

**Readings for March 5, 2023**  
**United Church of Strafford In Person and Zoom Service**

**Unison Reading** *Psalm 121, King James Version*

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,  
from whence cometh my help.  
My help cometh from the Lord,  
which made heaven and earth.  
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved:  
he that keepeth thee will not slumber.  
Behold, he that keepeth Israel  
shall neither slumber nor sleep.  
The Lord is thy keeper:  
the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.  
The sun shall not smite thee by day,  
nor the moon by night.  
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil:  
he shall preserve thy soul.  
The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in  
from this time forth, and even for evermore.

*Genesis 12:1-4a*

Now God said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” So Abram went, as God had told him.

*John 3:1-12, 19-21*

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.”

Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?”

Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” *continued on next page*

Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?”

“...This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”