

# Welcome to Metropolitan United Church

the downtown church for a diverse city



## March 21, 2021 Fifth Sunday in Lent

*We are an Affirming Congregation, offering welcome and companionship to all, regardless of orientation or designation.*

*For thousands of years, this land has been the traditional home of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. It is still home to Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We are grateful to work, live and worship on this land.*

# ORDER OF SERVICE

**CARILLON PRELUDE**     *Take, O Take Me As I Am*

arr. Lee

**ORGAN PRELUDE**   *O Lamb of God, All-Holy*  
                          *“Allegro, Adagio” from Trio Sonata #1 in Eb Major*

J. S. Bach  
J. S. Bach

## **WELCOME, CANDLE EXTINGUISHING**

**Reader 1:** Today is the fifth Sunday in the season of Lent. As we continue to travel with each other, listening to the stories of our ancestors in faith, we pause to give thanks for faith, persistence, and hope for the future.

**Reader 2:** Like Philip and Andrew, we struggle to understand your message for our lives .

**Reader 1:** The prophet Jeremiah reminds us that even in the wilderness experiences of life, when everything seems dry and lifeless, God’s restorative spirit and God’s promise can breathe new life and hope into our lives.

**Reader 2:** As we extinguish the fifth Lenten candle we acknowledge that even with our best intentions we sometimes feel discouraged and anxious about the future.

*(Extinguishing of one Lenten candle)*

**Reader 1:** As we watch the smoke rise we are reminded that God’s spirit is always with us in mysterious and visible ways in our community of faith and in the world.

## **OPENING HYMN #373 As Comes the Breath of Spring**

Denby

- 1     As comes the breath of spring with light and mirth and song,  
      so does your Spirit bring new days brave, free, and strong.  
          You come with thrill of life to chase hence winter’s breath,  
          to hush to peace the strife of sin that ends in death.
- 2     You come like dawning day with flaming truth and love,  
      to chase all glooms away, to brace our wills to prove  
          how wise, how good to choose the truth and its brave fight,  
          to prize it, win or lose, and live on your delight.
- 3     You come like songs at morn that fill the earth with joy,  
      till we, in Christ newborn, new strength in praise employ.  
          You come to rouse the heart from drifting to despair,  
          through high hopes to impart life with an ampler air.
- 4     You breathe and there is health; you move and there is power;  
      you whisper, there is wealth of love, your richest dower.  
          Your presence is to us like summer in the soul;  
          your joy shines forth and then life blossoms to its goal.

## INVITATION TO WORSHIP AND PRAYER OF APPROACH

One: Holy One, dwell within us.

**All: Whisper in our ears;**

One: Glimmer in our vision;

**All: Write upon our hearts.**

One: We wait

**All: with open ears, open eyes, open hearts.**

One: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Let us pray. (please be seated)

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

### SILENCE FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

**KYRIE** (based on *Pange Lingua* plainsong)

P. Wright

God, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. God, have mercy upon us.

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

**RESPONSE** *Shepherd Me, O God*

Marty Haugen

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life.

## READINGS

Jeremiah 31:31–34

“I will write my law on their hearts.”

Psalms 51:1–12

Put a new heart in me, O God.

**ANTHEM** *Miserere* (from Psalm 51)

Gregorio Allegri

Have mercy on me, Lord God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God,....

Solo quartet: Gisele Kulak, Valeria Kondrashov, Charles Davidson, Paul Winkelsman

**GOSPEL READING** John 12:20–33

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth.

**ONE:** This is the witness of the gospel of Jesus.

**CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: Thanks be to God.**

## CHILDREN'S TIME

### HYMN #703 *In the Bulb There Is a Flower*

Promise

- 1 In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;  
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.
- 2 There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;  
there's a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.
- 3 In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;  
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.  
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,  
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

### SERMON "THE 'DEATH' OF THE CHURCH"

THE REV. JASON MEYERS

### THEORBO SOLO "Prelude" from *Suite in G Major for cello*

J. S. Bach

### PEACE GREETING

One: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**All: And also with you.**

One: Let us greet one another with the peace of Christ.

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We are not alone, we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

**We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:**

**to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.**

**We are not alone. Thanks be to God.**

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

### OFFERING

DEDICATION OF OFFERING *Blessed Jesus, We are Here*

J. S. Bach

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them up to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord God.

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

One: Let us pray. (all seated)

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

### LORD'S PRAYER (all) (*Voices United*, p. 921)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

### CLOSING HYMN #578 *As a Fire Is Meant for Burning*

to Beach Spring

- 1 As a fire is meant for burning with a bright and warming flame,  
so the church is meant for mission, giving glory to God's name.  
Not to preach our creeds or customs, but to build a bridge of care,  
we join hands across the nations, finding neighbours everywhere.
- 2 We are learners; we are teachers; we are pilgrims on the way.  
We are seekers; we are givers; we are vessels made of clay.  
By our gentle, loving actions, we would show that Christ is light.  
In a humble, listening Spirit, we would live to God's delight.
- 3 As a green bud in the springtime is a sign of life renewed,  
so may we be signs of oneness mid earth's peoples, many-hued.  
As a rainbow lights the heavens when a storm is past and gone,  
may our lives reflect the radiance of God's new and glorious dawn.

## COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING

### ORGAN POSTLUDE *Fugue in G Minor*

J. S. Bach

LEADING IN WORSHIP are **The Rev. Jason Meyers** and **The Rev. Karen Bowles**. Reading the lessons is **Matthew Fraser**, and delivering the Children's Message is **Alana Martin**, Children and Youth Animator. The ministry of music is offered by Minister of Music **Dr. Patricia Wright**, Carillonneur **Roy Lee**, Wayne C. Vance Organ Scholar **Timothy Wisnicki**, Wayne C. Vance Junior Organ Scholar **Matthew Fraser**, tenor and theorbist **Benjamin Stein**, and lead singers of **The Metropolitan Choir**.

## TODAY

- 1:00 p.m. Big Questions Course - *What is Church?* (Zoom)  
2:30 p.m. Outreach Committee (Zoom)

## PROGRAMS AND EVENTS THIS WEEK

*Zoom links can be found in MET Connect and at metunited.ca*

### Monday, March 22

- 8:00 a.m. Daily Lenten Office (Zoom)  
8:00 p.m. Centring Prayer (Zoom)

### Tuesday, March 23

- 8:00 a.m. Daily Lenten Office (Zoom)

### Wednesday, March 24

- 8:00 a.m. Daily Lenten Office (Zoom)  
8:30 a.m. Breakfast Bible Study (Zoom)  
11:30 a.m. Hospitality Tent Narthex  
12:00 p.m. Zoom Bible Study (Zoom)

### Thursday, March 25

- 8:00 a.m. Daily Lenten Office (Zoom)  
10:00 a.m. Pre-Board (Zoom)  
12:00 p.m. Community Meal Program Narthex  
8:00 p.m. Evening Communion (Zoom)

### Friday, March 26

- 8:00 a.m. Daily Lenten Office (Zoom)

### Saturday, March 27

- 8:00 a.m. Lenten Bible Study (Zoom)

## NEXT SUNDAY: March 28 - Palm Sunday

The Rev. Karen Bowles preaching

- 11:00 a.m. Online Worship Service  
1:00 p.m. Big Questions Course (Zoom) - *So What?*

## GOOD FRIDAY CONCERT: GOD SO LOVED THE WORD

Our annual Good Friday concert is streaming online this year as a free event, April 2 at 8:00 p.m. at [metunited.ca/live](https://metunited.ca/live). Featuring The Metropolitan Choir, soloists and guest musicians. The music of Allegri, Bach, Vittoria and more.

## TO THE GLORY OF GOD — EASTER MEMORIALS

Metropolitan United Church invites you to make a memorial gift of any amount for Easter 2021. We will list your name and the name(s) of those you wish to remember in the bulletin for Easter Sunday and online during morning worship. You may remain anonymous if you wish. All donations to our Memorial Fund gifts are divided equally between sanctuary restoration and our congregation's endowment fund.

You may make your gift in the following ways:

Online: [metunited.ca/donate](https://metunited.ca/donate) Click on Donate Now; select Easter Memorial

By post: Metropolitan United Church, 56 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2Z3

After making your gift, please forward the names of person(s) you would like memorialized to Sheela Taylor at [sheelat@metunited.ca](mailto:sheelat@metunited.ca) or 416-363-0331, ext. 210 no later than Tuesday, March 30 to have it included in our Sunday bulletin and other communications on Easter Sunday.

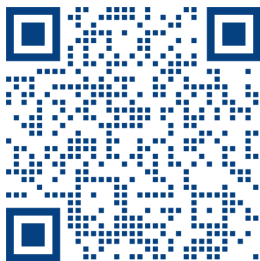
Thank you and Easter blessings to all.

## OUR LEGACY. OUR FUTURE:

"Congregations and Christians everywhere are discovering that the best giving flows not from heads informed about the budget, but from hearts that are tuned to the will of God." (Thomas C. Reike)

Thank you for remembering Metropolitan Church with a gift in your estate plans. For help, please contact Doug Flanders at 416-769-2746; email [dougflanders@sympatico.ca](mailto:dougflanders@sympatico.ca) A legacy — It's ours to leave. **Generosity is the most natural outward expression of an inner attitude of compassion.**

— Anonymous.



## CONTINUED GIVING

A new, easy way to donate! Focus your smartphone's camera on the QR code to the left and you'll be directed to our giving page.

Sign up for the MET Connect weekly newsletter at [metunited.ca](https://metunited.ca)  
Follow us on Facebook, Instagram & YouTube



## DIRECTORY

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### Community Outreach Ministry

Outreach and Housing Worker: Megan Carver, ext. 221 ([meganc@metunited.ca](mailto:meganc@metunited.ca))  
Outreach and Community Service Coordinator: Stephanie Cunti, ext. 241 ([stephaniec@metunited.ca](mailto:stephaniec@metunited.ca))

### Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Dr. Patricia Wright, ext. 226 ([patw@metunited.ca](mailto:patw@metunited.ca))  
Wayne C. Vance Organ Scholar: Timothy Wisnicki  
Wayne C. Vance Junior Organ Scholar: Matthew Fraser  
Metropolitan Choir Lead Singers: Gisele Kulak, Chelsea Van Pelt, Valeria Kondrashov,  
Chris Taeyoung Kim, Charles Davidson, Benjamin Stein, Nicholas Higgs, John Schneider  
Director, *Great Heart* Youth Ensemble: Benjamin Stein  
Conductor, *Metropolitan Sparklers*: Dr. Jennifer Martyn  
Carillonneur: Roy Lee  
Director, Metropolitan Silver Band: Fran Harvey



### Administrative Ministry

Director of Administration: Jane Tuomi, ext. 222 ([janelt@metunited.ca](mailto:janelt@metunited.ca))  
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