



◆ Melrose Vision ◆

To respond to God's call by being a people of faith who open our hearts and minds to the true power and love of Jesus Christ. To live our faith by providing within our changing community a welcoming environment which encourages all people to care for and accept one another.

◆ Worship Next Week ◆

Moving into the second Sunday of Advent, Isaiah is still speaking to the Israelites in exile. To our choir members, this will be a most familiar passage. Handel's Messiah brings to life its majesty in the words of Comfort, O comfort my people. God's commands bring to an end the punishment of the people and moves into a future period of joy of deliverance. We see two very different pictures of God. On the one hand God's might and power can lift up or make low and on the other God's tenderness knows no bounds.

We are asked to trust in this God, to hear the promises spoken in spite of worldly messages to the contrary. We are living in an exile from God. War, hatred, bigotry, greed, consumerism, religious zealotry appears to be the dominating force of evil, and yet, we are to hold the vision of redemption. We are to see the compassion and care for humanity that God holds in human relations, and to stand firm in our faith until that day when God will triumph.

Psalm 85 echoes this pattern of being at an in-between stage of awaiting restoration. This is a psalm of discernment, of trying to listen for God's word in everyday life and then presenting the vision of steadfast love and faithfulness. God's intention for this world stretches from heaven to earth and it is a vision that runs counter to many understandings. The basis of the salvation is in blessing, not terror of divine judgment. This is a vision of fourfold promises of steadfast love, faithfulness, peace, and righteousness to occur in a time to come.



The Gospel reading introduces John the Baptist as the messenger sent to prepare the way of the Lord. John does a lot of the prep work heralding Jesus' entry. He builds up the anticipation and the basis for trusting in the arrival of the Prince of Peace. John, himself is an unusual, weird character. He is flamboyant and unforgettable, yet his message does not direct people to himself. He points to the One who is to come with reverence and awe. John challenges the people to confess their sins, to turn from their selfish ways, towards the God who loves and will redeem them.

◆ A big thank you! ◆

A big thank you for all those who baked, sewed, crocheted, hustled and make the bazaar a huge success! We will release a total raised next week.

◆ Light in the December Darkness Service - December 9 ◆

We invite you to set aside an hour on the evening of Wednesday, December 9 at 7.30 to join our virtual service for a time of recognition of the losses that have attached themselves to you during this past year. Some of you have lost loved ones through a very trying time of COVID-19. But for many of you, the isolation, loss of income, health concerns and changed routines for family, have shaken your emotional well being. Join us for a time of prayer, rest and renewal. We would like to offer you the opportunity to request a candle to be lighted during this service in memory of a loved one, or in prayer of request or thanksgiving. Please let Michelle in our office know of your wishes and whether you want the names spoken or just your name and a quiet prayer when the candle is lit.



◆ Wesley's Christmas Program ◆

**NEW for 2020- Holiday Hampers!**

Due to COVID-19, Wesley's Christmas & Holiday program will not operate like a store this year. Instead, we will provide hampers for people who participate in Wesley programs and through some of our community partners. This includes families, seniors and the homeless.

Donations and pre-packed hampers can be dropped off at 1974 King Street East in December, where volunteers will sort and pack hampers.

There will be no public access of the program or Pioneer Church this year. Community members looking for assistance can contact a Food Bank at: <https://www.hamiltonfoodshare.org/contact-2/food/>

**Here are four ways to get involved this year!**

[Donate online](#) to help us purchase gifts & food in bulk

[Purchase an Amazon online gift card](#) and email us the details at [info@wesley.ca](mailto:info@wesley.ca)

**NEW** [Purchase a digital gift for a young person!](#)

**Purchase donations and do a curbside drop off at 1975 King St E (Pioneer Church).** See this year's [calendar](#) for drop off times. Donors are asked to stay in their cars and wait for instructions from volunteers. Only scheduled and screened volunteers are allowed inside the building this year. For more information, please read our [Pandemic Protocols](#) document.

**Donation Wish List:**

Plastic or re-usable bags

Any non-perishable food in individual or family sizes

New gifts: toys, hygiene items, small kitchen appliances, towel & linens

Gift Certificates for Walmart, Giant Tiger, Canadian Tire, Toys 'R' Us

New or gently used hats, mitts, socks, winter boots and coats (No clothing)

[Digital gifts for young people](#)



\*To make a pre-packed hamper for a single adult, pack \$25 worth of food and \$25 worth of gifts.

For general inquiries about this year's Holiday Assistance Program, please contact [raj.matharu@wesley.ca](mailto:raj.matharu@wesley.ca)

Melrose Specific: The Social Justice team is also offering opportunities to drop off items without contact at a number of locations throughout the city that they will collect and ensure makes it's way to Wesley. Items they will be collecting include: **Non-perishable foods, new towels and linens, hygiene items, toys, coats, mittens, socks, reusable bags and small kitchen appliances.** For info on where to drop off please contact Gwyn at [gwynxag@gmail.com](mailto:gwynxag@gmail.com).

#### ◆ Envelopes ◆

We are beginning 2021 envelope distribution early this year to give people an oppourtunity to safely drop by over the next 7 weeks. If you have envelopes to pick up you can stop by during the church operating hours to pick up. Masks are required to be worn at all times when in the building. If you are not feeling well please plan to stop by another time. If you want to double check your plan to stop by send a note to the office: [melrose@melroseunited.ca](mailto:melrose@melroseunited.ca). The office recommends ordering from the bazaar and picking up at the same time!

You do not need to pick up your envelopes to continue donating with the same donation number. Donations made through e-transfer, PAR or mailed in by cheque will still be tracked.

#### ◆ Donations ◆

The Melrose staff team (and volunteer base) continues to do work behind the scenes even though we cannot use the building to worship together. If you are looking to support the ongoing work of the church you can:



## Life and Work At Melrose

November 29, 2020

1. Sign up for P.A.R. (preauthorized remittance) through the office.
2. Make a one time or ongoing donation through Canada Helps.Org
3. Send a donation through e-transfer to [donations@melroseunited.ca](mailto:donations@melroseunited.ca).