



St. Paul's United Church
Sunday, December 31, 2023 – 10:00 a.m.
Welcoming in the New Year
Minister: Rev. Karen Ptolemy-Stam
Readers: Fran Hill, Neal Foot
Tech Team: Gabriela and Rick Dell, Bruce Wilcox

PRELUDE, WELCOME AND CALL TO THE GATHERED/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND

OPENING HYMN: VU#96 "Will You Come and See the Light"

1. Will you come and see the light from the stable door?
It is shining newly bright, though it shone before.
It will be your guiding star, it will show you who you are.
Will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
2. Will you step into the light that can free the slave?
It will stand for what is right, it will heal and save.
By the pyramids of greed there's a longing to be freed.
Will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
3. Will you tell about the light in the prison cell?
Though it's shackled out of sight, it is shining well.
When the truth is cut and bruised, and the innocent abused,
Will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
4. Will you join the hope, alight in a young girl's eyes,
of the mighty put to flight by a baby's cries?
When the lowest and the least are the foremost at the feast,
Will you hide, or decide to meet the light?
5. Will you travel by the light of the babe new born?
In the cradle lit at night there's a gleam of dawn,
and the darkness all about is too dim to put it out:
Will you hide, or decide to meet the light?

OPENING PRAYER: Fran Hill Written by Mary Parsons – Munn's U.C., Oakville, On from
Gathering A/C/E 2022-23 pg. 39

**LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES OF HOPE, PEACE, JOY, LOVE AND THE CHRIST
CANDLE:**

SUNG RESPONSE: Light a candle for Christ born among us. Grace of God most fully revealed.
Advent watching and waiting is over. God with us, humanity healed.
Emmanuel, God is here; God is here!

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; Matthew 2:13-23 read by Neal Foot

SERMON:

HYMN: VU#639 One More Step Along the World I Go”

1. One more step along the world I go, one more step along the world I go;
from the old things to the new, keep me traveling along with you:
And it's from the old I travel to the new; keep me traveling along with you.

2. Round the corner of the world I turn, more and more about the world I learn;
all the new things that I see you'll be looking at along with me:
And it's from the old I travel to the new; keep me traveling along with you.

3. As I travel through the bad and good, keep me traveling the way I should;
where I see no way to go you'll be telling me the way, I know:
And it's from the old I travel to the new; keep me traveling along with you.

4. Give me courage when the world is rough, keep me loving though the world is tough;
leap and sing in all I do, keep me traveling along with you:
And it's from the old I travel to the new; keep me traveling along with you.

5. You are older than the world can be, you are younger than the life in me;
ever old and ever new, keep me traveling along with you:
And it's from the old I travel to the new; keep me traveling along with you.

GIVING OF OUR GIFTS FOLLOWED BY SUNG RESPONSE: VU# 55 (V. 4)

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what I can I give him – give my heart.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/LORD'S PRAYER: Fran Hill written by Gill Le Fevre, Walton Memorial U.C., Oakville, Ont. Gathering A/C/E 2022-23 pg. 39

COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING Written by Sharone Winegardfen, Lion's Head Pike Bay Pastoral Charge, Lion's Head, Ont. Gathering A/C/E 2022-23 pg. 39

As we leave this place of worship today, may we be blessed in the discovery of new opportunities, new ways to love and live and reach out.

May God send us from here with love to share
and make us open and willing to take comfort in the love of others.

May God journey with us into this new year,
as we are full of hope and ready to embrace all that God offers to fill us up.

May God grant us courage to love freely, without judgment,
and to be creative in how we serve and reach out to others.

May God bless those who we love and those we don't.

And now, may we go out in faith, trusting that God will lead us;
may we go in love, believing in God's saving grace;

and may we go in peace, recognizing God's precious gift given to each one of us. Amen

SUNG BLESSING: Auld Lang Syne

Should auld acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind?

Should auld acquaintance be forgot and auld langsyne.

For auld langsyne, my dear, for auld langsyne

We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet for auld langsyne

POSTLUDE