

**CELEBRATING THE 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSITY OF  
MARIPOSA FOLK FESTIVAL  
Sermon by Karen Hilfman Millson  
St. Paul's United Church, Orillia  
July 11, 2010**

**Prophetic Voices:**

The theme for July is based on the book  
“Saving paradise – How the Christian Church  
Traded Love of the World for Crucifixion and Empire”  
The purpose of the book is to identify the primary focus  
of the Christian faith in the first 1,000 years  
which was, according to the art of those times –  
to help people be aware that Paradise, or the Kingdom of God  
is right here – here and now.

And that we experience Paradise or the Kingdom of God  
when we are connected to the beauty and wonder of creation  
(and therefore honour the beauty of the world around us).

And we experience Paradise  
when we live together in this world in such a way  
that justice, equality, compassion and peace are our goals, our intentions.

Justice, equality, peace, concern for the environment  
are also the major themes of folk music.

In so many ways the songwriters of folk music  
have been and continue to be a strong prophetic voice in our culture –  
just like the prophetic voices found in the writings  
and the poetry of the church (in the Bible).

Listen back to the vision for the world that Isaiah had  
and you'll hear the same themes,  
the same protests that we hear in folk music of our day:  
In the Isaiah vision – a prophetic poet of long ago  
we hear that the time will come  
when we will turn our swords into ploughshares  
when the lion and lamb will lie down together  
when justice will roll down like an ever flowing stream  
(which the prophet Amos spoke of)  
when people will get to be the ones to eat the food they plant.

The manifesto or mission statement  
that Jesus declared at the beginning of his work  
comes from Isaiah  
The time is now to bring good news to the poor  
release to the captives

recovery of sight to the blind  
(and how many ways do we live with metaphorical blindness)  
when the oppressed will go free  
and it is time for the Year of the Lord  
when all debts are forgiven and land returns to its rightful people.

A prophet – whether of long ago or today –  
is a person who sees more clearly than many of us into the present moment  
and sends out a rallying cry to say “People take note –  
if you continue on the path you are taking  
it will lead you where you do not want to go.  
Stop, change direction! Now!!

Like the Isaiah vision of old  
the new prophetic voices in folk music over the past 50 years  
also call us to be aware – to wake up to what we are doing  
to the earth  
to each other  
to ourselves.  
when we allow greed and profit to be the bottom line that guides us  
rather than the power of honour, creativity, love.

One of the folk music legends  
(who will be part of Mariposa Festival this weekend)  
is Oscar Brand who has the longest running radio show ever  
for 65 years – every Saturday hosted “Oscar Brand’s folksong festival”  
introduced such talents to the world as  
Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell, Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger.

Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie  
provided a solid foundation of protest songs in the genre of folk music  
and were inspiration to the songwriters and folksingers who came after them.

### **Woody Guthrie**

We begin today with music of Woody Guthrie.  
Guthrie – very influenced by his experiences  
of travelling with migrant workers –  
from Oklahoma (where he grew up) to California.  
In 1940 – Guthrie played a benefit  
(hosted by the John Steinbeck Comm.) to aid farm workers.  
In 1940 – he also penned his famous song  
“This Land is Your Land”  
In 2 of the lesser known verses he protested against class inequality.  
This was one of the protest songs at the Inaugural concert of Barack Obama –  
Pete Seeger, his grandson and Bruce Springstein sang it that night.

Canadian Version:

This land is your land,  
This land is my land,

From Bonavista  
To Vancouver Island,  
From the Arctic Circle,  
To the Great Lake waters,  
This land was made for you and me.

The sun comes shining  
As I was strolling  
The wheat fields waving  
And the dust clouds rolling  
The fog was lifting  
A voice came chanting  
This land was made for you and me.

As I was walkin'  
I saw a sign there  
And that sign said  
No trespassin'  
But on the other side  
It didn't say nothin'!  
Now that side was made for you and me!

In the squares of the city  
In the shadow of the steeple  
Near the relief office  
I see my people  
And some are grumblin'  
And some are wonderin'  
If this land's still made for you and me.

Nobody living  
Can ever stop me  
As I go walking  
That freedom highway  
Nobody living  
Can make me turn back  
This land was made for you and me.

In his recordings in the early 1940s  
Woody Guthrie included the following "Copyright Warning":  
"This song is copyrighted in the U.S. under Seal of Copyright #154085,  
for a period of 28 years, and anybody caught singin' it without our permission,  
will be mighty good friends of ours, cause we don't give a dern.  
Publish it. Write it. Sing it. Swing to it. Yodel it.  
We wrote it, that's all we wanted to do."

**Pete Seeger**

An iconic figure in mid 20<sup>th</sup> American folk music revival.  
In the 1940's – Co-founder Almanac Singers  
Provided a singing newspaper promoting the industrial unionization movement

Much of his music heard in labour halls  
He was a fixture on nationwide radio in the 40's and early 1950's –  
when Almanac singers, renamed The Weavers,  
recorded the hit song “Goodnight Irene”.

In 1955 Pete Seeger was blacklisted during the McCarthy era  
when he was brought before the “Committee on Un-American Activities”  
In the 1960's he re-emerged with protest music  
in support of international disarmament  
civil rights and environmental concerns.

Some of his best known songs:  
Where Have All the Flowers Gone  
Turn, Turn, Turn  
helped popularize the spiritual “We Shall Overcome”  
The logo on Seeger's banjo declared:  
“This machine surrounds hate and forces it to surrender”

Pete Seeger's “If I had a Hammer”

If I had a hammer  
I'd hammer in the morning  
I'd hammer in the evening  
All over this land  
I'd hammer out danger  
I'd hammer out a warning  
I'd hammer out love between my brothers and my sisters  
All over this land

If I had a bell  
I'd ring it in the morning  
I'd ring it in the evening  
All over this land  
I'd ring out danger  
I'd ring out a warning  
I'd ring out love between my brothers and my sisters  
All over this land

If I had a song  
I'd sing it in the morning  
I'd sing it in the evening  
All over this land  
I'd sing out danger  
I'd sing out a warning  
I'd sing out love between my brothers and my sisters  
All over this land

Well I've got a hammer  
And I've got a bell  
And I've got a song to sing

All over this land  
It's the hammer of justice  
It's the bell of freedom  
It's the song about love between my brothers and my sisters  
All over this land.

Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie were the early ones  
writing protest music to provide a prophetic voice  
to the nations of North America.

In 1960 when folk music was moving back into its full swing  
it was decided that the first international folk festival  
would be begun here in Orillia.

Looking back to those days, we have a brief clip,  
made this week from Pete McGarvey – a member of St. Paul's –  
who at that time was a town councilor and well-known radio personality  
and one of the co-founders of Mariposa Folk Festival.

*(Pete's tape)*

Pete went on and talked about some of the upcoming songwriters  
of that time including Bob Dylan.

### **Bob Dylan**

A great fan of Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger  
and good friend of Joan Baez and Gordon Lightfoot.  
Wrote a multitude of songs that both he and others have shared with us.  
In 1963 he wrote a song that became the rallying cry of the 60's shift.  
In the song he shares his prophetic call for the need to change:  
"The Times They Are A-Changing"

Here's one of the verses:  
Come senators, congressmen  
Please heed the call  
Don't stand in the doorway  
Don't block up the hall  
For he that gets hurt  
Will be he who has stalled  
There's a battle outside and it's ragin'  
It'll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls  
For the times they are a-changin'

The Times They Are A-Changing was another one of the songs  
that was sung at Obama's Inaugural Concert.

And now Sarah and Shannon with Dylan's "Blowin' In the Wind"

How many roads must a man walk down  
Before you call him a man  
And how many seas must a white dove sail

Before she sleeps in the sand?  
Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannonballs fly  
Before they're forever banned?  
the answer, my friend, is blowin' in the **wind**  
the answer is blowin' in the wind.

How many years can a mountain exist  
Before it's washed to the sea?  
Before they're allowed to be free?  
Pretending he just doesn't see?  
the answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind  
the answer is blowin' in the wind  
Before he can see the sky?  
the answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind  
the answer is blowin' in the wind.

### **Joan Baez**

An incredible activist throughout her lifetime.  
Became linked with "We Shall Overcome"  
(which became known in those years as the civil rights anthem)  
She sang it at Martin Luther King's 1963 March on Washington  
for jobs and freedom.  
Baez also joined King in the 1965 march  
from Selma to Montgomery  
and linked arms with King  
to protest that African-American school children  
in Mississippi were not being allowed into schools.

She worked with Amnesty International.  
Played a significant role in the 1985  
Live Aid concert for African Famine Relief.  
Has been prominent in the struggle for gay and lesbian rights.  
During the Christmas season 1972,  
Joan joined a peace delegation travelling to North Vietnam –  
both to address human rights in the region,  
and to deliver Christmas mail to American prisoners of war.  
During her time there she was caught in the U.S. military's  
"Christmas Bombing" of a city in North Vietnam –  
when the city was bombed for 11 straight days.

Out of that experience she wrote the song:  
"Where Are You Now my Son?"

These are just a few of the verses:

It's walking to the battleground that always makes me cry  
I've met so few folks in my time who weren't afraid to die

But dawn bleeds with the people here and morning skies are red  
As young girls load up bicycles with flowers for the dead.

An aging woman picks along the craters and the rubble  
A piece of cloth, a bit of shoe, a whole lifetime of trouble  
A sobbing chant comes from her throat and splits the morning air  
The single son she had last night is buried under her.

The siren gives a running break to those who live in town  
Take the children and the blankets to the concrete underground  
Sometimes we'd sing and joke and paint bright pictures on the wall  
And wonder if we would die well and if we'd loved at all

The helmetless defiant ones sit on the curb and stare  
At tracers flashing through the sky and planes bursting in air  
But way out in the villages no warning comes before a blast  
That means a sleeping child will never make it to the door.

The days of our youth were fun  
Where are you now, my son?

### **Gordon Lightfoot**

Gordon Lightfoot is a contemporary and friend  
of Joan Baez and Bob Dylan.

Grew up here in Orillia and began his singing career  
right here in the Children's Choir.

Gordon is best known as one of Canada's greatest storytellers through songs,  
and for bringing us ballads about life and love.

Back in 2006 – when Gord was coming home to St. Paul's  
as part of our 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations,  
both Blair and I had wonderful, significant conversations with him.

One of the things that Blair shared with Gord  
is that the song "Black Day in July"  
is one that is a favourite of both of ours.

Gord was quite humble about the song  
saying he wondered how he had the nerve  
to write about a political situation that he knew little about.

And yet his song and words that captured the anguish  
of so many of us after the riots in Detroit in 1967 –  
and continues to touch many of us in feeling passionate about injustices.

Not too long ago a young commentator in his early 30's on the CBC  
commented on the song saying something like:

"That's when people really knew how to write a song that really meant something".

And though it may be idealistic and even naïve  
(and though Gord may wish he could change the name  
with our increased sensitivity around language)

"Black Day in July" captures us with its expression of outrage.  
This is one of those songs you need to hear from the original artist.

Play CD of "Black Day in July"  
Written and sung by Gordon Lightfoot

**Black day in July**

Motor city madness has touched the countryside  
And through the smoke and cinders, you can hear it far and wide  
The doors are quickly bolted and the children locked inside  
Black day in July

Black day in July  
And the soul of Motor City is bared across the land  
As the book of law and order is taken in the hands  
Of the sons of the fathers who were carried to this land  
Black day in July

Black day in July  
In the streets of Motor City there's a deadly silent sound  
And the body of a dead youth lies stretched upon the ground  
Upon the filthy pavement, no reason can be found  
Black day in July

Black day in July  
Motor City madness has touched the countryside  
And the people rise in anger and the streets begin to fill  
And there's gunfire from the rooftops and the blood begins to spill  
Black day in July

In the mansion of the governor  
There's nothing that is known for sure  
The telephone is ringing  
And the pendulum is swinging  
And they wonder how it happened  
When they really know the reason  
And it wasn't just the temperature  
And it wasn't just the season  
Black day in July

Black day in July  
Motor City's burning and the flames are running wild  
They reflect upon the waters of the river and the lake  
And everyone is listening and everyone's awake  
Black day in July

Black day in July  
The printing press is turning and the news is quickly flashed  
And you read your morning paper and you sip your cup of tea

And you wonder just in passing, is it him or is it me  
Black day in July

In the office of the President  
The deed is done the troops are sent  
There's really not much choice you see  
It looks to us like anarchy  
And then the tanks go rolling in  
To patch things up as best they can  
There is no time to hesitate  
The speech is made the dues can wait  
Black day in July

Black day in July  
The streets of Motor City now are quiet and serene  
But the shapes of gutted buildings strike terror to the heart  
And you say how did it happen and you say how did it start  
Why can't we all be brothers, why can't we live in peace  
But the hands of the have-nots keep falling out of reach  
Black day in July

Black day in July  
Motor city madness has touched the countryside  
And through the smoke and cinders, you can hear it far and wide  
The doors are quickly bolted and the children locked inside  
Black day in July, black day in July, black day in July

### **Joni Mitchell**

Also from the same era as Gordon Lightfoot  
is Canadian musician and songwriter Joni Mitchell –  
known for many songs – including “Big Yellow Taxi” –  
which was voted #9 in 2005 on CBC’s top essential Canadian tracks.  
The song was written out of Mitchell’s anguish of the parking lots  
that stretched as far as the eye could see –  
that paved over the paradise of Hawaii to accommodate tourists.  
The song is well known for its environmental statements.

#### Joni Mitchell’s The Big Yellow Taxi

They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot  
With a pink hotel, a boutique  
And a swinging hot spot  
Don't it always seem to go  
That you don't know what you've got  
Till it's gone  
They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot

They took all the trees  
Put 'em in a tree museum  
And they charged the people  
A dollar and a half just to see 'em  
Don't it always seem to go  
That you don't know what you've got  
Till it's gone  
They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot

Hey farmer farmer  
Put away the D.D.T. now  
Give me spots on my apples  
But leave me the birds and the bees  
Please!  
Don't it always seem to go  
That you don't know what you've got  
Till it's gone  
They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot

Late last night  
I heard my screen door slam  
And a big yellow taxi  
Took away my old man  
Don't it always seem to go  
That you don't know what you've got  
Till it's gone  
They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot

I said don't it always seem to go  
That you don't know what you've got  
Till it's gone  
They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot

They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot

They paved paradise  
And put up a parking lot.

### **John Lennon**

John Lennon's *Imagine* – written in 1973 –  
picks up on many of the themes found in folk music of the same era –  
an influence that is seen in a variety of rock songs.

We include Lennon's "Imagine" today  
because it reflects a broad vision of the way the world can be  
when we all work together for what really matters,

rather than getting caught up in love of power  
and instead moving toward the power of love informing our choices.

John Lennon

**“Imagine”**

Imagine there's no heaven  
It's easy if you try  
No hell below us  
Above us only sky  
Imagine all the people  
Living for today...

Imagine there's no countries  
It isn't hard to do  
Nothing to kill or die for  
And no religion too  
Imagine all the people  
Living life in peace...

You may say I'm a dreamer  
But I'm not the only one  
I hope someday you'll join us  
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions  
I wonder if you can  
No need for greed or hunger  
A brotherhood of man  
Imagine all the people  
Sharing all the world...

You may say I'm a dreamer  
But I'm not the only one  
I hope someday you'll join us  
And the world will live as one

**Bruce Cockburn**

Bruce Cockburn is a Canadian  
folk/rock guitarist and singer-songwriter.  
He had his first solo performance at Mariposa Folk Festival in 1967.  
Many of his albums from the 1970's refer to his Christian belief –  
which in turn – informs his concerns  
for human rights and environmentalism.  
In the '80s he became heavily involved with progressive causes  
which is seen in his hit “If I had a rocket launcher”  
which reflects his incredible anger at the attacks  
by Guatemala military helicopters on Guatemala Refugee camps.  
In 1985 he wrote another passionate song  
about the destructive power of the IMF

– the International Monetary Fund –  
a concern which the United Church has been expressing for decades.

Bruce Cockburn  
**“Call It Democracy”**  
Selected lyrics

Padded with power here they come  
International loan sharks backed by the guns  
Of market hungry military profiteers  
Whose word is a swamp and whose brow is smeared  
With the blood of the poor

Who rob life of its quality  
Who render rage a necessity  
By turning countries into labour camps  
Modern slavers in drag as champions of freedom.

IMF dirty IMF  
Takes away everything it can get  
Always making certain that there’s one thing left  
Keep them on the hook with insupportable dept.

**Leonard Cohen**

Canadian Leonard Cohen began his career as a poet and novelist.  
In an interview with Adrienne Clarkson he once shared  
that he realized he needed to put his poetry to music  
if it was going to impact people’s lives –  
a very wise observation – since music, and the lyrics they carry,  
have the power to go deep into our soul –  
which is why – choosing what lyrics we listen to or join in singing –  
is so critical because they have a lot of power to influence us.  
Though much of Cohen’s poetry and songs have to do with ecstasy  
that comes from relationships,  
in 1992 he recorded “Democracy”  
which was influenced by the falling of the Berlin Wall.

Here are a few of the verses:

It’s coming through a hole in the air,  
From those nights in Tiananmen Square.  
It’s coming from the feel  
That this ain’t exactly real,  
Or it’s real, but it ain’t exactly there.  
From the wars against disorder,  
From the sirens night and day  
From the fires of the homeless  
From the ashes of the gay  
Democracy is coming to the USA.

It's coming from the sorrow in the street  
The holy places where the races meet  
From the homicidal bitchin'  
That goes down in every kitchen  
To determine who will serve and who will eat.  
From the wells of disappointment  
Where the women kneel to pray  
For the grace of God in the desert here  
And the desert far away  
Democracy is coming to the USA

Sail on, sail on  
O mighty Ship of State  
To the Shores of Need  
Past the Reefs of greed  
Through the Squalls of Hate  
Sail on, sail on, sail on, sail on.

### **Buffy Sainte-Marie**

Buffy Sainte-Marie is yet another well known folk singer who has taken the stage at the Mariposa Folk Festival. She was born in Saskatchewan as a Cree First Nation and has been an activist songwriter since the early 1960's. This song is based on a conflict – The Wounded Knee Incident – in the US that began in 1973.

### **Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee**

Indian legislation on the desk of a do-right Congressman  
Now, he don't know much about the issue  
So he picks up the phone and he asks advice  
From the Senator out in Indian country  
A darling of the energy companies  
who are ripping off what's left of the reservations. Huh.

I learned a safety rule  
I don't know who to thank  
Don't stand between the reservation and the corporate bank  
They send in federal tanks  
It isn't nice but it's reality

Chorus:

Bury my heart at Wounded Knee  
Deep in the Earth  
Cover me with pretty lies  
Bury my heart at Wounded Knee. Huh.

They got these energy companies that want the land  
And they've got churches by the dozen who want to guide our hands  
And sign Mother Earth over to pollution, war and greed  
Get rich – get rich quick.

### **John Denver**

Over 15 years ago driving to Florida with mom and daughter Melisa,  
only 2 tapes listened to -- by John Denver.

In those miles I discovered a singer and songwriter  
with more depth than I realized.

Danced to light and delightful “Thank God I’m a country Boy”  
or walked up the aisle to be married to “Annie’s song”.

In a 1995 interview, Denver, (who has been referred to as  
“The Poet of the Planet”) said:

“I want to work, in whatever I do,  
in a way that is directed toward a world in balance –  
a world that creates a better quality of life for all people.”

His work and success – he went on to say –  
provided him with the opportunity to focus  
on the things that were important to him –  
“the environment and the sense of global community  
which we are moving closer and closer to,  
whether we recognize it or not.”

Some of his involvements include:

Member of the Presidential Commission on World and Domestic Hunger  
One of 5 founders of the Hunger Project

Member of a fact-finding delegation which toured African countries  
devastated by drought and hunger

He created the “Plant it 2000” – a plan to urge people all over the world  
to plant as many trees as possible by 2000 to replenish what we wantonly destroy.  
100,000 trees were planted the 1<sup>st</sup> year.

Denver was one of the co-founders of the Winstar Foundation  
which is a not for profit environmental organization founded in 1976  
where the mission is “to inspire individuals to make responsible choices  
and take direct personal action to achieve a peaceful  
and environmentally sustainable future”

Another prophetic voice silenced too early by his untimely death.  
But still his lyrics continue to awaken us:

### **I Want to Live**

There are children raised in sorrow  
On a scorched and barren plain  
There are children raised beneath the golden sun  
There are children of the water

Children of the sand  
And they cry out through the universe  
Their voices raised as one.

We are standing all together  
Face to face and arm in arm  
We are standing on the threshold of a dream  
No more hunger, no more killing  
No more wasting life a way  
It is simply an idea  
And I know it's time has come!  
I want to live, I want to grow  
I want to see, I want to know  
I want to share what I can give  
I want to be, I want to live.

And from Calypso, he reminds us of our connection  
to the waters of the earth –  
just like author Alanna Mitchell who has been at St. Paul's many times  
who wrote the book Sea Sickness"

John Denver writes of the earth's ocean:

### **Calypso**

To sail on a dream on a crystal clear ocean,  
To ride on the crest of a wild raging storm  
To work I the service of life and living  
In search of the answers of questions unknown  
To be part of the movement and part of the growing  
Part of beginning to understand.

### **Sarah Harmer**

Sarah Harmer was born I 1970 in Burlington Ontario.

She is a singer-songwriter and activist.

In 2005, Harmer co-founded PERL (Protecting Escarpment Rural Land)  
an organization which campaigned to protect the Niagara Escarpment  
from a proposed gravel development  
which would see some part of the wilderness near the escarpment removed.

She and her acoustic band embarked on a tour of the escarpment,  
hiking the Bruce Trail, performing at theatres and community town halls along the way.

Sarah Harmer

### **Escarpment Blues**

If they blow a hole in my backyard  
Everyone is gonna run away  
The creeks won't flow to the Great Lake below  
Will the water in the wells still be ok?  
We'll need to build some new apartments  
And I know we're gonna have to fix the roads

But if we blow a hole in the escarpment  
The wild ones won't have anywhere to go  
If they blow a hole in the backbone  
The one that runs cross the muscles of the land  
We might get a load of stone for the road  
But I don't know how much longer we can stand  
We'll keep driving on the Blind Line  
If we don't know where we want to go  
Even knowledge that's sound can get watered down  
Truth can get sucked out the car window  
We're two-thirds water  
What do we really need?  
But sun, showers, soil and seed  
We're two-thirds water  
The aquifers provide  
Deep down in the rock  
There's a pearl inside  
If they blow a hole in the backbone  
The one that runs across the muscles of the land  
We might get a load of stone for the road  
But I don't know how much longer we can stand.

### **St. Paul's Story**

This past year one of the monthly themes  
of our Wednesday Wisdom Circle here at St. Paul's  
was the Eagle and Condor Symposium –  
Awakening the Dreamer – Changing the Dream --  
whose goal is to create a human presence on the earth that is:  
environmentally sustainable,  
spiritually fulfilling  
and socially just.

The last of our 8 part series focused on the topic of "Transition Towns" –  
a movement that is world-wide  
through which communities work together  
to create a plan and actions  
to move toward becoming less dependent on peak oil.  
Cities all over the world are changing their strategies  
to take into consideration steps that can be taken  
to honour this intention.

The Wisdom Circle gathering  
that focused on "Transition Towns" had over 50 people gather.  
At a second community gathering there were over 40 people.  
On the second Wednesday of each month over the next many months –  
Wisdom Circle will be a community gathering  
for people interested in exploring and networking  
around the issues of transitioning away from dependence on oil.  
One of the concepts that is being promoted  
and already put into action

is to create community gardens  
and encourage the 100 mile diet.  
This concern of lack of connection to the earth  
and dependence on farming that has become more like an industry  
that trucks its product far and wide  
begins to be reflected in Canadian singer and songwriter  
Murray McLaughlin's Juno Award winning song "The Farmers Song.

As we experience a taste of Murray's song  
an offering basket will be passed around  
that provides opportunity for people to support St. Paul's  
as a not for profit group that focuses on social justice,  
environmental concerns as well as creating opportunities for us  
to live more spiritually fulfilling lives.  
We do this work only through the generous support  
of people in the pews, at programs and in groups.  
We thank everyone for whatever contributions you make to support this ongoing work.

### **The Farmers Song.**

Dusty old farmer out working your fields,  
hanging down over your tractor wheels

The sun beatin' down turns the red paint to orange  
and rusty old patches of steel  
There's no farmer songs on that car radio,  
just cowboys, truck drivers and pain  
Well this is my way to say thanks for the meal  
and I hope there's no shortage of rain

Straw hats and old dirty hankies,  
moppin' a face like a shoe  
Thanks for the meal, here's a song that is real,  
from a kid from the city to you  
Straw hats and old dirty hankies,  
moppin' a face like a shoe  
Thanks for the meal. Here's a song that is real,  
from a kid from the city to you

The combines gang up, take most of the bread  
Things just ain't like they used to be  
Though your kids are out after the American dream  
and they're workin' in big factories  
Now if I come on by, when you're out in the sun,  
can I wave at you just like a friend  
These days when everyone's taking so much  
there's somebody giving back in

Straw hats and old dirty hankies,  
moppin' a face like a shoe  
Thanks for the meal. Here's a song that is real,  
from a kid from the city to you  
Straw hats and old dirty hankies,  
moppin' a face like a shoe  
Thanks for the meal. Here's a song that is real,  
from a kid from the city to you.

Our final song for today has touched many hearts  
down through the years –  
from the civil rights movement, to the peace movement.  
We recently heard about its use and its sense of hope  
in a refugee camp on the borders of Burma  
to where the Karen people flee.  
Every morning at the school there,  
that is supported here in Orillia through Project Umbrella Burma –  
the young people have to sing the anthem of Thailand.  
Following that they join their voices together to sing “We Shall Overcome”.

May it be so in our lives and our world.