

◆ MELROSE UNITED CHURCH ◆

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Minister:

The Rev. Dr. Philip Gardner

Music Director:

Alexander Cann

Child & Youth Coordinator:

Michelle Millson

Custodian:

Lee Stallard

Office Administrator:

Pamela Kovacek

◆ December 18, 2016 – 10:30 a.m. ◆

Fourth Sunday of Advent

MELROSE UNITED CHURCH

◆ Sunday, December 18, 2016 ◆

Fourth Sunday of Advent

* 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 – Larghetto and Allegro from *Sonata #5 in F Major* G. F. Handel
Allana Stevenson, flute

INTROIT – *We Can But Wait* (MV 175) B. Harding

* OPENING HYMN – *Hark, the Glad Sound* VU 29

* LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

One: The Light of Christ is in this place.

All: The light of Christ shines in our hearts.

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Say to those who are of fearful heart:

All: Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.

One: Then the eyes shall be opened,

All: And the ears unstopped.

One: Then shall the sick leap like a deer,

All: And the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

One: For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,

All: and streams in the desert.

One: And we shall come to Zion with singing.

**All: We shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.**

THEME CONVERSATION – Gillian Webster

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE (LOVE)

Lauren and Adam Stevenson; Carmen and Kael

Voice #1: On our journey to Christmas we have lit the candles of Hope, Peace and Joy.

Voice #2: This is the fourth Sunday of Advent, so we will light the last candle, the candle of Love. To a world of empires and despots, war and greed, grief and apathy, we proclaim that love is strong enough to overcome all evil and that compassion is more powerful than fear.

Voice #1: The angel Gabriel reassured Mary that "nothing will be impossible with God." The power of love is the power to overcome what we think is impossible. Love tells us that God doesn't want our excuses for why we dare not try, but our faithfulness to do.

Voice #2: As we light the candle of Love, we remember that God so loves this world that God sent God's beloved child, Jesus. We do so in honour of those who have shown us how to love, even when doing so is not convenient or sensible. We remember those who show us that compassion is central to the Christian life. Let us pray together:

All: **All-loving God, break into our world and our hearts again. Magnify your love in us until it overflows to our neighbours. Renew our faith to relive the wonder of your love. Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you.**

Come, God of Love, come. Amen.

(three blue candles and one pink candle are lit)

SONG – *A Candle is Burning* (verse 4)

VU 6

*A candle is burning, a candle of love,
a candle to point us to heaven above.*

*A baby for Christmas, a wonderful birth,
for Jesus is bringing God's love to our earth..*

WELCOME AND LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH

ANTHEM – *Soft Winds Over Bethlehem*

R. Wetzler

A TIME FOR CHILDREN AND THE CHILD WITHIN US

◆ **SERVICE OF THE WORD** ◆

* HYMN – *Angels We Have Heard on High*

VU 38

Reader: Jim Kraemer

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE WISDOM OF ISRAEL: Isaiah 55: 10-13

One: The Word of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL: Luke 2: 8-20

One: This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

* HYMN – *Before the Marvel of this Night*

VU 40

SERMON: "Glad Sound"

◆ **RESPONSE** ◆

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR OFFERING

OFFERING SOLO – *Bright Star*

N. Della Joio

Soprano: Allana Stevenson

* OFFERING HYMN – *What Child is This* (vs. 3)

VU 74

*So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh,
come one and all, to own him.*

*The King of Kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.*

*This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing,
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the Babe, the Son of Mary.*

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (said all together)

**God of all righteousness,
receive these gifts of gratitude,
the offerings of our lives.
Purify them with your refining fire
so that they may serve your purposes
and shine with your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND CONCERN

(concluding with the Prayer of Jesus) VU 921

* CLOSING HYMN – *Joy is Now in Every Place* VU 45

* COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING

* CHORAL RESPONSE – VU 955

*Grant to us your peace on earth,
Grant to us your peace, O God.*

POSTLUDE – *Siciliano and Giga from Sonata #5 in F Major* G.F. Handel
Allana Stevenson, flute

◆ **Melrose Events** ◆

◆ **Worship Next Week** ◆

This coming week is a high point of our Melrose worship year as we celebrate the Nativity of Christ on Saturday evening with two special worship opportunities: a "family" service at 7:00 and the Sacrament of Holy Communion at 10:30. Michelle, Philip and Alex have planned a "child-friendly" worship that will include a children's choir, and story time as well as familiar scripture and favourite carols. At 10:30 we will celebrate the Nativity of our Lord, appropriately again with singing -- this time featuring the participation of our excellent Melrose Chancel Choir. The homily will be the capstone of the Advent series based on the five senses (sight -- come and see!). The following morning, Sunday December 25th at 10:30 a.m., you

are invited to gather around the Church Parlour fireplace for Christmas Day worship capably led by Ted Lowrey, Shari Saunders and Carma McKay (pajamas optional). Then to ring in the New Year of 2017, Sunday worship at 10:30 on January 1 will take the form of a "New Year Levée" to be held in our beautiful Melrose chapel. Worship will feature more carols, readings, laughter and some comforting hot cider to take the chill off.

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!

◆ **Child and Youth Notes** ◆

Thursdays are for fun: join us Thursday evening from 6pm-7pm for a fun open hour of gym time here at the church! There will be **NO** Thursday evening Dec 29 and Jan 5.

Sunday School: Plan to join us each Sunday as we learn all about the Superheroes of the Bible! All ages welcome, nursery facilities available. Please note there will be **NO** Sunday School Dec 25 and Jan 1.

◆ **Melrose Corner Shoppe!** ◆

The Melrose Corner Shoppe is once again open for business! The Winter Solstice Christmas Sale will continue from **Dec.1- 24**, with new items every few days! Be sure to stop in and browse for Christmas goodies, stocking stuffers, hostess gifts & decorations or a treat for yourself! All proceeds will be put towards Melrose roof repairs. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Special Sale at the Corner Shoppe!

From today, December 18 until December 24

ALL CHRISTMAS ITEMS will be 50% off.

Time to get those last minute gifts!

(continued...)

Come into Melrose Church and you will see in the auditorium that there is a little Christmas shop in a nook behind the folding wooden doors. There are sparkling earrings, glittering rings, dazzling necklaces, for modern and vintage tastes. There are Christmas and winter theme decorations and ornaments for the Christmas tree or the mantel. There are many little figures, like glass snow figurines and candleholders to brighten your home. And, for those who like hand made crafts, there are soap bars with knitted cotton cloths. Handmade scarves in beautiful colours are also available for the chilly winter weather. The cute Nutcracker on top of the bookshelf reminds me of one of my favourite Christmas movies. History, thriller and mystery books can be found in the book corner. There are many items to choose from at the Melrose Christmas store – so drop in and see all the awesome treasures. There's something in everyone's price range. So, come into Melrose Christmas shop and help repair the roof at this wonderful holiday season!

-- Voluntarily submitted by a 10 year old student at OnCourse Education

◆ Office Hours: December 26 to January 3 ◆

Please note that the office will be closed from **December 26 to January 2 inclusive**. The building will be open December 27 to December 30 from 8am-3pm and staffed by custodians only. Regular office hours will resume on Tuesday, January 3.

◆ Donation Envelopes ◆

Please pick up your 2017 donation envelopes in the parlour after worship today! If you would like to have a box, please contact the office. As well, don't forget that the PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittal) option of donation is a wonderful way of sharing with Melrose. Your monthly donation (with amount(s) as prescribed by you) is conveniently and automatically taken from your bank account once a month. You may start, change, or cancel this donation at any time by contacting the office.

◆ **Did You Spot the Roofers...** ◆

... **working on our church building?** Though we are indeed fortunate to have a roof over our heads, we have experienced water damage in several areas (including our lovely chapel) over the past few months. Other necessary projects had already completely exhausted the Property Committee budget for 2016 before the extreme urgency of the roof repairs became clear. If find yourself able to add a little to this year's offering to close this significant fiscal gap, the Treasurer and the Property Committee would be most grateful.

◆ **Brr!!! Hat, Scarf and Mitten Drive** ◆

It's that time of year! The weather is getting colder and we're pulling out our hats, mittens and scarves. Many of the children at Lake Avenue School need these necessary items. Many of the children in need are Syrian Refugees who arrived when the weather was warmer. The school has a clothing room for students who need items. The Social Justice Committee is asking for your help in collecting **NEW** warm hats, mittens/gloves and scarves to stock up the school's clothing room. All sizes welcome. Donations can be placed in labeled box in auditorium. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

◆ **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.



MELROSE WEEKLY CALENDAR

Monday – December 19

Carpet Bowling	1:00 p.m.	Bowling Area
FIRE DRILL	3:00 p.m.	Entire Building
Big Book	7:00 p.m.	Auditorium
Bach Elgar Board Meeting	7:00 p.m.	Parlour

Tuesday – December 20

Tai Chi	7:30 p.m.	Parlour
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Wednesday – December 21

Carpet Bowling	1:00 p.m.	Bowling Area
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Thursday – December 22

Carpet Bowling	1:00 p.m.	Bowling Area
Thursdays are for Fun!	6:00 p.m.	Parlour, Gym
English Country Dancing	7:00 p.m.	Auditorium
Tai Chi	7:30 p.m.	Chapel
Melrose Choir Practice	7:30 p.m.	Parlour

Friday – December 23

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Saturday – December 24

Christmas Eve Family Service	7:00 p.m.	Sanctuary
Christmas Communion Service	10:30 p.m.	Sanctuary

Sunday – December 25

Melrose Christmas Worship	10:30 a.m.	Sanctuary
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