

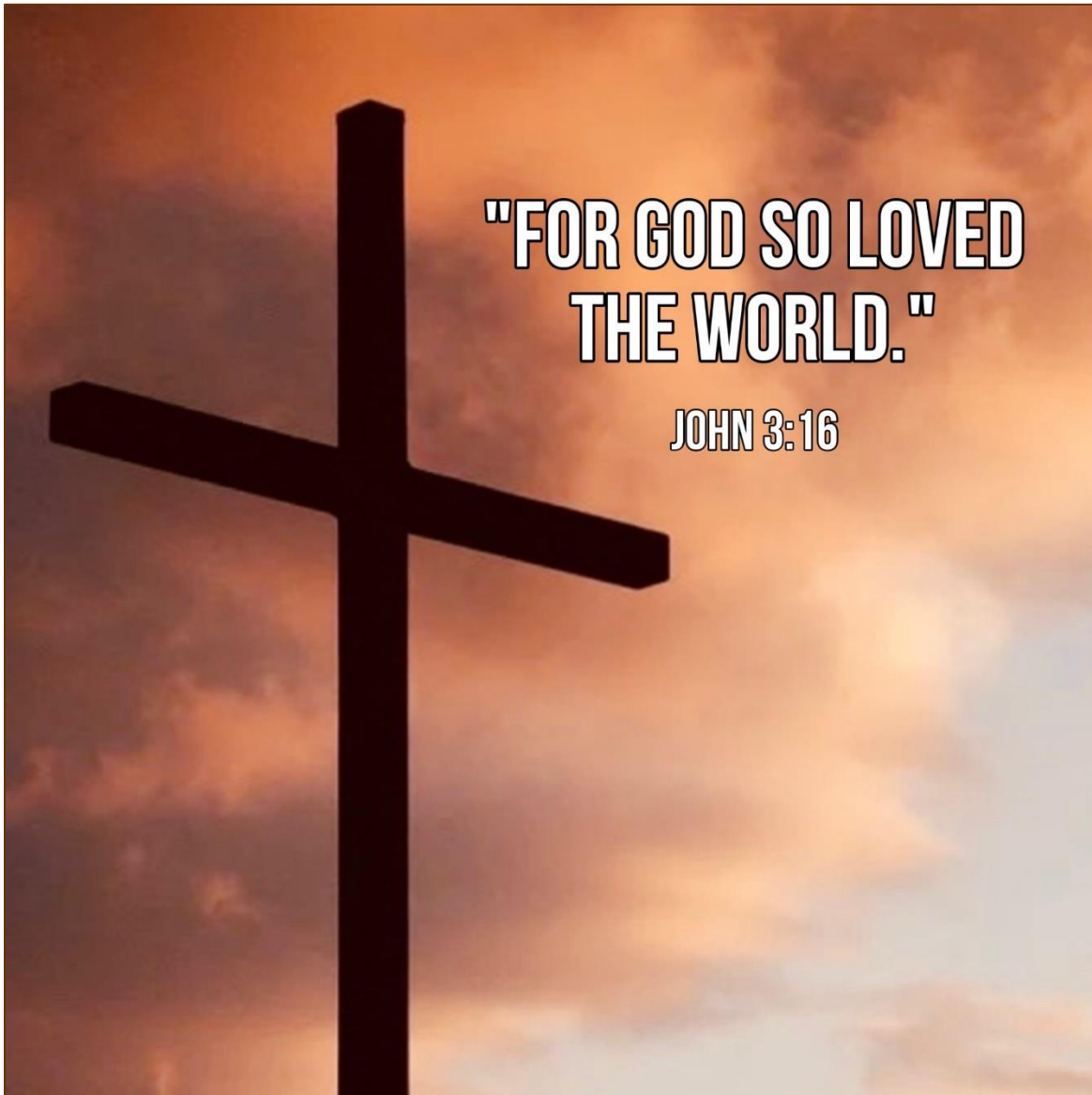


Northlea United Church

**In the community. For the community.**

125 Brentcliffe Road, Toronto, ON, M4G 3Y7

[www.northleaunited.ca](http://www.northleaunited.ca) ~ 416-425-5252



**March 5, 2023**  
**Second Sunday in Lent**

At Northlea United Church,  
we encourage one another as we:  
Love God ~ Connect with others  
Nurture the spirit ~ Serve the world

Thank you for joining us for service today whether in-person or online. If there is anything we can do to improve your experience, please let us know by calling the church office at 416 425 5252 or emailing us at [office@northleaunited.ca](mailto:office@northleaunited.ca). There are many ways to access online videos whether live streamed or pre-recorded. The Northlea United Facebook page or our website will have links to our services:

**Facebook:**

Simply sign on to Facebook and search for the Northlea United page. You will find links there.

**[www.northleaunited.ca](http://www.northleaunited.ca):**

Visit our website. Links will be posted to our homepage for easy access.

**Thank you for helping with today's service:**

Rev. Lee-Ann Ahlstrom - Presiding  
David Jafelice - Music Director & Music Video Production  
Kayla Ruiz, Soprano & Karen Davidson, Alto  
Joshua Clemenger, Tenor & Tristan Zaba, Bass  
Jo Dullard - Video Production, Donna Rutz - Social Media Support  
Diane Carlton - Reader

**Minister:** Rev. Lee-Ann Ahlstrom [lee-ann@northleaunited.ca](mailto:lee-ann@northleaunited.ca)

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**Congregational & Community Outreach Coordinator:** Jo Dullard [jo@northleaunited.ca](mailto:jo@northleaunited.ca)

Consider financially supporting Northlea United through Canada Helps (scan QR code) or by contacting the office to receive a Pre-Authorized Remittance form to set up automatic monthly donations or by mailing in your donation.



Please contact the church office if you would like more information

**416 425 5252 or [office@northleaunited.ca](mailto:office@northleaunited.ca)**

\*\* Unless otherwise indicated: Prayers (various) are taken from “The United Church of Canada - Gathering - resources for worship planners” Lent Easter – 2023 Year A Worship, Music, and Spirituality ISSN-0823-1869 1.9M 10/22 220004 CH11183

**Northlea United Church  
Sunday March 5, 2023**

**Prelude:** God So Loved the World – John 3:16-17

John Goss (1800-1880)

**Land Acknowledgement:**

We give thanks for the land on which we live and gather, remembering that our indigenous brothers and sisters cared for it long before we arrived as settlers. We remember how their languages, traditions and spiritualities have always recognized our kinship with the land and all its creatures. May we honor our apology to First Nations Peoples by continuing to learn from their stories and by embracing our shared responsibility for taking care of the land we all call home.

**Welcome**

**Joys and Concerns**

**Call to Worship:**

Lent calls us to journey, this and every day,  
following Jesus wherever he leads us.

**Lent calls us to journey:  
to the place where God covenants with us,  
to receive the new names we are given.**

Lent calls us to worship together,  
to tell future generations the good news.

**Lent calls us to practice justice,  
to bring God's hope to all people.**

Lent calls us to faithful living,  
to trust the One who gives us life.

**Lent calls each of us to take up our cross,  
to trust the One who bears it with us.**

Lent calls us to journey with God.

**Let us worship God, who walks with us,  
this and every day.**

~ written by Thom Shuman, and posted on Lectionary Liturgies.

**The Gift of Peace**

(Take a moment to turn and greet the gathered community with a smile and a bow of greeting)

Our Lenten journey invites self-reflection, to notice how our faith aligns with our actions. It's a time to check in with God and God's will for our lives, individually and collectively. As we journey with Jesus to the cross we may be challenged to confront assumptions and beliefs that no longer sit right. Life experience, relationships and circumstances in the world may cause us to see God's will and Christ's mission in new ways. As we sing together this hymn written in the 1900's how do we hear these words today?

**Opening Hymn: Lift High the Cross**

**Voices United 151**

*Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.*

*1 Come, Christians, follow where our Saviour trod,  
he Lamb victorious, Christ the Son of God. R*

*2 Led on their way by this triumphant sign,  
the hosts of God in unity combine. R*

*3 Each newborn servant of the Crucified  
ears on the brow the seal of him who died. R*

*4 Saviour, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
your death has brought us life eternally. R*

*5 So shall our song of triumph ever be  
praise to the Crucified for victory. R*

**Lighting of the Christ Candle:**

Today God invites us to see the light of Christ in our time. How is the cross of Christ triumphant in a world filled with religious diversity? In our post-Christendom era, in our time of reconciliation, as we deconstruct supremacist ideology and examine the use of privilege, how and where do we proclaim the love of Christ so that others will adore his sacred name?

Silent Reflection

May the flame of sacrificial love shine brightly in our hearts, bringing warmth into places of darkness within us and in God's world.

~ light the candle~

The light of Christ.

**Thanks be to God**

**Opening Prayer:**

God, you loved the world so much  
that you embraced it in all its suffering  
in your beloved Son Jesus Christ,

who sought the way of the cross  
that he might come to Easter  
and offer us the way back to you.

**We thank you for this space apart,  
not just on this Sunday morning  
but in the weeks that are to come –  
space to become more receptive  
to the incredible promise of new life:  
life to challenge all that is deathly in our world,  
life to challenge all that is dull in our hearts.**

Help us to use this time,  
not just in prayer at worship,  
but in the thoughtfulness  
in which we go about these coming days,  
listening for your voice in all we do,  
as you challenge the habits that restrict us  
and the assumptions that close our minds.

**Help us also to be aware of others  
who at this time are examining themselves,  
whether from religious duty  
or because they have reached a turning point,  
in a career, or in a relationship, or in a crisis.  
Give us an ear that listens  
that we may find the words to sustain  
and the openness to learn  
through Jesus Christ,  
our deliverance and our hope. Amen.**

~ written by Rev Dr. Douglas Galbraith, Church of Scotland's Starters for Sunday website.

~ Listening ~

**Psalm 51:** *God, I call to you for help, in your mercy hear my prayer.*      Voices United 776, Refrain I  
Verse music by Joseph Gelineau

Joseph Parry 1879

God, I call to you for help; in your mercy hear my prayer.

**Prayer for Illumination:**

Holy Spirit, stir us with your word,  
as we listen for inspiration in your sacred story.  
Amen.

**Scripture:** John 3:1-17

Diane Carlton

In this reading we hear God’s voice,  
**The Spirit is still speaking, thanks be to God.**

**Reflection: For God so Loved the World**

~ Responding ~

**Anthem:** Renew Me, Lord

Bernadette Farrell

**Offering our Gifts: How shall we respond?**

**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 away from temptation and deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**Closing Hymn: Breathe on Me, Breath of God**

Voices United 382

**Sending Forth:**

May the grace of Christ,  
the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all.

**Sung Amen**

Christopher Walker

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of a series of notes: A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F#5 (quarter), G5 (quarter), A5 (quarter), B5 (quarter), C6 (quarter), D6 (quarter), E6 (quarter), F#6 (quarter), G6 (quarter), A6 (quarter), B6 (quarter), C7 (quarter). The notes are connected by a long slur. The lyrics 'A - - - men, a - - - - - men.' are written below the staff, with hyphens indicating the duration of each note.

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## **About the hymn:**

“Lift high the cross” (is) one of the great processional hymns in the Anglican tradition. The original version with 11 stanzas plus refrain was written for a festival service under the auspices of an important mission organization, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, held in Winchester Cathedral in 1887 by George William Kitchen (1883-1894), Dean of the Cathedral.

“Lift high the cross” incorporates an important feature of processions: the crucifer (cross-bearer) leads the stately procession down the long nave, lifting the cross high. This ritual use of the cross is a sign of the victory of the resurrection and finds a biblical basis in John 12:32, “And I, when I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself” (RSV).

Another influence comes from the fourth century, based on a story of the Emperor Constantine’s vision as told in Eusebius’s *Life of Constantine*, in which he saw a cross inscribed with the words, “In hoc signo vinces” (“in this sign [of the cross] you will conquer”). Constantine recognized Christianity officially as a religion of the state, providing a basis for further spread of Christianity.

In addition to its use as for processions, the hymn also expresses the understanding of the Church Militant (*Ecclesia Militans*), “those Christians on earth who are engaged in a continuous war against evil and the enemies of Christ,” and the Church Triumphant (*Ecclesia Triumphans*), “those Christians in heaven who have triumphed over evil and the enemies of Christ.”

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org>

**Reading Next Week**

From *The Gathering*

Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

To find out what's happening at Northlea United, visit [northleaunited.ca](http://northleaunited.ca).