

St. Paul's United Church

Sunday, March 12, 2023 – Lent 3

Minister: Rev. Karen Ptolemy-Stam

Music Director: Victoria Warwick

Readers: Marlis Dupuis, Debbie Just

Music: St. Paul's Choir

Tech Team: Glenn Erwin, Gabriela & Rick Dell, Bruce Wilcox



WELCOME/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND/CALL TO THE GATHERED:

OPENING HYMN: MV# 28 God of the Bible

1. God of the Bible, God in the Gospel, hope seen in Jesus, hope yet to come
you are our centre, daylight or darkness freedom or prison, you are our home

Refrain:

Fresh as the morning, sure as the sunrise. God always faithful you do not change.

2. God in our struggles, God in our hunger, suffering with us, taking our part,
still you empow'r us, mothering Spirit feeding, sustaining, from your own heart. **Refrain**

3. Those without status, those who are nothing, you have made royal, gifted with rights,
chosen as partners, midwives of justice, birthing new systems, lighting new lights. **Refrain**

4. Not by your finger, not by your anger will our world order change in a day,
but by your people, fearless and faithful small paper lanterns, lighting the way. **Refrain**

5. Hope we must carry, shining and certain through all our turmoil, terror and loss
bonding us gladly one to the other, till our world changes facing the Cross. **Refrain**

OPENING PRAYER: Read by Marlis Dupuis written by Bob Root, Peterborough, On from Gathering
Lent/Easter 2023 pg. 33

Loving God, you've called us and we've come. We know our need to be in this place and we give you thanks that we are here. We want to learn more about your love for us. We want to feel the strength of those who have gone before us and whose presence surrounds us now. We want to find courage for the living of our lives today. We want to notice your presence in the quiet places of our hearts. We want to live with joy and in service to others and to your creation. We want a lot of things, O God. But deep down, we know that you love what is best for us. So, most of all in this time, we want to be with you and to feel your love. Hold us, bless us, touch us, so that, when we our worship is over, we may go out to be a blessing to everyone we meet. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen

EXTINGUISHING THE LIGHT ON OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

SUNG RESPONSE: Sung Response VU #595, We Are Pilgrims, vs. 1, 3

We are pilgrims on a journey, Fellow travellers on the road;
We are here to help each other, walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear

THEME CONVERSATION (Children Leave for Discovery Kids)

HYMN: VU#367 "Come Down, O Love Divine" Music Video

SCRIPTURE READING: John 4:5-42 read by Debbie Just

SERMON:

GIVING OF OUR GIFTS AND OFFERTORY ANTHEM

SUNG RESPONSE: "Give What You Can"

**Give what you can, take what you need. For the body of Christ is enough to feed.
The hungry for Spirit and the thirsty for love. Give thanks when you can
to our God up above.**

OFFERTORY PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND LORD'S PRAYER: Read by Marlis Dupuis Written by Deborah Ambridge Fisher, Forest Hill U.C.; Fredericton N.B. p 35

Loving God, we come to you in this Lenten season aware of our shortcomings. There have been times when we have stumbled and not done what we know to be right. We have made choices that suited our immediate needs rather than the needs of our community, our family, and our world. There have been times when we did not care for ourselves as you would have us do, times we forgot how much you love us. Gracious God, there have been times when others have treated us badly, times when our love was answered with indifference or dismissal, times when people have not seen the beauty you have so lovingly created in us. O God we struggle to choose the right way when so many around us seem to be openly choosing the wrong way. We ask you to help us change what we can. Help us to examine within ourselves and consider how we can better reflect your image. Help us to understand the brokenness in those who hurt us, a brokenness that does not reflect their true image or perceive our true image. We ask you, O God, to remind us of how deeply you love us, even through the brokenness we feel. Remind us that our stumbling and shortcomings are passing things, things that do not define us but simply define a moment in our lives. We are made in the image of God and that image is strong and true. We are loved and we have an incredible capacity to love and forgive. The beautiful rainbow that lives in each of us has been lovingly crafted by you, O God. Continue to be with us and with all your creation, amid all moments. Amen (followed by Lord's Prayer)

CLOSING HYMN: VU#120 "O Jesus, I Have Promised"

1. O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
remain forever near me, my Saviour and my friend:
I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.

2. O let me feel you near me; the world is ever near,
I see the sights that dazzle the tempting sounds I hear;
my foes are ever near me, around me and within;
but, Jesus, then draw nearer and shield my soul from sin.

3. O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;

O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;
now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul

4. O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you
that where you are in glory and your servant shall be too
And Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
O give me grace to follow, my Saviour and my friend.

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

SUNG BENEDICTION: "May the Christ Who Walks with Wounded Feet"

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you on the road.
May the Christ who serves with wounded hands stretch out your hands to serve.
May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart open your hearts to love;
when you leave this place may you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet,
and may everyone you meet see the face of Christ in you.

POSTLUDE