

Lent Four: Laetare

March 10, 2024 + 4pm



Watanabe Sadao (渡辺禎雄 1913-1996) "The Brazen Serpent" (青銅の蛇)



Welcome to the AbbeyChurch

***No matter who you are or what you are carrying today,
know you are beloved and so very welcome here.***

At the AbbeyChurch, we tell stories of faith, encourage hope, share meals, care for each other and for God's creation, and strive to practice the teachings of Jesus.

We're at different places in our faith journey but we share a guiding sacred story as found in scripture (The Bible) and summarized in our Christian creeds.

We share a willingness to honestly wrestle with God—with our questions and doubts, our disillusionment with our institutions and our concern for our world.

We invite diversity in our community and our leadership; old, young, rich, poor, conservative, liberal, radical, single, married, LGBTQ2IA+, straight, evangelical, progressive, overeducated, undereducated, overhoused, underhoused, certain, doubting, hurting, thriving (to name a few).

As a witness to unity in diversity, the AbbeyChurch is an affirming shared ministry of The United Church of Canada and The Anglican Church of Canada.

We draw on those spiritual traditions, as well as others across the Christian spectrum. We're also connected to Emmaus, an intentional community that makes commitments to one another for prayer, presence and simplicity.

We believe that Christ's love and grace binds our differences together and renews our hope as we gather each week at Jesus' table of radical welcome.



admin@abbeychurch.ca + www.abbeychurch.ca
778.557.4166 We would love to connect.

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It's Laetare!

Laetare Sunday is the fourth Sunday in the season of Lent in the Western Christian liturgical calendar. Traditionally, this Sunday has been a day of celebration within the austere period of Lent. This Sunday gets its name from the first few words of the traditional Latin entrance verse (Introit) for the day. "*Laetare Jerusalem*" ("Rejoice, O Jerusalem") is from Isaiah 66:10. Laetare is also known as Mothering Sunday and Refreshment Sunday... The Sunday is considered a day of relaxation from normal Lenten rigours; a day of hope with Easter at last within sight.

Traditionally, weddings (otherwise banned during Lent) could be performed on this day, and servants were released from service for the day to visit their mother church, the place in which they received the sacrament of baptism (hence the name 'Mothering Sunday'). *Adapted from Wikipedia*

Welcome to the Season of Lent

Welcome to the holy season of Lent! This year at AbbeyChurch we are walking into this wilderness aware of how much we are each carrying – our weariness, our concern over the state of our world and our families and our selves, unsure of how best to direct our energies in a world of such complex need. We rage against all the violence and pain... and we weep over the violence that lives inside of us...

The invitation to each of us in these 40 days is simple: **Rest. Re-lent.**

What might it mean to enter Lent as a time of rest? To enter a space where we might entrust ourselves to the God who meets us in our need?

What might it mean to Re-Lent? To relent is to ease up, to change course, to turn, or to abandon or mitigate a harsh or cruel intention. There is much wisdom for us in these two postures:
Rest and Relent.

They carry the freedom our friends in the recovery community find in the first and second step: as we acknowledge our lives are unmanageable and we are powerless, but we come to believe a power greater than ourselves can and will restore us to sanity.

May Lent be a time of rest and freedom as we turn our gaze back to our Maker! There is much repentance in that, yes, but it's less about self-flagellation and more about relenting our endless efforts to live as though God does not exist.

So put away the hair shirts and feel the delicate warmth of a prayer shawl being draped over your tired shoulders. Open your dry cracked hands to allow palms up to receive the Rest your maker longs to give you.

And know you are not alone in the wilderness – Courage my friends, we will walk with you and sing your spirit home.

There are many invitations to enter Lent differently as we gather for worship - look below for instructions for how we might embody a posture of Rest and Relent...

We Gather

Ambient Loop / Tolling of the bells

Bell x 3

The Invocation Song: Slow Me Down

During this song of Invocation, we invite you to carry your burdens (symbolized by a large rock or stone you picked up when you came in) forward and leave them with the God of mercy. Whatever burden or pain you carry today, know that the God who holds you can hold this. We invite you to bring those rocks forward at any point in worship (sit with them as long as you like through the service) and give them to the God of compassion.

Having re-lented our burdens, we invite you to take a small stone from the Baptismal font (front Right of altar) with the word 're-Lent' printed - carry it as a reminder of this holy invitation.

Verse



1. O good Shep-herd, would You teach me how to rest?
2. From my an - xious drive to la - bor on and on,
3. When my ta - ble's bent with on - ly greed and gold,

4



I'm rush - ing on: will You make me to lie down?
from the rest - less grind that has put my mind to sleep,
and my grasp - ing hands are a - fraid You won't pro - vide,

8



Will You build a fold by the wat - ers that re - fresh?
will You call me back and gent - ly slow me down?
will You pour the wine that loos - ens up my hold?

12



Will You call my name and lead me safe - ly out?
Will You show me now what to lose and what to keep?
Set Your ta - ble here with what tru - ly sa - tis - fies.

Chorus



O Good Shep-herd, O Good Friend, slow me down, slow me down. O Good Shep-herd,

26



O Good Friend, slow me down, slow me down. **Fine**

The Confession

In this season of Lent we begin with silence and in confession. Recognizing the burdens we bear, and the ways we have wounded ourselves, the lives of others and the life of the world, we confess that our lives have become unmanageable and we turn to God for mercy.

Sung Trisagion (sung three times)

Ho - ly God.

E(no3) E A/E E

5 Ho - ly and might - y. Ho - ly im - mor - tal One, Have

A/C# B(add4) E/G# A B C#m

9 mer - cy, have mer - cy, on us.

F#m7 B(add4) B E

Silence for personal confession.

The Absolution or Assurance of Grace

The Collecting Prayer

Generous God, we give you thanks and praise for the joy and goodness we find in your presence. Refresh and renew us as we follow Jesus to the cross, and beyond. Give us hope in your steadfast power for life. In Jesus' name, **amen**.

Poem: Selected and read by poet-in-residence, Rebecca Yeo

We Proclaim

A reading from Numbers (21: 4-9)

From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food." Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the Lord

and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live." So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

...The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

You are invited to rise in body or in spirit as we prepare our hearts to hear the gospel.

The Gospel Acclamation: The Time is Fulfilled

The time is fulfilled. The Kingdom of God has drawn near

Come let us repent and believe the Gospel (3x) Tom Wuest / Brass Trumpet Publishing / With Permission

The Gospel

Hear the good news of Jesus Christ!

Thanks be to God.

A reading from the +Gospel of John (3: 14-21)
Jesus said, "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned

already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God." Hear the good news of Jesus Christ!

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation: The Time is Fulfilled

The time is fulfilled. The Kingdom of God has drawn near

Come let us repent and believe the gospel (3x) Tom Wuest / Brass Trumpet Publishing / With Permission

You are invited to rise in body or in spirit as we affirm the ancient story of faith.

Affirmation of Faith

[we say together] **Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.**

Love the Lord your God with all your heart,

with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

This is the first and the great commandment.

The second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself.

There is no commandment greater than these.

Our Prayers: Interactive stations

For Lenten prayer times, you are invited to pray in several ways:

- *quietly in your seat or kneeling upon pillows near the altar and rocks (centre);*
- *Praying in the side chapel with icons including many for black history month (left of the band);*
 - *through written words and prayer requests, left in our prayer weave (Left station);*
 - *lighting candles in the chapel (out either of the doors and across hall);*
- *ACTION: sign a letter of support around WSÁNEĆ concerns with Goldstream infrastructure proposal sign letter and we'll email them. (right near Balmoral doors)*
...and/or through singing along with us in this time of quiet contemplation.

Pre-recorded Song: Nothing To Fear by Porter's Gate feat. Audrey Assad Paul Zach Publishing

Song: Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Precious Lord, take my hand
 Lead me on, let me stand
 I'm tired, I'm weak, I am worn
 Through the storm, through the night
 Lead me on to the light
 Take my hand, precious Lord,
 lead me home.

When my way grows drear
 precious Lord, linger near
 When my light is almost gone
 Hear my cry, hear my call
 Hold my hand lest I fall
 Take my hand, precious Lord,
 lead me home.

When the darkness appears
 and the night draws near.
 And the day is past and gone
 At the river I stand
 Guide my feet, hold my hand
 Take my hand precious Lord,
 lead me home.

Precious Lord, take my hand
 Lead me on, let me stand
 I'm tired, I'm weak, I am worn.
 Through the storm, through the night
 Lead me on to the light
 Take my hand, precious Lord,
 lead me home.

The Rev. Thomas A. Dorsey / Unichappell Music
 (OCP/OneLicense)

The Peace

...The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

All are invited to offer a gesture or sign of God's peace to those around them.

*During the 'offertory' song, the communion table is set.
Contributions to our common life can be made at the back of the space (now or later).*

As we prepare for this holy feast we are reminded that all are welcome to receive wherever they find themselves in their spiritual journey. All are welcome to Jesus' table - as you feel ready.

The Offertory Song: Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah

Guide me, O my great Jehovah,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore,
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain,
whence the healing stream doth flow.
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
lead me on my journey through.
Strong Deliverer, strong Deliverer,

Be Thou still my strength and shield,
Be Thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside.
Death of death, and hell's Destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side.

Songs of praises, songs of praises

I will ever sing to Thee,

I will ever sing to Thee

Welsh melody / Williams and Williams 18th century /
Public Domain.

We Celebrate

The Prayer Over the Gifts

God of gentleness and strength, help us turn to you and release our anxieties and fears. Give us courage to deepen our trust in you, and to extend and receive grace from one another as companions in the way of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

God be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to God.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
O Lord our God, creator, redeemer, sovereign of the universe.

When we gave up hope in the wilderness
succumbing to the poison of bitterness and despair,
you kept us alive, and set us back on the path to the promised land



Glor-y to you for-e-ver and ev-er.

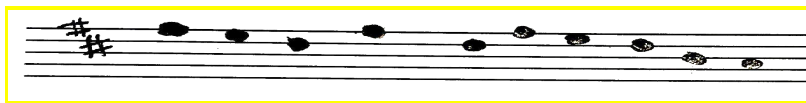
Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all the faithful of every time and place who forever sing to the glory of your name:



Schubert Deutsche Messe.

You are holy, O God of all mercy, and blessed is your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Out of your great love for the cosmos you created,
you sent Jesus Christ— not to condemn, but to save us—
so that those who trust in him might not perish, but have eternal life.



Glor-y to you for-e-ver and ev-er.

Remembering your gracious acts in Jesus Christ,
we take from your creation these gifts of bread and wine
we joyfully celebrate his dying and rising, as we await the day of his coming.

As Jesus was eating with his disciples
He took a loaf of bread and after blessing it, broke it, gave it to them and said
Take, this is my body. Do this in remembrance of me.

Glory to you forever and ever

As supper was ending Jesus took the wine
And after blessing it, Poured it, gave it to them and said,
Take, this is my blood shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this in remembrance of me. **Glory to you forever and ever**

Holy God we give you thanks for the mystery of faith given to us in Jesus your child.



Chri-st has died. Chr-ist is Ri-sen. Chri-st will come will co-me a---gain.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon these gifts of bread and wine,
that the bread we break and the cup we bless
may be to us the body and blood of your Christ.
By your Spirit, unite us with Christ and with your church in all the world.
With thanksgiving, we offer our very selves to you
to be a living and holy sacrifice, dedicated to your service.
Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour are yours, almighty God, now and forever.



A-----men. A-----m-en. A----- men. A- m-en. A----men.

*Euch. Prayers for Lent, Year B; Office of Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Alt.
Tone: Holloway Acclamation by Jack Holloway, St. Lydia's Table (Lutheran) Brooklyn NY*

The Prayer of Jesus

As beloved children of a loving parent, we pray as Jesus taught:
(said in a language, translation or paraphrase of your choice)

**Our *Father (*or Parent, or Source, or Mother) in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
Now and forever. Amen.**

Silence.

These are the gifts of God for the people of God given for the life of the world.

Thanks be to God!

All are welcome to receive at Jesus' table! The bread is gluten-free but contains almond flour and dairy. Please ask the server if you would like a non-dairy / almond option. The juice is in the small cups. Wine is in the larger common cup. Please refrain from dipping the bread.

During communion there are a couple of folks who are available to pray with you in our new side chapel to the left of the band (enter through the opening in the curtains).

Communion Song: Don't Be Afraid

♩ = 60 C G Dm C F C

English: Don't be a-fraid. My love is strong-er, my love is strong-er than your
 French: *N'a-yez pas peur, mon a-mour est plus fort, il est plus fort que vo - tre*

Gsus G C G Dm C

fear. Don't be a-fraid. My love is strong-er and
 peur. *N'a-yez pas peur, mon a-mour est plus fort; je*

Am Em/G F C/E Dm Gsus⁴ G C

I have prom - ised, prom - ised to be al - ways near.
vous ai pro - mis, pro - mis d'ê - tre tou - jours là.

John Bell / The Iona Community (Wild Goose Publishing) 1995 / OneLicense

Communion Song: God's Highway

My feet are strong, my eyes are clear
 I cannot see the way from here
 But on we go, God knows the way
 And in those arms, I am kept safe.

Refrain:

*Fear not, keep on, watch and pray
 Walk in the light of God's highway*

The shadows flee, the valley is deep
 But evil cannot conquer me
 Your rod and your staff, they protect me
 You give me rest, you gave me peace
Refrain.

I see the shore from these troubled seas
 This tiny ship that carries me
 It is not yet, but it will be
 So heaven come, it's you we need
Refrain.

I'm holding on to you, Lord
 You're holding on to me

Refrain.

Sandra McCracken / Drink Your Tea Music / CCLI

The Prayer after Communion

(together) **We give thanks, almighty God,
 that you have refreshed us at your table
 by granting us the presence of Jesus Christ.
 Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another,
 and send us forth into the world united in courage and peace,
 rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit;
 through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.** Celebrate God's Presence - UCC

The Blessing

We Are Sent

Closing Song: Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before Thee
Op'ning to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the dark of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day!

All Thy works with joy surround You,
Earth and heav'n reflect Your rays,
Stars and angels sing around You,
Center of unbroken praise;
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain
Praising You eternally!

Always giving and forgiving,
Ever blessing, ever blest,
Well-spring of the joy of living,
Ocean-depth of happy rest!
Source of Grace and Fount of Blessing
All who live in love are Thine
Teach us how to love each other,
Lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus,
Which the morning stars began;
God's own love is reigning o'er us,
Joining people hand in hand.
Ever singing, march we onward,
Victors in the midst of strife;
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life.
Henry VanDyke / 1907 / Public Domain

Sending

Go in peace knowing Christ walks with you in the desert.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude: Felix Culpa

God who watches over you will never slumber nor sleep.
God who watches over you will never slumber nor sleep.
O, my child, lay your burdens down, lay them at my feet.
God who watches over you will never slumber nor sleep. Alana Levandoski / CCLI, alt.

*We depart in silence or continue to sit in the stillness of the space.
Folks are welcomed (and encouraged) to gather in the foyer.*

Prayer / Communion (other than Sunday afternoon)

- **Tuesday at 8:15am–Morning Prayer.** in-person/online at Lynn and Phil's (email for location–near Castle Hardware on Cook) and on Zoom.
- **Wednesday communion - 4pm at Our Place** in-person only, followed by a meal. Meet at church parking lot at 3:45 to walk over together.
- **Thursday at 8:15am - Morning prayer** at Quadra/Balmoral Chapel in person only. Enter from parking lot at 932 Balmoral.
- **Friday at 8:15am - Morning Prayer.** Zoom-only.
- **Sunday at 10am - Spanish Anglican Eucharist** at Quadra/Balmoral Chapel. Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe - Misas Todos Los domingos a las 10: 00 de la Mañana con Fr. Dimas Canjura NO 10am EUCHARIST March 10 due to Dimas' vacation.

*Our weekday common prayer is liturgical and based on ancient monastic practices.
It's open to anyone who wants to join in-person or online.*