

Another word January 4, 2022

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

Happy New Year!! At 7pm on New Years Eve, Nancy Carlyle and Richard Harper committed their lives to each other in Holy Matrimony. What a wonderful way to end a year, and what a wonderful time for Nancy and Richard to begin their new life together. Please join me in wishing them long life in God's perfect peace.

As I sit here trying to put my thoughts together, the grinding and drilling just outside my office door has commenced. Yes, the new doors are being installed. I tell you this in case some of my ramblings seem to be, shall we say, rambling.

Scriptures for January 9th: Isaiah 43:1-7 read by our Elder, Dale Campbell. Our New Testament reading is Luke 3:15-17, 21-22. "Jesus is baptized." Because we were unable to take last Sunday off as planned, Donita and I will be gone this Sunday.

Please keep John Whitmer and Ellie Wells in your prayers. May we be in prayer.

Gracious and loving God. You and You alone are Holy. As we begin a new year, may we learn from our past, but go forward with joy and hope, knowing that You are faithful to those who wait on You, and trust in You. Just knowing You are there lovingly guiding us through the months to come, gives us strength to know there is nothing in life that we can't face. We ask for Your continued protection for those who are willing to stand in the line of danger to protect the weak and vulnerable. We pray for our leaders that they will be inspired to govern by Your truth and justice. And may our lives be a reflection of Your love. In Jesus' loving name we pray, Amen.

During Advent, I wrote about a different Christmas Carol each week. It then occurred to me that maybe I should write about a song for New Years. This was an easy choice because there is only one song sung worldwide; and it's "Auld Lang Syne."

This song has never been high on my list, especially because of the campy way it was played by different big bands of the 50's and 60's. However, in researching the song I have come to appreciate its meaning. (And it didn't hurt any by hearing and seeing it sung as intended in a "Downton Abbey" episode.)

The song is a poem that the famous Scottish poet, Robert Burns penned in 1788. It was based on an earlier folk song from the late 1600's that expressed a farewell to the old year. Burns added the memories of long-ago friends and acquaintances to the passing year, and asks if it is right to never again have them "Brought to mind?" He then turns to us in the chorus and says we must never forget the past or our dear friends, and to raise a cup of kindness to them, for "Auld Lang Syne." (The sake of old times.)

"Auld Lang Syne"

Robert Burns

Should "Auld" acquaintances be forgot, and never brought to mind?
Should "Auld" acquaintances be forgot, and Auld Lang Syne?
For Auld Lang Syne my dear, For Auld Lang Syne,
We'll take a cup of kindness yet, for Auld Lang Syne.

I think we all can agree that memories are important, as well as old friendships. But we must be careful that we don't allow ourselves to live in the past, to live only in our memories. It can be so easy to surround ourselves with the past, to allow the past to hold us back, and

never move ahead. I think Burns would agree that to remember is good, but that we also must be able to let go, and move on.

Paul wrote to the Church in Philippi, "I thank God every time I remember you." (Php 1:3) You see, there is nothing wrong with remembering, even reminiscing. We need to thank God for our memories and "Old Acquaintances." But then Paul goes on to say, "Forgetting what is behind, and straining toward what is ahead." (Php 3:13) In other words, don't let anything get in the way of the task God has chosen for you. We are each placed where we are for a specific purpose, and each new day brings about new opportunities to live in His will. Don't miss the prize of a lifetime by living only in the past.

In His Peace,

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