour can take longer than the construction of the Great Wall of China.

4. Their generational wisdom. Their members have lived through so much that they know how to do pretty much everything, so when there's a project to be done there's a ready pool of 12 experts who will tell the rest how it should be done.

5. Their belief that everything can be fixed by drinking coffee. Even when the boiler breaks, Pastor Willie loses his place in the sermon, the microphones squeal like distressed dolphins...after church someone will say, "Well, at least the coffee's good."

6. Their selective hearing. Announcements can be repeated for six weeks but will still surprise half the congregation on the day of the event.

7. Their musical unpredictability. Gladys has been the organist for as long as anyone can remember, but her eyesight has dimmed as she grew older, so she often plays in the key of "this is bound to surprise you," ... and it generally does.

Phyllis Turner, the facilitator, looked over the list. All she could say was, "Well, folks, these things weren't exactly what I had in mind...so I'm going to need some time to work on a process for our next meeting.

When Myrtle Birstead got home from that meeting, and sat down in her rocking chair, Frank asked her how it went. She replied, "Well, Franklin, let's just say we still have work to do. As usual there are those who are quite optimistic about our future, and those who aren't sure there's much we can do but ride it out until there's nothing to ride anymore."

"I see, Myrt," replied Frank. "Do I detect a note of disappointment in your voice?"

"Well, Franklin," replied Myrtle, "I just hope that we end up concentrating on our real strength—our community, and how we welcome everybody who comes. There are no strangers at The Church of the Reluctant Apostle."

"I get it, Myrt," said Frank. "That's the spirit that Pastor Willie brought with him to your church, and it's stood you in good stead."

"That's for sure, Franklin." With that Myrtle got up from her rocking chair. "Know what, Franklin, it's getting late. Time for our bedtime snack. I'll go fix our wieners and beans."

Well, that's all the news from Our Town for this week. At least from the stories that I've heard.

Now, given the church name, you may wonder about them engaging in a process about visioning the future. And when Phyllis Turner asked her opening question "Where are we going?" you might wonder why there were some quite optimistic about the future; the church name suggests they'd all be pessimistic.

Turns out that the church—The Church of the Reluctant Apostle—is appropriately named. Some of the apostles were also reluctant.

From this morning's scripture reading: The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him...but some doubted."

It's an interesting scene that Matthew paints.

The Eleven gather on a mountain in Galilee—already a symbol of revelation and new beginnings.

Some worship, some doubt. Matthew doesn't hide this. That there's a mix is the point.

They were not all on the same page. Some doubted. Some were reluctant apostles.

But then Jesus gives them what is known as The Great Commission. Go! Teach! Baptize!

And remember that no matter what you do, I will always be with you. Even to the end of the age.

Even when they found themselves not believing in their mission, he still believed in them...and would do so even to the end of the age.

You see, this group of eleven is not a triumphant army being commissioned; it's a wounded, bewildered community being steadied.

It's a lesson for us when we feel wounded and bewildered. God is still with us. "I am with you always"—is the heartbeat of The Great Commission.

I took the service last Sunday at Trinity in Guelph. During the sermon, I told this story there, but I think it fits in with today's theme "Where are we going?" so I'll tell it again.

I have 11 great-grandchildren. My youngest is Ledger. He's 5-years-old. Lives in Edmonton. He's a bit of a phenomenon. Works out on gym equipment every day. Plays on a 5-7-year-old hockey team. Hits baseballs thrown by a pitching machine.

There's a basketball hoop on the family garage door. Two weeks ago, he was out there one afternoon shooting baskets...and counting as he scored. He finally quit when he got to 600 baskets.

He's five years old.

The most interesting thing about Ledger is that from a very early age he saw no limits. When he thought of something he should do, he saw nothing that would limit his doing it. He might not be able to do it, but that didn't stop him from trying.

That's the kind of spirit we all need. The kind of spirit that says "we can do it." Yes, we might not quite be able to pull it off but it's better to fail in the trying than not to try at all.

And remember what Jesus said: "I am with you always!"

Where are we going here? Whenever you consider that question here at Melville, hear that line lingering in the air: "I am with you always!"

Amen.

Hymn: Walk with Me VU 649

(refrain)

Walk with me, I will walk with you
and build the land that God has planned
where love shines through.

1. When Moses heard the call of God

He said, "Lord, don't send me."
But God told Moses, "You're the one"
To set my people free."

(refrain)

Walk with me, I will walk with you
and build the land that God has planned
where love shines through.

2. Now Peter was a most unlikely
Man to lead the flock;
But Jesus knew his holiness
And he became the Rock.

(refrain)

Walk with me, I will walk with you
and build the land that God has planned
where love shines through.

3. Young Mary Magdalene was sure
Her life could be much more,
And by her faith she dared to let
God's love unlock the door.

(refrain)

Walk with me, I will walk with you
and build the land that God has planned
where love shines through.

4. And when you share your faith with me
And work for life made new,
The witness of your faithfulness
Calls me to walk with you.

(refrain)

Walk with me, I will walk with you
and build the land that God has planned
where love shines through.

Sharing our Joys and Concerns

- **Birthday**
 - Marion Maine celebrates May 31

Poem: Nature's Unfolding Dream By: Tom Watson

In February, nature dreams.

 In May, February's dream
arrives. Migrating birds
 return to splash the air

with sound and colour.

Everything is rapidly emerging.

A brook burbles and babbles
in its first spring song. Light
streams through budding trees,
shining on fields and forests,
illuminating folds in the
warming soil.

Everything lifts its face upward
to embrace the gentle, restoring
rays from sun and moon.

A new intimacy and closer
bonding is woven through the
breathing earth. All is at peace.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

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

Hymn: Bless Now, O God, the Journey VU 633

1. Bless now, O God, the journey that all your people make,
The path through noise and silence, the way of give and take.
The trail is found in desert and winds the mountain round,
Then leads beside still waters, the road where faith is found.

2. Bless sojourners and pilgrims who share this winding way,
Whose hope burns through the terrors, whose love sustains the day.
We yearn for holy freedom while often we are bound.
Together we are seeking the road where faith is found.

3. Divine Eternal Lover, you meet us on the road.
We wait for lands of promise where milk and honey flow.
But waiting not for places, you meet us all around.
Our covenant is written on roads, as faith is found.

Benediction

May the God who touches earth with beauty...

Make our hearts as new as a grand spring day.

May the God who gives us springs of living water...

Nourish us for whatever journey we take.

In all that we do—as individuals and as a church—may we be as faithful...

As the birds of the air and the flowers of the field.

Go in peace.

Amen.

Departing 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: Be Thou My Vision Traditional Irish Melody Arr. by Anna Laura Page

Welcomers: Mary Lloyd, Annie Denny

Counters: Mary Lloyd, Annie Denny

Worship Schedule

June 7 th	2 nd after Pentecost	Rev. Jeff Hawkins
June 14 th	3 rd after Pentecost	Social Justice Team
June 21	4 th after Pentecost	Rev. Linda Butler
June 28 th	5 th after Pentecost	Rev. Tom Watson

Council Meeting June 3. Please reach out to a Council member if there is a concern or question to be shared with Council.