

Coast Hills Community Church
First Sunday in Lent:

Take some time to get to know each other by answering this question:

* What has been your experience of LENT?

"Lent is the season of repentance – a chance to acknowledge our limitations, our humanity, our failures, our sins and recognize our utter dependence on God for our every breath." Kate Bowler

Read Matthew 4:1-11

Test 1: *If you are the Son of God... then?* (Matthew 4:1-4)

Jesus' testing regarding his identity is a common human experience.

This comes right after the baptism of Jesus (See Matthew 3:17) this is when the heavens opened up and spoke these words: "This is my Son in whom I love, with him I am well pleased."

Jesus' circumstances do not define his identity.

Who are you really? Take some time to remind each other of who you are, that you are loved, and created in the image of the Divine.

Test 2: *Does God really care for you?* (Matt. 4:5-7)

The tester, the tempter, the accuser is using scripture to try and manipulate Jesus.

Side Note: (Scripture can be used to deceive - Jesus needs to be at the center of our interpretation.)

Jesus reveals he is the Son of God through trust not tricks. (Psalm 91)

How do we trust God in our context?

Test 3: *How will Jesus rule?* (Matt. 4:8-10)

Jesus rules as a servant to God and a servant to others. (Matt. 20:28)

What are our expectations of how God rules? How does that shape how we live?

A Benediction for this Beautiful, Limited day - by Kate Bowler

Blessed are we who see the impossibility
of solving today.
It can't be done.

God, there are lists on lists
and errands on errands
and a taste, like tin in our mouths,
of the unfinishedness—the imperfectability—
of our lives.

Are we counting items instead
of knowing what counts?

God, help us live here,
seeing the whole truth of what is.

Blessed are we who walk toward
the discomfort,

bringing what gifts we have,
and our sufferings too,
whether of illness or loss,
grief or betrayal,
confusion or powerlessness.

Blessed are we who scoot up close
so we can whisper our loves, our fears,
all that feels too heavy to carry alone,
and all that we wish we could
hold onto for longer.

Show us what we love.
Show us what we never want to lose.
And show us what we no longer need
here in this beautiful, limited day,
as we place our trust and hope in you.

Amen.