

The Fourth Sunday in Lent
Laetare Sunday
March 19, 2023 + 4pm



Healing of the Blind Man by Brian Jekel



*Beloved companions in the Spirit -
Come as you are offering our lives
in the beautiful struggle of faith...*

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).

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

We Gather

Opening Loop / Tolling the Bells

Welcome and Land Acknowledgment

Video Meditation: Leaving Ourselves at the Altar

featuring Phuc Luu - from The Work of the People

Let us pause in silence to bring to God those burdens we wish to be set free of

Sung Confession: Good Lord, Deliver Us

Refrain: Good Lord, Good Lord Good Lord, deliver us
Good Lord, Good Lord, Good Lord, deliver us

From the merchants in the temple
And the worship of our greed
From the whisper of the tempter
We should take more than we need
From the chains of wealth and plunder
From our avarice and pride
From the ever growing hunger
From our vanity and strife. *refrain.*

From our constant quest for power
Over all that we survey
From the lies that we devour
From the fears we cannot face
Come and save us from our demons
Come and strip away our hate
Come O Lord, restore our reason
Come O Christ, the time is late. *refrain.*

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Silence for personal confession.

The Absolution / Assurance of Grace

During the next song, the children will set the front table with symbols of our faith and common life together.

Opening Song: Amazing Grace by John Newton

Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me
I once was lost but now I'm found was blind but now I see

Twas grace that taught my heart to fear & grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed

The Lord has promised good to me this word my hope secures
God will my shield and portion be as long as life endures

Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come -
twas grace that brought me safe thus far & grace will lead me
home John Newton / Public Domain

Poem: Instructions by Neil Gaiman

Read/selected by poet-in-residence **Rebecca Yeo**

We Proclaim

The Psalm: Psalm 23 - Stillwater (aka Greenwater)

*The Lord is - my Shepherd - leads me beside still water (repeat)
Even though I walk through the dark night
I will not fear death - You know my troubled voice
And you will lead me - You will lead me home
Tom Wuest / Brass Trumpet Publishing / CCLI*

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.
You make me lie down in green pastures
and lead me beside still waters.
You revive my soul and guide me along
right pathways for your name's sake.
Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who trouble me;
you have anointed my head with oil
and my cup is running over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

*The Lord is - my Shepherd - leads me beside still water
Even though I walk through the dark night
I will not fear death - You know my troubled voice
And you will lead me - You will lead me home
Tom Wuest / Brass Trumpet Publishing / CCLI*

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

Gospel Acclamation: Lord to Whom Shall We Go

Lord to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life

We've come to believe and to know

That You are the Holy One of God *repeat*

Carolyn Arends 2021 / © Running Arends Music/ASCAP 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 John (9: 1-41)

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbours and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am he." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received

my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were

not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshipped him. Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgement, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind.” Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

Let us proclaim the gospel from the rooftops!

With our words and with our lives!

Gospel Acclamation: Lord to Whom Shall We Go

Lord to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life

We’ve come to believe and to know

That You are the Holy One of God

Carolyn Arends 2021 / © Running Arends Music/ASCAP CCLI

The Sermon

Matt Humphrey, EC

Silence for meditation. Bell / Silence / Bell

You are invited to rise in body or in spirit as affirm our faith with the Shema - The Hear, O Israel (Israel = “God-wrestlers”)

Hear, O Israel

[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.

The Peace

Beloved in Christ, The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you!

We acknowledge the peace of Christ in each other.

During this next 'offertory' song, the table is set. Contributions to our common life can be placed in the record player in the back of the space. Cheques made out to 'The Emmaus Community'. Charitable receipts will be issued if you provide your address.

Offertory: Come Healing by Leonard Cohen

O, gather up the brokenness

Bring it to me now

The fragrance of those
promises

You never dared to vow

The splinters that you
carried

The cross you left behind

Come healing of the body

Come healing of the mind

And let the heavens hear it

The penitential hymn

Come healing of the spirit

Come healing of the limb

Behold the gates of mercy

In arbitrary space

And none of us deserving

Of cruelty or the grace

O, solitude of longing

Where love has been

confined

Come healing of the body

Come healing of the mind

O, see the darkness yielding

That tore the light apart

Come healing of the reason

Come healing of the heart

O, troubledness concealing

An undivided love

The heart beneath is
teaching

To the broken heart above

And let the heavens falter

Let the earth proclaim

Come healing of the altar

Come healing of the name

O, longing of the branches

To lift the little bud

O, longing of the arteries

To purify the blood

And let the heavens hear it

The penitential hymn

Come healing of the spirit

Come healing of the limb

O let the heavens hear it

The penitential hymn

Come healing of the spirit

Come healing of the limb

Leonard Cohen / Patrick Leonard

Come Healing lyrics © Universal Music

Corp., Old Ideas Llc, No Tomato Music,

Pw Arrangements

We Celebrate

Invitation To the Table / Prayer Over The Gifts

God of the light and of the shadows
your joyful Word brings to us a new vision of your glory.
Accept this, our offering of praise and thanksgiving,
through Jesus Christ our sibling, healer & God.

The Anglican Church of Canada, expanded and alt.

The Communion / The Holy Eucharist

The Lord be with you! **And also with you!**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

It is right to give our thanks and praise!

Holy God, How wonderful is the work of your hands! All of creation echoes the silent music of your praise. When sin had scarred the world, You made a covenant to renew the whole of creation. You embraced a people as your own and filled them with longing for a peace that would last and a justice that would never fail.

Glory to you forever and ever.

Through countless generations your people hungered for the bread of freedom. From them you raised up Jesus, the living bread, in whom all our hungers are filled.

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:

Holy holy holy Lord God of power and might

Heaven and earth are full of your glory

Hosanna in the highest

+Blessed is the One who comes

in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

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 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, 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:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Send 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. Show us your joy in the wilderness and shape us into a people of hope, justice, and 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.

Amen. *St. Lydia's Table, alt.*

The Prayer of Jesus

As beloved children of a loving parent let us pray:

Our Father (Mother/Source/Parent) 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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. 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! Amen.**

All are welcome to receive at Jesus' table! The bread is gluten-free. It contains dairy and/or almond flour. If you'd like a dairy or nut free option, please let the presider know. Juice is in the small cups. Wine is in the common cup. Please do not dip the bread into the cup.

Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

Pre-recorded. Agnus Dei (feat. Jen Reardon) ·

Trinity Music · The Anima Christi © 2009 Marty Reardon / CCLI

Communion Song: Bless the Lord from the Taize Community

Bless the Lord, my soul and bless God's holy name
Bless the Lord, my soul. Who leads me into life

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Communion Song: Joy Will Come by Paul Zach

The shadow has no power over us - for we will trust in the Lord
And through the night we have a song to sing
A hope that we can cling to
Joy will come in the morning Joy will come in the morning
God is our rock and our salvation. Joy will come

Sister, fix your eyes upon the hills for surely help will come

Brother, we will take our refuge in

The God who knows our suffering

We will rise up... We will rise up in the morning

Common Hymnal Publishing, IAMSON Productions, Integrity's Alleluia! Music, Paul Zach
Publishing, PG Songs And Hymns / CCLI

We Are Sent

Prayer after Communion / Blessing

Let us sing our blessing to one another...

(Sung twice responsively)

Courage (**Courage**)

My Friends (**My friends**)

You do not walk alone

We will (**We will**)

Walk with you (**Walk with you**)

And sing your spirit home ...and the blessing of God...

Closing Song: Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee, God of glory, Lord of Love;
hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin & sadness, drive the dark of doubt away
giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

All thy works with joy surround thee

earth and heaven reflect thy rays

stars and angels sing around you, centre of unbroken praise.

Field & forest, vale & mountain, flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain sound their praise eternally.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Source of grace & fount of blessing, let your light upon us shine;
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 lifts us sunward in the triumph song of life.
Henry Dykes / Words and music public domain.

*We are invited to leave the space in (joyful!) silence
during this holy season.*

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We would love to connect! Call, Text, Email.



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