

February 21, 2021

Rev Jen's 44th Love Letter From Lockdown

Dear Pilgrims,

Welcome to another Lenten journey, the 40 days and nights of walking together with Jesus through baptism, temptation, trial, tribulation, death, descent, and resurrection. This is an allegorical, metaphorical, virtual, and actual journey that we take with Jesus and the "experience" is real for us as we return, review, reconsider and realign our walk with the divine.

Welcome to 40 days and nights of inner work, contemplation, prayer, and intentional action or inaction as the case may be. Perhaps you are "giving something up" or maybe you are "taking up" a spiritual practice. Raising your awareness and maybe raising funds for a specific purpose, like the Lenten Bible Study where we will be walking with Ruth and Naomi and raising funds for the Burnaby and FIRST UNITED Coldest Night Walk and the World Day of Prayer. Please join us as we walk together!

There are many ways to walk this Lenten journey and my prayer is that you will be intentional about this time and choose to focus your attention on your spiritual life and walk with God.

My Lenten intention is to "let go" of all that I no longer need to carry (including weight!) and to take up MY cross (not everyone else's!) and do MY work inner and outer work of cleaning, clearing, and re-aligning with God expressing in me. As I walk with Jesus, Ruth, and Naomi, I will be thinking about what it means to be "in relationship" with them. How do I walk with the Bible and engage the living word? What does it mean to "walk with" Jesus, Ruth, and Naomi? How do I "walk with" the Holy one? How do I "walk with" my siblings in Christ? How do I walk with myself?

The Gospel tune "Walk together children" came to mind and settled on my heart saying, "this is the one to focus on throughout Lent". Come and walk together children even as we are apart.

And so we "walk together" as we begin this Lenten journey. Ash Wednesday calls us into this time of release and renewal. We walk with Jesus, the Bible, the history and tradition of the faith, the times, and all of it intersects with our story and our walk of life and of faith.

Today the text talks of the Baptism of Jesus and the 40 days of temptation in the wilderness.

Jesus comes to the Jordan to be baptized by John and "just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Wow, that's quite a baptism! And the message is to and for Jesus. He is the one who saw the heavens torn apart. Jesus is the one who hears "who he is". In that moment he is named and identified. In that moment he knows he is the beloved of God and worthy. In that moment, the magnitude of his presence, power, and purpose "descending like a dove on him." In that moment he knew who he was!

And the Spirit immediately drove him into the wilderness. For 40 days and nights he was with the wild beasts, tempted by Satan, and angels waited on him.

The spirit drove him to the wilderness, to wilderness time. A period of separation. A desert time when one must face the "demons", be tempted, live with the wild beasts, and be waited on by angels. A time of overcoming the earthly temptations in order to reveal and rise to God's purpose, power and presence expressing within. A time of coming to terms with who you are and what you were meant to be.

Have you had "wilderness times" in your life? Have you, like Jesus, walked that lonesome valley that only YOU could walk? Dealing with temptations, the "wild beasts" and the "demons", however they may be defined? Have you had to come to terms with who you are and how God is expressing in you?

Well Lent is one of those times. It is an extended time for a "closer walk with thee". An intentional walk with purpose. We do this willingly even though it may be challenging and change producing. "Walking with" God, changes us. "Walking with" Jesus changes us. "Walking with" one another, changes us. The kingdom of God comes near, and we get a glimpse of the glory and we are changed. We are transformed by the relationship and the walk with the divine presence.

Through Lent, we walk with Jesus in the wilderness and wildness of the times and we deepen our relationship with God the creator, Jesus the son, the Spirit that descends and drives, and with each other as siblings in Christ.

Let us walk together children! And while we walk let us sing our song of faith and celebrate God's presence with us. For we are not alone, GOD is WITH US! And we say thanks be to God!

A Lyrics

Refrain 1

Oh, walk together children
Don't you get weary
Walk together children
Don't you get weary
Walk together children

Don't you get weary
There's a great camp meeting in the promised land

1. Goin' to mourn and never tire,
Mourn and never tire,
Mourn and never tire,
There's a great camp meeting in the promised land

Refrain 2
Oh, clap together children
Don't you get weary
Clap together children
Don't you get weary
Clap together children
Don't you get weary
There's a great camp meeting in the promised land

2. Goin' to shout and never tire,
Shout and never tire,
Shout and never tire,
There's a great camp meeting in the promised land. Refrain 3

Refrain 3
Oh, sing together children
Don't you get weary
Sing together children
Don't you get weary
Sing together children
Don't you get weary
There's a great camp meeting in the promised land

I'm not going to sing the whole song. I'm going to encourage you to sing it. Sing it for 40 days and 40 nights as we walk together children. <https://youtu.be/Ox2xxw5CA2o>

Blessings upon this 2021 Lenten journey. Blessings upon our walk with God.

With love from

Rev Jen.