

WELCOME TO METROPOLITAN UNITED CHURCH

Hope, Healing and Beauty in Jesus' name



THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

February 8, 2026

We are an Affirming Congregation, offering welcome and companionship to all, inclusive of age, ethnicity, gender identity, differing abilities, and sexual orientation.

For thousands of years, this land has been the traditional home of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit, covered by Treaty 13. 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

♪ indicates “please stand as you are able.” Our services are livestreamed, so please be aware that you may appear on camera. If you have children with you, there is Sunday School and a quiet play area at the back of the sanctuary.

CARILLON PRELUDE

ORGAN PRELUDE

J.S. Bach, 1685-1750

Partita on the chorale *Christe, der du bist der helle Tag*, BWV 766
 (“Christ, who art the brightest day”)

~ We are gathered in Christ ~

WORDS OF WELCOME

♪ PROCESSIONAL HYMN 413 ○ *Splendour of God's Glory Bright*

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

♪ INVITATION TO WORSHIP

One: Just as sunrise breaks through the darkness each day,

All: So God's grace, mercy and justice shine forth.

One: We gather, with devotion and doubt, with weariness and wonder;

All: trusting that God's peace and love are present here.

One: Come and worship as you are, knowing you are loved.

All: We come, rejoicing, to praise God's holy name.

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Let us pray. (*please be seated*)

PRAYER OF APPROACH AND CONFESSION

SILENCE FOR PRIVATE PRAYER

KYRIE (Congregation and Choir) **946**
Lord, have mercy.

from the Russian Orthodox Liturgy

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

♪ ACT OF PRAISE (All) **81, v.5**

DIX

In the heavenly country bright none shall need created light,
You, its light, its joy, its crown, you its sun which goes not down,
There forever may we sing hallelujah to our King.

~ *We encounter the Word* ~

READINGS

Isaiah 58:1-9a

True worship is not found in empty ritual, but in lives shaped by justice, compassion, and care for the vulnerable.

1 Corinthians 2:1-12

Faith rests not on human wisdom, but on the transforming power of God's Spirit.

ANTHEM *My Lord, What a Mourning*

Spiritual, arr. William Dawson

GOSPEL

Matthew 5:13-20

Jesus calls his followers to live as salt and light

One: This is the witness of the good news of Jesus Christ.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN 376 *Spirit of the Living God*

LIVING GOD

During the hymn children are invited to meet Ael at the front to go down to Sunday School.

SERMON **"Salt of the Earth People"**

The Rev. Mark Aitchison

ANTHEM *Weave for Us a Garment*

Kola Owolabi, b. 1977

~ *We respond with love* ~

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. *(please greet each other with a bow)*

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. *(please be seated)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OFFERING *(To make a donation, you can use the envelopes in the pews or scan the QR code to the right with your phone.)*



OFFERTORY *Do Lord*
The Metropolitan Hand bells

Trad. Spiritual, arr. Valerie W. Stephenson

OFFERTORY HYMN 93, v.4 *When Heaven's Bright with Mystery*

SUSSEX CAROL

When heaven's bright with mystery and stars still lead an unknown way,
When love still lights a gentle path where courts of power can hold no sway,
There with the Magi, let us kneel, our gifts to share, God's world to heal.

DEDICATION OF OFFERING

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. *(please be seated)*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

~ We are sent to offer hope, healing and beauty in Jesus' name ~

RECESSIONAL HYMN 236 *Now Thank We All Our God*

NUN DANKET

COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING

BLESSING 429 *(All - please turn toward the centre)*

William Wright

May the blessing of God be upon you. May God's love light all your way.
May the grace of Christ enfold you and peace around you stay.
May the Spirit of God dwell within you. May you live in joy each day.

ORGAN POSTLUDE *Fugue in E flat, BWV 552/2*

J.S. Bach, 1685-1750



Leading in worship are **The Rev. Mark Aitchison** and **The Rev. Jason Meyers**. Reading the lessons is **Derrick Hempel**. The ministry of music is offered by Wayne C. Vance Carillonneur **Dr. Elisa Tersigni**, Minister of Music **Dr. Jonathan Oldengarm**, Wayne C. Vance Organ Scholars **Ethan Duan** and **Edward Xu**, the **Metropolitan Choir**, and the **Metropolitan Hand Bells**. Members of our Care Staff are **Siva Selva** and **Austin Tran**. Our sound and livestream technicians are **Paya Dehghani** and **Nishaanth Siva**. Metropolitan's livestreaming equipment was made possible thanks to the generosity of **Wayne C. Vance**.

MUSIC NOTES

J.S. Bach's lengthy musical career began while the composer was still in embryo: his family name was synonymous with "musician" in his native Thuringian region of Germany. Bach's parents died when the composer was still young, and as a 15-year-old he was sent to study at the choir school in Lüneburg, in distant North Germany. While there he undoubtedly met and studied with Georg Böhm, one of the great organists of the day. Böhm's influence can be heard in this morning's set of seven variations on the Vespers chorale ***Christe, der du bist der helle Tag***, especially in the tasteful and varied use of French harpsichord-inspired keyboard textures. At the height of his powers, Bach published four collections called the Clavier-Übung, or "keyboard exercises". Far more than finger calisthenics, these are musical, compositional, intellectual, and devotional exercises; in Part III (of which the mighty "St. Anne" ***Fugue in E flat*** is the conclusion) we have a set of chorale preludes that follow the content and structure of the Longer and Shorter Lutheran Catechisms—theological training and discipleship is a key goal here.

February is Black History Month, and our choral and hand bell music honours that important occasion. The spirituals had their origins in the terrible sufferings of enslaved African-Americans, and unsurprisingly hope for the afterlife, expressed through the scriptures, is a common theme. In ***My Lord, What a Mourning*** we see both the hope and fear of the Last Judgement, when Christ will return to judge the righteous and unrighteous, and when justice will come for the oppressed. ***Do Lord*** is a quote of one of the criminals crucified next to Jesus, who repented and asked Jesus to remember the criminal when Jesus came into His kingdom.

Canadian-born **Kola Owolabi**, of Nigerian and Trinidadian descent, was a student next door to us at St. Michael's Choir School, and is now Professor of Organ at Notre Dame University. His rollicking anthem ***Weave for us a garment*** is based on a traditional Native American text, and was commissioned by the Church of St. Andrew and St. Mark in Dorval, QC.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Zoom and livestream links in Met Connect and at metunited.ca

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9

8:00 p.m. Centring Prayer (*Zoom*)

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

12:30 p.m. Celtic Communion (*Founders Chapel and Zoom*)

7:00 p.m. Metropolitan Silver Band

6:00 p.m. Trustees

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

12:00 p.m. Wednesday @ Noon Bible Study (*Zoom*)

4:00 p.m. Worship Committee

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12

8:45 a.m. Thursday Morning Bible Study (*Zoom*)

10:45 a.m. Rimbala (*Chancel Room and Zoom*)

12:00 p.m. Noon at Met (*Sanctuary and Livestream*)

1:00 p.m. Hybrid Knitting Group (*Learning Room and Zoom*)

4:00 p.m. Chop Chop

6:30 p.m. Handbell Choir

7:30 p.m. Metropolitan Choir

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13

10:30 a.m. Community Meal Program

NEXT SUNDAY: FEBRUARY 15 - Transfiguration Sunday

9:30 a.m. Choristers

10:00 a.m. Library Open (re-opens 12:15 p.m.)

10:30 a.m. Nursery

11:00 a.m. Worship - The Rev. Jason Meyers preaching

Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9 (*Sanctuary and Livestream*)

12:30 p.m. Affirm Brunch at the Firkin on Yonge

COMMUNITY NEWS

THIS AFTERNOON! PATRICIA WRIGHT FUND MASTERCLASS AND CONCERT

This afternoon at 3:00 p.m. we welcome international superstar organist Isabelle Demers, Associate Professor of Organ at McGill University, as our guest artist for this annual masterclass and concert event that honours the legacy of our Minister of Music Emerita. Isabelle will dazzle us with a programme ending with her own arrangement of Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite*. Free admission; your generous donations to the Patricia Wright Fund are greatly appreciated. The concert can be enjoyed in-person and on livestream.

AFFIRM GROUP BRUNCH

The Affirm Group is planning to host a brunch on Sunday February 15 at 1 pm at the Firkin Pub at Yonge and Shuter. This is a great opportunity for LGBTQ2S+ members to meet each other. Everyone who attends

Metropolitan is welcome at the brunch. Please RSVP to Jim Nixon at jnixon4411@hotmail.com. We'll meet at coffee hour and walk over to the restaurant together.

NOON AT MET

This week, Noon at Met features The University of Toronto Schola Cantorum under the direction of Daniel Taylor, performing Gabriel Faure's beautiful *Requiem*.

PLAN AHEAD

- Wednesday, February 18 at Noon - Ash Wednesday service
- Sunday, February 22 - First Sunday in Lent
- Friday, April 3 at 7:30pm - Good Friday Concert
- Sunday, April 5 - Easter Sunday

LOOKING TOWARDS LENT

We will be taking the season of Lent back to its 4th century roots this year as we walk the old pilgrim paths of the initiate. Through our worship services, gatherings each Monday evening, and other special programming, we will prepare our souls for a renewal of baptismal energy for ourselves and for the whole body of Christ. Adult baptisms and the reaffirmation of baptism will be offered at the Easter Vigil on the evening of April 4th. If you have not previously been baptized, and would like to take this important step in your spiritual journey, please speak to Rev. Jason. More information about this season including services, events, and programs is now available on the website.

SAVE THE DATE! MARCH 1 CONCERT IN HONOUR OF BILL MARTYN

Bill Martyn is Turning 90! Let's Celebrate! Join us for a birthday bash concert featuring the Metropolitan Silver Band and Oshawa Civic Band. A musical celebration is in order - and yes, cake too! Sunday, March 1, 2026 at 2:00 pm, Metropolitan United Church, Cost: free! Please bring a non-perishable food item for Met's Community Meal Program.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Over the Christmas season, you were again generous in your financial support of Metropolitan. Gifts for our:

- Christmas Thank Offering: \$11,803.
- Christmas Community Meal and Stockings: \$5,145.
- Christmas Luncheon: \$1,899.

Total Christmas related donations to Metropolitan for 2025: \$18,846. On behalf of your Official Board and Stewardship Committee, *THANK YOU!*

WITH GRATITUDE

Your Official Board Church acknowledges with deepest thanks the generosity of an anonymous couple who has given Metropolitan a gift of securities. Their gift is to be applied against the principal of the \$2.7 million mortgage taken out to help fund our north end renovations. We are profoundly grateful for this most thoughtful gift. Thank you!

CONTINUED GIVING

Scan the QR code to be directed to our giving page. You can continue to mail in envelopes and/or cheques to the church, or arrange a pre-authorized remittance for regular giving (PAR) from your bank account, or credit card - forms at metunited.ca/donate. Please contact Elena Pejcinovska, Financial Manager at elenap@metunited.ca or 416-363-0331 ext. 229 with any questions.



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