

◆ MELROSE UNITED CHURCH ◆

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◆ **DECEMBER 24, 2016, 10:30 p.m.** ◆
Candlelight Communion

MELROSE UNITED CHURCH
◆ December 24th, 2016 10:30 p.m. ◆
CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION

* indicates a time to stand, if you are able
congregational responses are in **boldface type**

◆ **GATHERING** ◆

CAROLS FROM THE GALLERY –

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen
Ding Dong Merrily on High
Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
Up! Good Christian Folk, and Listen

* PROCESSIONAL CAROL – *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

VU 60

CALL TO WORSHIP

LIGHTING OF THE NATIVITY CANDLE

(The three blue and pink candles are lit.)

Voice #1: God is with us

All: We are not alone.

Voice #2: Thanks be to God!

Voice #1: The gift of Emmanuel, God with us, is the gift of hope, peace, joy and love.

Voice #2: We join the angels and the multitudes of heavenly hosts in singing songs of praise:

All: (singing Refrain)

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

VU 38

Voice #1: We light this nativity candle as a reminder of the indescribable gift of Emmanuel. *(white candle is lit)*

All: We are not alone.

Voice #2: Thanks be to God!

OPENING PRAYER

One: Mysterious God, you come to us this night
softly as a mother's sigh,
as startling as the cry of a newborn child.

**All: Come into our hearts, we pray,
that we might be cradled in your love
and stirred by your glory.**

One: We pray in the name of Jesus Christ,
born to bring your great love to earth. Amen.

WELCOME

★ CAROL – *Angels We Have Heard on High*

VU 38

◆ WE HEAR GOD'S LOVE STORY ANEW ◆

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Reader: Gillian Webster

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 9: 2-7

pew bible, p. 593

ANTHEM – *Ane Song of the Birth of Christ*
solo: Allana Stevenson, soprano

W.H. Anderson

SECOND LESSON – Luke 2: 1-7

pew bible, p. 889

ANTHEM – *Winter Moon Over Bethlehem*

D. Lantz III

THIRD LESSON – Luke 2: 8-16

pew bible, p. 889

ANTHEM – *Glory to God, from Messiah*

G. F. Handel

HOMILY – “Let Us Go and See”

★ CAROL – *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

VU 64

◆ **RESPONSE** ◆

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR OFFERING

OFFERING

★ OFFERTORY HYMN – *In the Bleak Mid-winter*

VU 55

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (said all together)

**Loving God, these are our gifts for your Son, Jesus.
May they be used to birth your love in the world
and bring peace to all people. Amen.**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Christmas Eve Communion

Gregorian chant to welcome the Christ Child

One: *Today Christ is born.*

Today the Saviour appears.

*Today the angels sing on earth,
and the Archangels rejoice.*

Today the just exult, saying:

Glory to God in the highest. Alleluia.

The Invitation to Communion

One: In the name of the One who said,

“I am the bread of life,”

I invite you to come and eat.

In the name of the One who said, “I am the true vine,”

I invite you to come and drink.

In the name of the One who said,

“Love one another, as I have loved you,”

I invite you all to the table of Jesus Christ.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

One: God be with you

All: And also with you

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to our God.

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

One: How can we thank you, O God
for sun and moon and stars,
for breath and life and all things good,
for your steadfast promise and your faithful love,
for the day that is surely coming
when all things will be made new?

On this most holy night
with saints, with angels, and with the whole creation,
we join the ancient and eternal hymn:

All: (singing) O holy, holy, holy God
O God of time and space.
All earth and sea and sky above
bear witness to your grace.
Hosanna in the highest heav'n,
Creation sings your praise.
And blessed is the One who comes
and bears your name always!

MV 203

The Words of Institution and Prayer for the Spirit

One: We give you thanks, Holy God, for Jesus
who came to be Your living Word,
to baptize us with Spirit and fire,
to feed the hungry, to humble the mighty,

and to announce the good news of your coming realm.
With thanksgiving, we remember how, when the hour had
come, Jesus took his place at the table with his friends.

Then Jesus took bread and when he had given thanks,
He broke it and gave it to them saying,
"This is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me."
In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave thanks.
He gave it to his friends, saying,
"This cup that is poured out for you
is the new covenant in my blood.
Do this as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

With thanks and praise we offer ourselves to you,
sharing this holy meal,
remembering Christ's dying and rising,
and praying: Come Lord Jesus! Come!

All: (singing) *Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen, MV 204*
Christ will come again!
Sing Christ has died and Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!

One: Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us --
this bread, this cup, these people --
Christ's body and blood,
given in love for the world.
Make us one in the Spirit,
one in the church,
and one with Christ our Lord.

Make us gentle, joyful, thankful people,
serving our neighbours, worshipping you alone.

Keep us in the peace of Christ
until you gather us at your table in glory.
Even now, a voice is crying in the wilderness:
prepare the way of the Lord!
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour are yours, Almighty God, now and forever.

Communion Solo – *O Holy Night*

A. Adam

Margaret Duff, Soprano

The Passing of the Peace

One: The Peace of the new-born Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

(all are invited to share the peace with one another)

Intercessions

One: At this time, we also remember all with whom You would have us share your feast. We pray for all who are in sorrow or in pain, all who are ill or alone. We pray for all who suffer loss through natural disaster or human wrongdoing, those who are constricted by fear and anxiety. We pray for ourselves and for our church that we may always strive for justice, mercy and peace in the name of the one who taught us to pray together, singing (VU#959)... *Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.*

The Sharing of the Elements

One: The Bread of Life shared with you.

The Cup of the New Covenant shared with you.

Come, for the meal is ready!

*(our communion tonight will be received by intinction. If you are able, please come forward up the centre aisle. Pick up a piece of bread from the tray, move to right or left, dip the bread in the cup and **consume it immediately**, returning to your seats via the side aisles. The **light coloured** chalices contain **grape juice**, the **dark green** chalices contain **wine**. If you are unable to come forward, the servers will gladly come and serve you in the pew. Please help them to locate you.)*

The Prayer after Communion

All: With open hands we have received your love, O God.

With open hearts may we now share it with others.

May your joy and love, shared through the birth of the Christ Child, continue to fill our homes and our world with hope and peace. Amen.

★ RECESSIONAL CAROL - *Joy to the World*

VU 59

★ COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

A LULLABY FOR THE CHRIST CHILD--*Silent Night* (seated)

VU 67

Silent night! Holy night! All is calm, all is bright!

Round yon virgin mother and child,

Holy infant so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight:

Glories stream from heaven afar,

Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia,

Christ, the Saviour, is born! Christ, the Saviour, is born!

Silent night! Holy night! Son of God, love's pure light

Radiant beams from thy holy face,

With the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Please blow out your candle before leaving the pew.

Thank you to all who participated in this service!

Tonight's Ushers, Candle lighters and fire safety technician:

Bob Ross, Barb Mann, Keith Mann, Ian Brisbin

Thank you: to Gillian Webster for her lovely cover print
on this evening's bulletin

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP AT MELROSE

at 10:30 am around the Parlour fireplace

Ted Lowrey, Shari Saunders & Carma McKay will lead
an informal service (pyjamas optional)
of carols and reflections suitable for the
Day of the Nativity of our Lord.

Cider will be provided and everyone is welcome!