

◆ MELROSE UNITED CHURCH ◆

86 Homewood Avenue ◆ Hamilton, Ontario ◆ L8P 2M4

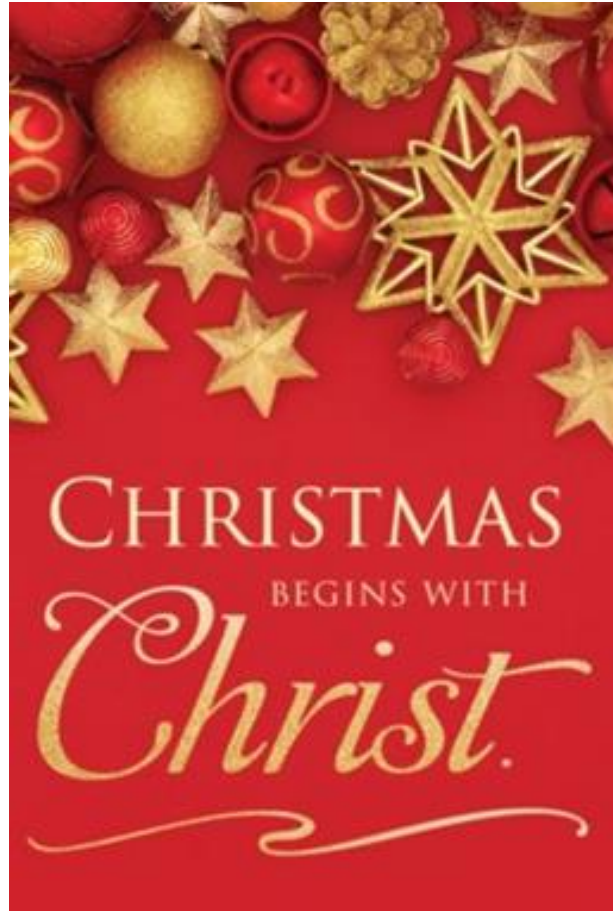
905 522 1323 ◆ melrose@melroseunited.ca

◆ www.melroseunited.ca ◆

◆ www.facebook.com/melroseunitedchurch ◆

◆ Twitter: @melroseunited ◆

◆ Instagram: @melroseuc ◆



Minister:

Rev. Sonia Ireson

Music Director:

Alexander Cann

Family Ministries Coordinator:

Meg Chalmers

Custodian:

Kevin Geluch

Office Administrator:

Michelle Millson

◆ **Tuesday, December 24, 2019** ◆

Christmas Eve, 10:30pm

MELROSE UNITED CHURCH

◆ December 24th, 2019 10:30 p.m. ◆

CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION

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

◆ **GATHERING** ◆

PRELUDE

CAROLS FROM THE GALLERY

O Emmanuel

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Rocking

Ding Dong! Merrily on High

* PROCESSIONAL CAROL – *O Come All Ye Faithful* VU 60

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In the swirl of living, a baby is born on a spinning earth
going all too fast.

**All: One silent night, the cry goes up and the stars shine
brighter and the depths of night give way to the joyful
dawning of a new way to love.**

One: Christmas spins by again in our busyness. Yet it lingers
hopefully inside our hearts wanting to touch everyone with
love and hope, joy and peace.

**All: Will we let it? Or will we hide? That is the choice of this
night!**

One: Come, let us welcome the birth of the Christ child.

**All: Let us welcome the tender touch of the Christ Child's
grace.**

LIGHTING OF THE NATIVITY CANDLE

Candles lit by the MacMillan family – Carolin, Vince, Andrew, Sarah, Colin and Emi (Rev. Sonia's daughter and family)

- the three purple and pink candles are lit

One: We hold hope in our hearts,

**All: hope that in the vulnerable infant Jesus is our promise
for transformation**

(the candle of Hope is lit)

One: Hope leads us to pray for peace, acting peacefully to cultivate harmony in all our relations.

All: In that peace, we find the Prince of Peace.

(the candle of Peace is lit)

One: Peace transforms into joyful celebration: walls torn down, chasms filled, barriers leveled, valleys bridged.

All: Joy inspires us to dance with abandon

(The candle of Joy is lit)

One: Joy embraced fosters love that makes all things new

**All: and, in that newness, we discover the deep meaning of
love shared.**

(the candle of Love is lit)

One: Love self-given through self-emptying, through humility,

**All: shows us the Christ, still completely vulnerable, yet
filled with promise.**

(The Christ Candle is lit)

**All: In the manger newborn baby, squalling and weak;
humble mother, desperate, maybe, while angels speak.
Is his life a love endeavor; can the chains of sin he sever?
Will he change the world forever, though lowly meek?**

Song: Hope is a Star

VU7 (Verse 5)

Love is a flame that burns in our heart

Jesus has come and will never depart.

When God is a child there's joy in our song.

The last will be first and the weak shall be strong

And none shall be afraid.

WELCOME AND LIFE OF THE CHURCH

* CAROL – *Joy to the World*

VU 59

◆ **WE HEAR GOD'S LOVE STORY ANEW** ◆

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Reader: Ian Brisbin

FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 9: 2-7

CHORAL ANTHEM – Sir Christémas

W. Mathias

SECOND LESSON – Luke 2: 1-7

CHORAL ANTHEM- Rorate Caeli

Palestrina

THIRD LESSON – Luke 2: 8-16

* CAROL – *Angels We Have Heard on High*

VU 38

STORY AND REFLECTION: George's Breakthrough Moment!

* CHORAL ANTHEM- O Magnum Mysterium

de Victoria

◆ **RESPONSE** ◆

THE INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERING

* OFFERTORY HYMN – *What Child Is This?*

VU 74

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (said all together)

**We offer to you, Loving God, our worship,
Our carols, our prayers, and our reflection on the nativity story.
We offer our concerns about those going through difficult
times.**

**We offer our readiness to work with others for the enrichment
of the church.**

**We offer our wish to help all who need to know your presence.
God bless these gifts.**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Christmas Eve Communion

The Invitation to Communion

One: God is with you

All: And also with you

One: Lift up your hearts

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to God

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

Who is Invited to the Lord's Table?

One: All are invited;

The young and the old,

The rich and the poor,
The lowest and the least;
Sinners and saints together in communion.
Come find your place here
Where there are no strangers or foreigners,
Only brothers and sisters in the sight of God.

Why do we Give Thanks at this Table?

**All: We give thanks because Jesus showed us the way,
We give thanks because Jesus is the way.
Jesus was a gift from God for the world.
He was called Immanuel, "God with us".
He came to save us from our sins.
Jesus lived a life of thankfulness
And gave his life as a sacrifice for many.
We give thanks that he is our Saviour, Christ the Lord.**

Why do we Eat and Drink at this Table?

One: We eat because on the night before Jesus died, he ate with friends. He gave them bread and said "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.
(bread is broken)

One: At the same meal, he took a cup of wine and said,
"Drink this cup. This is the blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."
(wine is poured)

**All Singing: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might;
holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heav'n and earth are full,**

VU 942

full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

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)

A New Creed - Said together

We are not alone,

we live in God's world.

We believe in God

Who has created and is creating,

Who has come in Jesus,

The Word made flesh,

To reconcile and make new,

Who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

To celebrate God's presence

To live with respect in Creation,

To love and serve others,

To seek justice and resist evil,

To proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

Our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Who do we Remember at this Table?

One: We remember Jesus' birth and his presence as God with us.
We remember Jesus' life and his love.
We remember Jesus' suffering and death on the cross.
We remember the resurrection and the promise of life.
We remember that we are waiting in hope to see Jesus
again.

All Singing: Christ has died, VU 943
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again

One: Revealed in stable, cross and empty tomb, we give thanks O
God for your limitless love for all. With your people of all
times and places, we await with hope the fulfillment of our
vision for all creation.

Bless us O God and these your gifts; encourage us to share
your life and love, which make us, and the gifts we share
truly holy.

Transform us God, and your world and bless your children:
Those who feel alone or afraid...
Those whose souls and homes are broken by violence...
Those who will go hungry, thirsty, and cold tonight...
Those who long only to hear that they are loved...
God made known in Jesus Christ,

All: Hear our prayer.

All Singing: Amen, Amen, Amen. VU 943

Our Lord's Prayer

**All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be 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 for for ever. Amen.**

The Sharing of the Elements (by Intinction – bread and
juice/wine– bread is dipped in the cup)
(elements are served)

Communion Anthem: O Holy Night
Allana Stevenson, soprano

A.C. Adam

The Prayer of Thanksgiving after Communion

**All: Jesus, Immanuel with us may this meal we shared
Nourish us to be your body in the world.
God of love, guide us to the stables of our world where the
lonely and longing gather.
Lead us to the mangers of our time,
Where hope and renewal are born again.
Make us heralds of your love and joy. Amen.**

SHARING OF LIGHT

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.

A special thank you to Ralph & Brenda Moulton,

Ian Brisbin and Bob Ross for ushering at tonight's service.

A special thank you to Stuart and Richard Feenstra for candle lighting and safety.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM YOUR MINISTER 2019

I bring you joyful Christmas Greetings from myself and the exceptional and dedicated staff and host of volunteer workers at Melrose United Church. This has been a transitional year for them as they have said goodbye to Rev. Philip Garner, who was with them until the end of June. After their search for a new minister, I was warmly welcomed by all to begin our ministry together on October 1. I thank you for the kindness and support you have shown to me and look forward to the year 2020 in ministry together.

Here in Melrose we try to provide a sanctuary of safety and rest to all who enter our doors. In this chaotic and bewildering world, we face increased violence, a bombardment of untruths, fearful response to desperate people seeking asylum, racial tensions, and a polarizing of differing political viewpoints. It is difficult to remain a faithful follower of Christ's Way in our secular world which demands putting self first.

I encourage you to help each other find the simplicity in the Blessed Christmas season, to expand your kindness and forgiveness to others, and to choose love over hate. May God richly bless you and keep you safe and healthy throughout this time.

Yours in the Service of Jesus Christ, Rev. Sonia Ireson