

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION (*Prayer for Refugees*)

Loving God, over the last few weeks, we paused to remember those who are suffering as refugees in different parts of the world, such as Yemen, Syria, Palestine, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Thai-Burma, Sri Lanka, Ukraine and Artsakh/Armenia.

We have heard the Good News of churches, charity and humanitarian organisations working hard to bring about Hope, Peace, Joy and Love in our world.

We pray for all refugees all over the world, especially young children.

Loving God, we thank You for the work of all the charities and the churches supporting them.

Bless them as we join together in praying the prayer Jesus taught us:

Our Father

A NEW YEAR'S PRAYER

May God make your year a happy one! Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain, but by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes; not by making your path easy, but by making you sturdy to travel any path; not by taking hardships from you, but by taking fear from your heart; not by granting you unbroken sunshine, but by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows; not by making your life always pleasant, but by showing you when people need you most, and by making you anxious to be there to help. God's love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead.

HYMN: 733 *“Lord God, You Now have Set Your Servant Free”*

SENDING OUT

Go from this place filled with excitement for how God is using us to love our neighbours.

Go now, as people of God.

We go assured that God is love and is using us to love all of creation.

We go to love our neighbour as ourselves.

Go now, held in the loving hands of God Most High.

Go now and follow Christ in all things.

Go now, in the love and fellowship of the Holy Spirit. *Amen!*

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Longueville - St. Andrew's Uniting Church



**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**

ORDER OF SERVICE

Last Sunday of the Year

31 December 2023

CALL TO WORSHIP

Here we meet. Here we encounter. Here we worship God.

Here we will encounter Christ, redeemer of all of creation.

Here we will celebrate what it means, to be the people of God in this place.

Here we will give thanks for the Word made Flesh.

Here we will follow Christ.

Here we will worship God.

We gather for worship and to claim the promises of God.

We come to be reminded of the grace that sustains and the mercy that forgives.

We come to renew our covenant as followers of Christ.

Blessed is the name of the Lord and greatly to be praised!

Let us worship God!

INVOCATION

We have come today, O God, seeking Your grace and claiming Your healing power. We have journeyed through another year of life, with both joys and blessings, and its hardship and trials. Wash us with Your Holy Spirit and renew us for the journey of life in the name of Christ. Amen!

HYMN: 106(i) “Now Thank We All Our God”

THANKSGIVING TO GOD

(Gnostic prayer Mid-2nd Century)

We give thanks to You!

Every soul and heart is lifted up to You, undisturbed name, honoured with the name ‘God’ and praised with the name ‘Father’, for to everyone and everything comes the fatherly kindness and affection and love, and any teaching there may be that is sweet and plain, giving us mind, speech, and knowledge:

Mind, so that we may understand You, speech, so that we may expound You, knowledge, so that we may know You.

We rejoice because You have shown us Yourself.

We rejoice because while we were in the body, You have made us through Your knowledge.

The thanksgiving of the person who attains to You is one thing: that we know You. We have known You, intellectual light, Life of life.

Eternal permanence of the begetting Father, thus have we worshipped Your goodness.

There is one petition that we ask:

We would be preserved in the knowledge. And there is one protection that we desire: that we not stumble in this kind of life.

SONG – Great is the Lord

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 148

Page 623

HYMN: 134 “Praise, my Soul, the King of Heaven”

PRAYER BEFORE READING THE SCRIPTURES

Father, anoint us with Your Holy Spirit, so that as we read Your eternal word, Your word may penetrate our whole being and transform us. Grant us the blessing to be a faithful disciple in believing the Word of God and that we may be a light shining upon all who are in darkness. *Amen!*

BIBLE READINGS -

Isaiah 61:10-62:3 *(Pages 739-740)*

Virginia Knowles

Luke 2:22-35 *(Page 1015)*

MUSICAL REFLECTION

MESSAGE: “Simeon’s Message - Hope for the Future.” Krikor

HYMN: 324 “Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace”

NOTICES - Elders’ & Council Meetings Wed 14 February 12:30 pm.

- **Movie/ Pizza Nights will resume on** Tues 6 Feb 6:30 pm.

The movie will be “Penguin Bloom”.

- **Time4U** will resume on Wed 7 Feb 10:00 am.

OFFERING - Give back to the One who first gave, and gave His best.

DEDICATION of OFFERING

Generous God, we thank You for the faithful witness of people. We thank You for their service and their vision. We thank You for the opportunity with our siblings in Christ around the globe to love our neighbour as You love us. We pray for our offering this day.

May we use it in loving service for those in need. *Amen!*