



## Advent IV

December 21st, 2025 - 4pm



Image: Wikimedia Commons - Margaritone d'Arezzo - Madonna col Bambino in Trono e Scene Religiose, 1263-64 - CC BY 3.0



# Welcome to The AbbeyChurch

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

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 summarised 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, uncertain, doubting, hurting, thriving (to name a few).

As a witness to unity in diversity, the AbbeyChurch is an affirming (full inclusion and leadership of 2SLGBTQIA+ folk) 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 is inspired by monasticism and whose members make commitments to 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.

## **Land Acknowledgement**

The AbbeyChurch acknowledges that we worship and pray on the stolen territory of the Lək'ʷəŋən peoples', the Songhees and Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) Nations. We strive to journey toward reparation, right relationship and reconciliation with justice. We confess the complicity of our religious traditions and institutions in the loss of life, lands, languages, spiritualities and cultures of the First Peoples' of these lands.

We pause in silence to remember and to recall the land under our feet, the hidden rivers, the trees and flowers and shifting seasons. We are grateful for the ongoing wisdom, stewardship and tending of these lands and apprentice ourselves to this good work of caring for creation and seeking to live in right-relationship with each other.

# We Gather

## Opening Loop and Tolling of the Bells

A Vision of the Prophet Isaiah (7:10-16)

Again the *LORD* spoke to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign of the *LORD* your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the *LORD* to the test." Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

## Welcome Song / Lighting the Candle(s) Ruby Cloud Iris 2024

Wel - come to this sa - cred place. We all join to share this space.

All are pre - cious in His sight. Here we come to share His light. We light the can - dle here, we light the can - dle here!

Here we are now ga - thered as one. Here we will wait for Your son.

In this ad - vent sea - son this year we will wait, we fe - el You near. We light the can - dle here, we light the can - dle here!

Hope, peace, love and joy We will wait to hear Your voice, We light the can - dle here, we light the can - dle here!

We light the can - dle here, we light the can - dle here for You. Light the can - dle

## The Poem

## Chosen by Molly LeBlanc - Poet-in-Residence

*Folks of all ages are welcomed to set the table as we sing this opening song. You are invited to rise in body or in spirit as we sing joyfully.*

### Opening Song: O Come O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.  
*Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.*

O come, thou Rod of Jesse's stem,  
From every foe deliver them  
That trust thy mighty power to save  
and give them victory o'er the grave.  
*Refrain*

O come, thou Key of David, come  
and open wide our heavenly home.  
Make safe the path that leads on high  
And close the path to misery. *Refrain.*

O come, thou Dayspring from on high  
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh.  
Dispel the gloomy clouds of night  
and death's dark shadow put to flight.  
*Refrain.*

O come, desire of nations, bind  
in one the hearts of all humankind.  
Bid thou our sad divisions cease  
and be thyself our prince of peace!  
*Refrain.*

*Latin, c. 12th century; Ancient Antiphons (Latin),  
versified in 18th century by Neale. Public Domain.*

## We Proclaim

### The Epistle:

A reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Rome (1:1-7)

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, to all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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

### The Gospel Acclamation: Make a Way

Come, Son of God, and make us new - Light of the world, our hearts renew  
Hope in our inner darkness lies - Oh, healing sun of justice rise  
Oh, make a way, open wide the gates  
Oh, make a way through the sorrow and the pain  
Oh, make a way, though the road is dark and winding Oh, come, come.  
Paul Zach / Isaac Wardell / Kate Bluett - Porter's Gate . CCLI.

## The Gospel

Let us proclaim the Gospel from the rooftops. **With our words and with our lives!**

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew (1:18-25)

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “*Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son and they shall name him Emmanuel,*” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son and he named him Jesus.

...Let us proclaim the Gospel from the rooftops. **With our words and with our lives!**

## Gospel Acclamation (Repeated)

Come, Son of Man, to show the way. Oh, through the tears, may we see the day!

So long did we in darkness dwell, come down to break the chains of hell!

Oh, make a way, open wide the gates

Oh, make a way through the sorrow and the pain

Oh, make a way, though the road is dark and winding

Oh, come, come. Paul Zach / Isaac Wardell / Kate Bluett - Porter's Gate . CCLI.

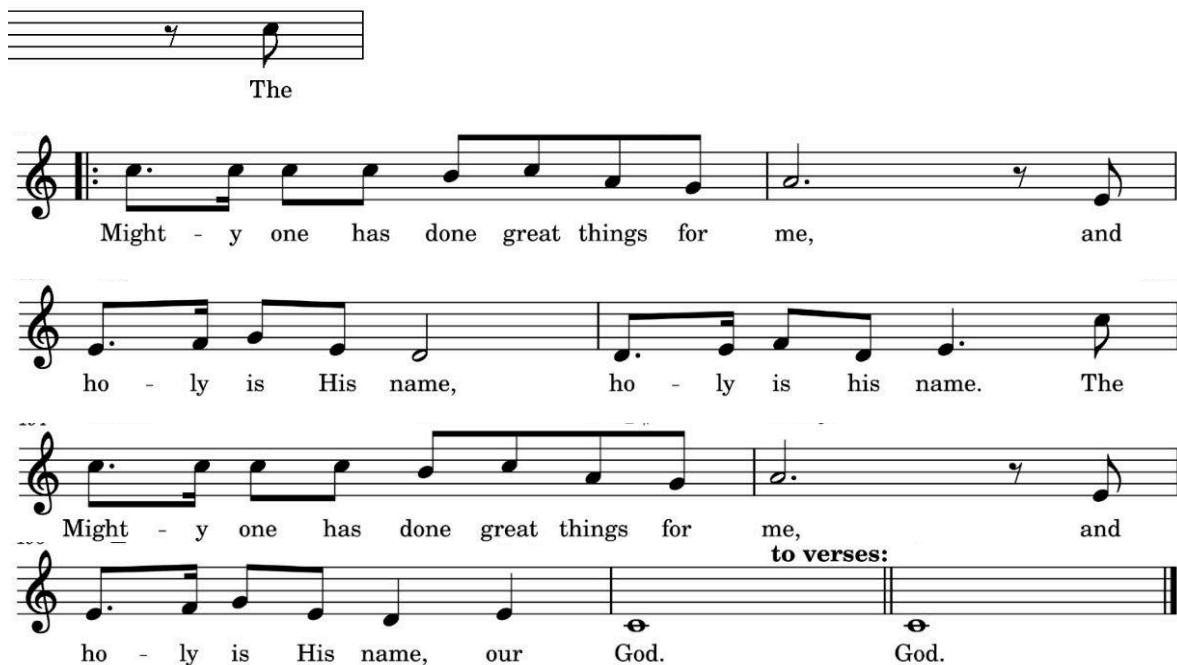
## Sermon

**Lynn Mills**

*Bell. Silence for reflection. Bell.*

## Affirmation of Faith: The Magnificat

*Please rise in body or in spirit as we join with Mary in proclaiming a vision of God's promise:*



The

Might - y one has done great things for me, and

ho - ly is His name, ho - ly is his name. The

Might - y one has done great things for me, and  
to verses:

ho - ly is His name, our God. God.

Ruby Cloud Iris 2024

## Our Prayers

### The Confession

Be not afraid, for the God of mercy is with us.

With confidence in God's grace, let us turn to God in penitence and faith.

*Silence is kept.*

God of all: **We prepare our hearts for your coming. We confess our sins; our words and deeds, our failures of indifference and inaction. Forgive us, cleanse our hearts, and keep us faithful for the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### The Absolution / Assurance of Grace

God of all consolation, forgive us and deliver us, heal us and strengthen us by your Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.** *Church of England, Alt.*

### The Peace

In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us, to give light to those who dwell in the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Luke 1:78-79)

The peace of Emmanuel, God-With-Us, be with you all.

**And also with you.**

*You are invited to share a sign of peace to those near you.*

*Offering: Contributions to our common life can be made at the back of the space (now or later) in the boxes or using debit or credit card. You can e-transfer donations to [treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca](mailto:treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca) (that's our preferred method) or donate to AbbeyChurch / Emmaus via CanadaHelps by using the QR Code on the last page of this leaflet. All donations are eligible for a charitable tax receipt.*

### **Offertory Song: A Christmas Hymn**

Come now see the Lord of Heaven  
In a lowly manger laid  
King deserving of a throne room  
Born a poor, powerless babe  
Oh the myst'ry, oh the wonder  
Somehow God is one of us  
Such is greatness in God's kingdom  
Christ descended to our dust

Christ the Word, holy expression  
Of the humbleness of God  
Herald of a prideless kingdom  
One of sacrificial love  
Mighty One who made the heavens  
Knelt to wash His sibling's feet  
And the earth that He created  
He bestowed unto the meek

King of glory became nothing  
Humbled to the point of death  
Stretched His arms out like a beggar  
And forgave with His last breath

What God started with a manger  
Ended with an empty grave  
Suffering servant now exalted  
Jesus, name above all names

Light eternal in the darkness  
He shall not be overcome  
Shining over all our shadows  
Every curse has been undone  
Heaven breaks forth like the springtime  
Through the winter of our souls  
Now His life is life abundant  
Is forever ours to know

Come now church, let us adore Him  
Tune your heart to sing His grace  
Streams of mercy never ceasing  
Call for songs of loudest praise  
Teach me some melodious sonnet  
Sung by flaming tongues above  
Praise the mount I'm fixed upon it  
Mount of God's redeeming love.

Rend Family Records, under exclusive license to Capitol CMG, Inc. and Rend Collective / CCLI

### **We Celebrate**

*As we prepare for this holy feast, we are reminded that all are welcome at Jesus's wherever they find themselves in their spiritual journey. If you wish to come forward to receive a blessing rather than bread and wine, place your hands across your chest.*

### **Prayer Over The Gifts**

Gracious God, who, by the power of the Spirit, sanctified the mother of your Son, make holy all we offer you this day. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. **Amen** BAS alt.

### **The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.



**C: And al - so with you.**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them up to God**

Let us give thanks to the \*Lord our God.

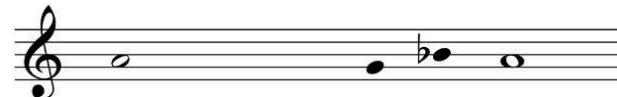
**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Holy God, how wonderful is the \*work of your hands!  
 From the beginning your light has shone forth / bringing \*order out of chaos /  
 and life in the \*midst of death.  
 When we fled from you / you sought us out and gathered us like a \*mother sheep /  
 covered us in your mercy / and set us a place at your table.



Glory to you fore - ver and ever.

Your holy prophets longed that you might tear the \*heavens and come down / and so in tenderness, you sent Jesus, born of Mary, to be Emmanuel - God with us.  
 As one of us/Jesus healed the sick and ate with \*outcasts and sinners/ he opened the eyes of the blind and proclaimed liberation for all.

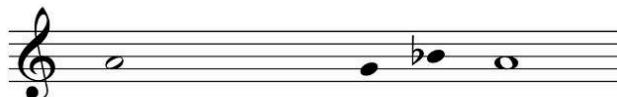


Glory to you fore - ver and ever.

You have sent your Holy Spirit as a mighty stream, to refresh and renew the \*face of the earth/ Therefore with the company of heaven and all of your creation \*we sing:

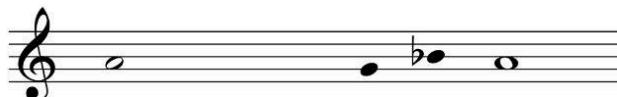
1. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly\_\_\_\_ Lord, God of pow - er, God\_\_\_\_ of\_\_\_\_ might,  
 hea - ven and the earth are\_\_\_\_ full, are full\_\_\_\_ of your glo - ry, O Lord. Ho - san - na,  
 ho - san - na! How bles - sed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

While 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 remem\*brance of me."



Glory to you fore - ver 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 / do this in reme\*mbrace of me.



Glory to you fore - ver and ever.

Holy God we give you thanks /for the mystery of faith given to us / in Jesus your Child:

2. Praise to you, Lord Je - sus Christ: dy - ing, you de - stroyed our death;  
ri - sing, you re - stored our life. Lord Je - sus, come in glo - ry to reign. O come,  
O come. - Em - man - u - el! Lord Je - sus, come in glo - ry to reign.

Se-e-nd your Holy Spirit upon us /and upon these gifts of \*bread and wine /that they may be to us the Body and \*Blood of your Christ / As we stay alert for signs of your coming O God / stir up our hearts and infuse us with Your hope (peace, joy, love). As grain was scattered across this land then gathered and made one in this bread / so may your church, scattered to the ends of the earth / be gathered and made one in your love.

A - - - - men.

### **The Prayer of Jesus**

As beloved children of a loving parent, we pray as Jesus taught:

**Our \*Father (\*or Parent, or Abba, or Amma, or Source, or Mother)  
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.  
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.**  
Silence is kept

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 (none compelled!) to receive at Jesus' table!  
The bread is gluten-free, there are also rice crackers available.  
Grape juice is in the small cups. It is wine (port) in the larger chalice.*

**Song (pre-recorded): Agnus Dei / Lamb of God - Salt of the Sound**

### **Communion Song: Come to us, Emmanuel**

Come to us, Emmanuel, we wait for thee with bated breath  
And hope-filled hearts and anxious minds  
Longing to see your face and worship at your feet

Isaiah's vision didst unfold  
When you descended into this world  
to bring good news and set the prisoners free  
You set aside eternity so that we might live

So come to us, Emmanuel, we live in hope of your return  
To bring new life to this old world  
To end all wars and to heal all hearts  
And to reign forever more.

*Peter LaGrand / Ordinary Time / CCLI*

### **Communion Song: Open Up**

you heard the cry of our hearts  
and you came down  
freely you gave us your love  
showing us how  
make me an instrument of your peace  
where there is hatred  
let me show love  
where there is darkness  
let me shine light and

may your love cause us to open up  
cause us to open up our hearts  
may your light  
cause us to shine so bright  
that we bring hope into the dark

all that we do without love  
it means nothing  
grant us the courage to give

as you're calling  
make me an instrument of your peace  
where there is hatred  
let me show love  
where there is darkness  
let me shine light and

may your love cause us to open up  
cause us to open up our hearts  
may your light  
cause us to shine so bright  
that we bring hope into the dark

hope for the hopeless,  
your love is  
strength in our weakness,  
your love is  
may we love, as you love

*The Brilliance, 2011, John Arndt / David Gungor / CCLI*

### **The Prayer After Communion**

[we pray together] **Faithful God, in this sacrament we receive the promise of salvation.  
May we, with the strength and power of Mary, consent to be obedient to your will.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.**

## **We Are Sent**

### **The Blessing**

### **Closing Song: Come Thou Long Expected Jesus**

Come Thou long expected Jesus  
born to set Thy people free  
From our fears and sins release us,  
let us find our rest in Thee  
Israel's strength and consolation  
hope of all the earth Thou art  
Dear desire of every nation -  
Joy of every longing heart

Joy to those who long to see thee,  
Dayspring from on high, appear;  
come, thou promised Rod of Jesse,  
of thy birth we long to hear!  
O'er the hills the angels singing  
news, glad tidings of a birth:  
""Go to Christ, your praises bringing;  
Christ the Lord has come to earth.""

Come to earth to taste our sadness,  
You whose glories know no end;  
by your life you brings us gladness,  
our redeemer, Shepherd, Friend,  
Leaving riches without number,  
born a refugee, born the least;  
this the everlasting wonder,  
Christ come be the Lord of Peace.

Born Thy people to deliver,  
born a Child and yet a King  
Born to reign in us forever,  
now Thy gracious kingdom bring  
By Thine own eternal Spirit,  
rule in all our hearts alone  
By Thine all sufficient merit  
raise us to Thy glorious throne.

*Vs 1, 4 Charles Wesley / public domain / tune: hyfrydol. Vs 2-3, Mark E. Hunt, alt. / IVCF / CCLI*

## **Sending**

Go from this place to watch, wait and prepare the Way.

**Thanks be to God. Amen!**

***Our Christmas Eve service will happen at 4pm on December 24  
Cider at 3:30pm + Carols, communion at 4pm  
There will be no worship on Dec 28th.***

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## **Donations to our Common Life and Ministry**

*We are well on our way to raising our year-end goal of \$9500, but there is still time to give!*



A huge thank you to everyone who has supported our ministry in 2025, making it possible for us to continue thriving! As we rapidly approach the end of the year (with our final time together being December 24<sup>th</sup>) we recommend you use one of the following giving methods to ensure your donation will be included in the 2026 tax receipts:

1. **E-transfers.** This method is our favourite as we receive the full amount. (no fees) Please use your online banking to interac e-transfer to [treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca](mailto:treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca). Make sure you have filled out [this form](#) so we have the details to provide a tax receipt or email [treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca](mailto:treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca) with the details of the amount, date and your full contact details.
2. **Online** Via [Canada Helps - follow the linke below or click the QR code ->](#) [here:https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/emmausabbeychurch/](https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/emmausabbeychurch/)
3. The **Square POS** set up at the back of the church. Again, be sure to provide your name and contact details either when making the donation via Square or using one of the slips by the iPad.

*We have one donor who has given a number of times via the Square, but we have no contact information. If you desire a tax receipts, please email Lynn at [treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca](mailto:treasurer@emmauscommunity.ca). with the dates and amounts donated and your full contact details.*

With deep gratitude for your generous support of this beloved AbbeyChurch.

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## **QOMQEM is Back!!**



Join AbbeyChurch in Supporting weekly Indigenous-Led Street Outreach

QomQem Coastal Connections has operated a weekly night outreach initiative for the past two years, bringing basic needs, hot and cold foods, harm reduction, and other supplies to the street family. This Indigenous-and-lived-experience-led outreach model follows Coast Salish teachings that everyone should have a home, food to eat, and a role in the community.

**Items Needed:** Drop them off into the treasure chest at the back!

- Non perishable foods used in the weekly menu: Gatorade/Powerade, juice boxes, fruit cups, pudding cups, peanut butter and jam (large jars), noodle bowls, large bags of candy/baked treats
- Supplies: Gloves, hats, socks, hand warmers, high-quality umbrellas, raincoats, winter coats, tarps, winter weight sleeping bags, emergency blankets, batteries, flashlights, tents
- Inexpensive phones and pay as you go phone credits

**Volunteer:** QomQem will be in the kitchen each Sunday after worship (about 5:15pm) - and AbbeyChurch folk are welcome to come and volunteer.

**Donate Money:** You can designate funds to this important work through AbbeyChurch - go to [canadahelps.org/en/charities/emmausabbeychurch/](http://canadahelps.org/en/charities/emmausabbeychurch/) and select QomQem Coastal Connections on the drop down menu.

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## **Weekday Prayer with the Emmaus Community**

**@ Emmaus/AbbeyChurch Upper Room** (off the Balmoral parking lot, metal stairs up)

**Mondays 9 am** - Morning Prayer w/ Centering Prayer - approx 45 mins. In-person only.

**Tuesdays 9 am** - approx 25 mins - in-person and online.

**Thursdays 8:15 am** - morning prayer - The Upper Room and online on zoom.

**Fridays 8:15 am** - morning prayer - *on-line zoom only*

*Contact us for information on the accessible entrance or zoom/liturgies link*

***There will be NO morning prayer December 24 until January 5.  
We resume Jan 5, 2026.***

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**WANNA CHAT?** Reach out to us at [admin@abbeychurch.ca](mailto:admin@abbeychurch.ca)

**BORROW A BOOK?** the (very in-process - 15% catalogued) library catalog is here: [www.librarycat.org/lib/EmmausCommunity](http://www.librarycat.org/lib/EmmausCommunity) or email [library@emmauscommunity.ca](mailto:library@emmauscommunity.ca)

**WEEKLY NEWSLETTER?** Have you subscribed to our weekly e-newsletter? We have recently learned that some shaw.ca emails are not receiving the newsletters - if you are missing them, please re-subscribe with a new email here: <https://www.abbeychurch.ca/subscribers>

**[admin@abbeychurch.ca](mailto:admin@abbeychurch.ca) + [www.abbeychurch.ca](http://www.abbeychurch.ca)**

**778.557.4166 we would love to connect.**