

◆ MELROSE UNITED CHURCH ◆

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photo taken by: Brian Gedcke

Minister:	The Rev. Dr. Philip Gardner
Music Director:	Alexander Cann
Family Ministries Coordinator:	Meg Chalmers
Custodian:	Darcy Feaver
Office Administrator:	Michelle Millson

◆ 17 December, 2017 – 10:30 a.m. ◆

Advent III

MELROSE UNITED CHURCH

◆ December 17, 2017 ◆

ADVENT III

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

◆ All are welcome for coffee and conversation in
the parlour after worship ◆

◆ GATHERING ◆

PRELUDE – Dimanche de l’avent

C.A. Chauvet

INTROIT – MV 75 Veni sancte spiritus

* OPENING HYMN – *Hark, the Glad Sound*

VU 29

* LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

One: The light of Christ is coming into the world.

All: Prepare the way of the Lord!

* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Love comes down to us this Advent Season.

All: Divine love which heals and transforms our lives.

One: With great joy, we receive that love and share it with others.

**All: We open our hearts to all God’s children,
the last, the least, and the lost,
as well as those who feel privileged.**

One: The Lord has done, and continues to do great things for us.

**All: Praise be to God who loves us so much
and who challenges us to be people of joy
in this darkened world. Amen.**

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE (JOY)

candle lit by Patricia and James Young; daughter Willamena

One: In this season of Advent, we celebrate God's joy.

**All: Knowing that Christ is coming,
to bring healing and wholeness to the world,
is a source of genuine delight!**

One: When we gather for worship it is a celebration,
an opportunity to rejoice in all that God is doing
among us and beyond us.

**All: Our lives are marked by laughter and friendship,
as we love our neighbours with wide smiles and open arms.**

One: Even when we face difficulty and trouble
we sing a song of faith, confident that Jesus is able
to redeem our suffering world.

All: Together, we are a sign of God's joy for the world.
(The third candle is lit)

Song: *A Candle is Burning*

VU 6 (Verse 3)

*A candle is burning, a candle of joy,
a candle to welcome brave Mary's new boy.
Our hearts fill with wonder, and eyes light and glow
as joy brightens winter like sunshine on snow.*

WELCOME AND LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

* HYMN - *Joy to the World*

VU 59

◆SERVICE OF THE WORD ◆

Reader: Ian Brisbin

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

RESPONSIVE PSALM: Psalm 126

VU 850, Refrain 1

THE WISDOM OF ISRAEL: Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11

One: The Word of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL: John 1: 6-8, 19-28

One: This is the Good News of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

* HYMN – *Before the Marvel of This Night*

VU 40

SERMON – “Joy Shall Come, Even in the Wilderness”

ANTHEM – God’s Delight at Bethlehem

Francis Patrick O’Brien

◆ **RESPONSE** ◆

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR OFFERING

OFFERING

* OFFERING HYMN – *When Heaven’s Bright with Mystery* VU 93, Verse 1
*When heaven's bright with mystery and stars still lead an unknown way,
when love still lights a gentle path where courts of power can hold no
sway, there with the Magi, let us kneel, our gifts to share, God's world to
heal.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

God, you have blessed our lives in so many ways.

Receive these tokens of our blessings

and cause them to work in this world

which you have loaned to us

to make light shine in the darkness

and peace an attainable goal.

We offer these gifts in Jesus’ name. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND CONCERN

(concluding with the prayer of Jesus)

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, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

★ CLOSING HYMN – *Down to Earth, as a Dove*

VU 42

★ COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING

CHORAL RESPONSE

*For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace,
The mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing,
And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
For ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace.
Music: A. Cann*

POSTLUDE – Rejoice, O daughter of Zion from Handel's *Messiah*
Solo: Allana Stevenson

◆ Melrose Events ◆

◆ Worship Next Week ◆

This coming week is a high point of our Melrose worship year. In the morning, at the 10:30 service, we will honour the fourth Sunday of Advent -- the Sunday devoted to the theme of "love." Our Family Ministries Coordinator, Meg Chalmers has been busy organizing a pageant "Journey to the Christ Child" which, supplemented with appropriate music, is certain to be a beautiful celebration of "Love Came Down at Christmas." After sundown, Christmas Eve, we turn to the feast of Christ's nativity with two special worship opportunities: a "family" service at 7:00 and the Sacrament of Holy Communion at 10:30. For the

earlier service Meg, Philip and Alex have planned a "child-friendly" worship that will include a bell choir, and story time, as well as familiar scripture and favourite carols. At 10:30 we will celebrate this most holy night through word and music, this time featuring the considerable talents of our Melrose Chancel Choir and soloists.

◆ **Thank you** ◆

...to our December coffee hosts – Barb and Keith Mann

◆ **From Ralph: A Melrose Financial Update** ◆

This has been a challenging year for the financial health of Melrose. Our rental income unexpectedly declined due to the temporary loss of a tenant as well as a reduction in special event rentals. The maintenance of our property has continued to be a strain, as we repaired the inevitable failings of an old building and equipment, and we renovated space for a new tenant. Payroll expenses have grown as we endeavoured to bring our staff up to a living wage, and we experienced additional costs to provide coverage during an extended medical absence.

Our expenses so far this year have exceeded revenues by about \$115,000. We have drawn heavily on funds held by our Trustees to cover this deficit, and we will need to obtain additional funds from the Trustees this month. Our weekly donations this year have matched those received to this point last year. However, as our expenses continue to grow, we must strive for growth in our donations as well. Please consider if you are able to increase you donations to Melrose, either on a weekly or monthly basis or as a one-time extra donation. Every donation, no matter of size, is helpful.

◆ **White Gift special thank you...** ◆

Many many thanks for all the folk who have donated foodstuffs and gift cards and toys to Wesly Urban Ministries. It was all dropped off on Sunday Dec 10! Thanks to Allan Bentley and his van for transporting the items!

◆ **2018 Offering Envelopes Now Available!** ◆

2018 Offering envelopes are now available for pickup in the church office. They will also be out in the parlour for the next 4 weeks. If you would like

envelopes but do not currently have a number assigned please contact the office. Also, if you would like to switch from envelopes to PAR the church office can assist with the process.

◆ **Melrose Office and Building Hours** **December 25-January 2** ◆

Please note that the office will be closed from **December 25 to January 2 inclusive**. The building will be open **December 27 to December 29 from 8am-3pm** and staffed by custodians only. Regular building custodial hours will return January 2. Regular office hours will resume on Tuesday, January 3.

◆ **Family Ministry Updates** ◆

Santa's Breakfast – A HUGE thank you to all those who attended our annual Breakfast with Santa Saturday.

Christmas Eve - 10:30am – We are planning on facilitating a simple Christmas Nativity re-enactment during this service. If you and your family will be attending and your children would like to be involved **please let Meg know**. More details will follow.

7:00pm – All Ages service – All are welcome to Celebrate the Coming of the Christ Child!

TGIF – Just a reminder that there is no TGIF this month.

2018 Programming – Meg is starting to make plans for next year and would love to hear your feedback! If you have any suggestions or ideas for the Family Ministry Program at Melrose please let Meg know.

◆ **Melrose Corner Shoppe...** ◆

Stop in and check out all kinds of goodies. Shoppe is stocked regularly throughout the week as items are sold. There are always used and new treasures available! All proceeds go to stained glass window repairs.

◆ **The Prayer Bear Ministry...** ◆

... at Melrose is sponsored through a generous gift in loving memory of Easton Carter Strongman, the infant son of Adam and Jessica Strongman, who died in 2013.



If you know of anyone in need of some Prayer Bear cheer, you are invited to take one of the bears from the table near the south (right hand) sanctuary door. Please fill in the Prayer Bear registry book also located on the table so that we have some information about the bear's new home.

◆ **Presbytery News** ◆

From December 5th meeting

- Heather Leffler, President of Hamilton Conference led worship and spoke about changes ahead and being proactive moving forward.
- A presentation was made by Rev Greg White and Laurie White on Remit 6, the main topic of the meeting. Briefly, it concerned One Order of ministry. After much discussion, the vote was taken and the remit was defeated.
- Pastoral Oversight reported that Rock Chapel U.C. will cease to exist. After discussion this motion was tabled to look further into the financial details. - The draft budget was presented in detail by David Dawson.
- Hamilton Conference Persistent Friend, Diane Blanchard reported on the upcoming ' Living Apology Project' event Jan 11-15, 2018 at New Vision UC.
- Wesley Christmas store is open for registration & volunteers are most appreciated to help at Pilgrim UC King St. E. (See flyer in hall). Toques and socks are for sale to support Wesley. A great initiative in 2018 by Wesley: a food services social enterprise cafe will open at First Place. This cafe will benefit high barrier employment youth who will help operate the cafe. Please support Wesley Urban Ministries and all of their many outstanding programmes in Hamilton and Burlington to serve those less fortunate, needing support and assistance. Bravo WESLEY!

Submitted by Dianne Coons, Melrose Presbytery rep.

MELROSE WEEKLY CALENDAR

Monday – December 18

MONTHLY FIRE DRILL	10:00 a.m.	Entire Building
Film Crew Lunch and Holding	10:00 a.m.	Auditorium
Carpet Bowling	1:00 p.m.	Bowling Area
Big Book	7:00 p.m.	Auditorium

Tuesday - December 19

Film Crew Lunch and Holding	4:00 a.m.	Auditorium
Yoga Class	7:00 p.m.	Norman Slater
Tai Chi	7:30 p.m.	Room Parlour

Wednesday - December 20

Film Crew Lunch and Holding	7:00 a.m.	Auditorium
Carpet Bowling	1:00 p.m.	Bowling Area
Pilates	6:30 p.m.	Norman Slater Room

Thursday - December 21

Carpet Bowling	1:00 p.m.	Bowling Area
English Country Dancing	7:00 p.m.	Auditorium
Melrose Bell Choir Practice	3:30 p.m.	Sanctuary
Melrose Choir Practice	7:30 p.m.	Chapel
Tai Chi	7:30 p.m.	Parlour
West Hamilton U12 Soccer	7:30 p.m.	Gymnasium

Friday – December 22

Melrose Bell Choir Practice	3:30 p.m.	Sanctuary
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Saturday - December 23

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Sunday – December 24

Melrose Choir Practice	9:40 a.m.	Chapel
Melrose Worship	10:30a.m.	Sanctuary
Melrose All Ages Christmas	7:00 p.m.	Sanctuary
Melrose Candlelight Communion	10:30 p.m.	Sanctuary