

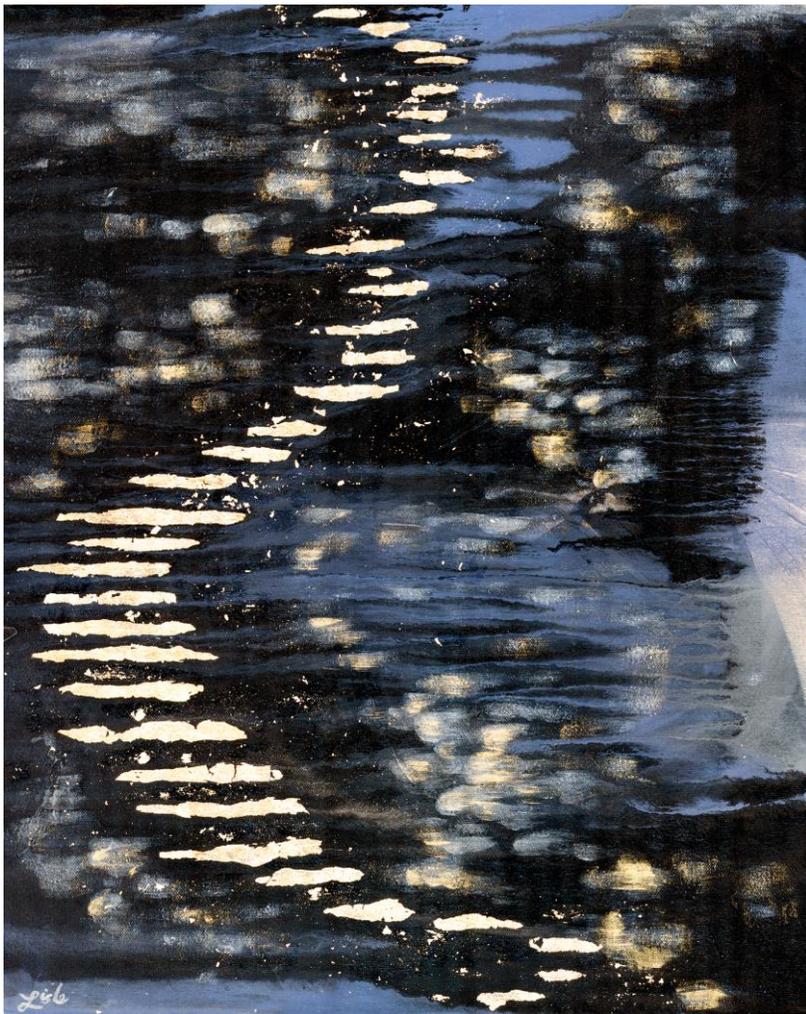
During Lent, we are inviting our congregation to spend time in God's word. Once a week, we will guide this time with a devotional reading from Scripture and a reflection from someone within our church family. Begin by centering yourself in prayer; ask God to reveal something new and speak to you today. Next, spend time reading the Scripture passage for the day, noting what stands out to you and what word from the Lord might be coming through the text for *you*. Then, move to reading the reflection shared below. Below, you will see that we have also included a piece of visual art for you to consider as you reflect on the passage. I (Pastor Ashley) encourage you to actually get out your Bible and engage with the text on your own first, before reading the reflections shared below. Also, we would love to hear what God was saying to you through this passage! Comment on our [Facebook post](#) for today with what stood out to you from the Scripture passage.

### **Lenten Devotional: Week One**

**Step One:** *Prior to reading the Scripture passage, spend a moment centering yourself in prayer.*

**Step Two:** Our Scripture reading today is **John 3:11-21**. Read through the text (maybe even a few times), noting what stands out to you and what word from the Lord might be coming through this text for *you* today.

**Step Three:** Now, enjoy this reflection from our Interim Youth Director, Felicia Johnson:



"Light Wave" by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity  
A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Two young kids who are on the phone got into an argument. One kid said to the other, "It is night", and the other kid said, "No, it is day." They couldn't understand that they were both right. This was because they were too young to know that the world is more extensive than their own experiences. 1 John 3:12 says, "Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his actions were evil and his brothers were righteous."

The question is, before the murder, did Cain believe his thoughts were evil? In his mind, he was right. Because he was right, he, in his mind, was pushed into committing murder. Like the kids who were on the phone, we typically see the world from our perspective and not from others; therefore, we operate from two different truths. Thus, we are forever drifting apart. It is incumbent on us as Christians to keep our eyes forever up with the knowledge that God's truth forever shines like the sun. In the midst of darkness, the sun, like God, is shining somewhere.

We either have to wait or move to be once again warmed by God's truth. As with us, our neighbors live within the limitations of their experiences. The question is, how can we judge our understandings and have insight into theirs? 1 John 3:17 gives us a clue when it says, "If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?" Brothers and Sisters of Cornerstone let us examine our hearts. Would we want God to see our actions

with the same intensity of moral clarity with which we judge others? Could your actions stand without explanation in the fullness of the day? If not, let us pray to have the patience and the understanding to know that the sun sets and rises at different times, in different places. Let us not be like children who cannot see beyond what is directly in their faces. Trust that God's truth forever reigns. We fail to see it because we are blind to our faith's limitations. Therefore, trust the wisdom of 1 John 3:21 when it says, "... if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God."

- Felicia Johnson; Interim Youth Director

**Step Four:** Close in prayer, thanking God for what has been revealed to you today and asking the Lord to help you carry it into this day and the days ahead.

**Step Five:** Join us as we continue reading God's Word this week. Here are daily suggestions for further reading:

- **Thursday, Feb 18** – 1 John 1:5-10, 2:1-6
- **Friday, Feb 19** – 1 John 2:7-14
- **Saturday, Feb 20** – Psalm 139
- **Sunday, Feb 21** – John 5:1-18
- **Monday, Feb 22** – Isaiah 60:1-7
- **Tuesday, Feb 23** – 1 Corinthians 4:1-12