

Worship Bulletin: Transfiguration Sunday

February 14, 2021

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Beyond our busyness, Above the cold winter floor there is a glory rising born of heaven and reaching out to each one of us

a light that shines through the clouds an invitation seeking all of who we are that transfigures the world

that transforms darkness into hope that brings life from a cross where old life ends and new life is born

In glory Jesus meets us here raising us from depths of valley to the height of the mountain carrying the weight of our humanity to the heights of heavens glory.

Let us worship from the mountain and hear again “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!”¹

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (ELW p. 119)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG – “Alleluia, Song of Gladness” (ELW 318)

¹ ~ written by Rev. Rob Smith, Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church, Apple Valley, MN. Posted: <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2017/02/call-to-worship-for-transfiguration.html>. Found at: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/follow-me/transfiguration-sunday-year-b-lectionary-planning-notes/transfiguration-sunday-year-b-liturgical-resources>

Alleluia, Song of Gladness

1 Al - le - lu - ia, song of glad - ness, voice of joy that can - not die;
2 Al - le - lu - ia you are sound - ing, true Je - ru - sa - lem and free;
3 Al - le - lu - ia can - not al - ways be our song while here be - low;
4 In our hymns we pray with long - ing: Grant us, bless - ed Trin - i - ty,

al - le - lu - ia is the an - them ev - er dear to choirs on high;
al - le - lu - ia, joy - ful moth - er, bring us to your ju - bi - lee;
al - le - lu - ia our trans - gres - sions make us for a while for - go;
at the last to keep glad Eas - ter with the faith - ful saints on high;

in the house of God a - bid - ing thus they sing e - ter - nal - ly.
here by Bab - y - lon's sad wa - ters mourn - ing ex - iles still are we.
for the sol - emn time is com - ing when our tears for sin shall flow.
there to you for - ev - er sing - ing al - le - lu - ia joy - ful - ly.

Text: Latin hymn, 11th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.
Music: PRAISE, MY SOUL, John Goss, 1800-1880

Alleluia, Song of Gladness

1 Alleluia, song of gladness,
voice of joy that cannot die;
alleluia is the anthem
ever dear to choirs on high;
in the house of God abiding
thus they sing eternally.

2 Alleluia you are sounding,
true Jerusalem and free;
alleluia, joyful mother,
bring us to your jubilee;
here by Babylon's sad waters
mourning exiles still are we.

3 Alleluia cannot always
be our song while here below;
alleluia our transgressions
make us for a while forgo;
for the solemn time is coming
when our tears for sin shall flow.

4 In our hymns we pray with longing:
Grant us, blessed Trinity,
at the last to keep glad Easter
with the faithful saints on high;
there to you forever singing
alleluia joyfully.

GREETING (ELW p. 120)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 124)

Let us pray. **Almighty God, the resplendent light of your truth shines from the mountaintop into our hearts. Transfigure us by your beloved Son, and illumine the world with your image, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD - God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: 2 Kings 2:1-12

A reading from 2 Kings.

Today's reading centers on the transfer of power and authority from the prophet Elijah to Elisha. Their travels, which retrace the path of Joshua back to Moab (the place where Moses died) and the parting of the waters, demonstrate that Elisha and Elijah are legitimate successors of the great prophet Moses.

¹Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ²Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. ³The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent." ⁴Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the Lord has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. ⁵The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent." ⁶Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. ⁷Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. ⁸Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground. ⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." ¹⁰He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." ¹¹As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 50:1-6

Out of Zion, perfect in beauty, God shines forth in glory. (Ps. 50:2)

¹The mighty one, God the Lord, has spoken;

calling the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

2Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty,

God shines forth in glory.

³Our God will come and will not keep silence;

with a consuming flame before, and round about a raging storm.

4God calls the heavens and the earth from above

to witness the judgment of the people.

⁵"Gather before me my loyal followers,

those who have made a covenant with me and sealed it with sacrifice."

6The heavens declare the rightness of God's cause,

for it is God who is judge.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

The spotlight of Christian ministry is not on the people who carry out ministry but on the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as God made light shine at creation, God makes the light of Jesus Christ shine in our lives through Christian ministry.

³Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus 'sake. ⁶For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 124)

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL: Mark 9:2-9

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Mark 's gospel presents the transfiguration as a preview of what would become apparent to Jesus 'followers after he rose from the dead. Confused disciples are given a vision of God 's glory manifest in the beloved Son.

²Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" ⁸Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON (ELW p. 125)

Happy Transfiguration Sunday (or Wednesday) as it may be!

This church celebration is one that's all about change. The disciples had changed their location (up a mountain). Jesus' clothes changed (dazzling white). Who was present in the situation

changed (Elijah and Moses). Then there was a cloud. Then it all changed back... and they saw Jesus only. Then they moved down the mountain, changing to a new location again.

This church celebration is also at a time of transition for the church year. It's always sandwiched between Epiphany and Lent, the door hinge, if you will, between the two seasons. It's right after the season of Epiphany, the season of light, as we head into the season of Lent, a season that walks towards Good Friday, the most difficult and darkest day of the church year.

More and more, I sense that we are in a time of change too. Schools are opening more and more. More and more of you are vaccinated, though I know many are painfully still waiting. Restrictions are slowly but surely relaxing. In a synod meeting, the bishop talked about how we often think of the transition out of COVID-19 time as being like a light switch. We are in it. Flip the switch. Then we aren't in it. But, really this time of transition is more like stopping a steam tanker. A steam tanker slowly stops over the course of a long distance. The pandemic, too, for us will be slowly ending and things reopening over a long course of time, as well. Thanks be to God, it seems we are heading towards the end, but we may have a ways more to journey together. We will, surely, have much discernment to practice together, so we pray that God would continue to bless us with patience and wisdom as we work together.

This being said, in some ways, I think the toughest days for the church may be ahead of us. Yep. You heard that right. I remember sitting in college in a religion class as the professor talked about how easy it is to cling to faith in hard times and how hard it is to stay mindful of faith in good times. At first, the whole discussion seemed wrong. Shouldn't it be the other way around?

But, the more I thought, and, now, the longer I live, I think that professor was completely right. In times of death and illness, we are painfully aware of what and who truly matters in life. We understand how much we are not in control of what is happening around us. We can see that the things we often turn to in life... entertainment, food, money, activities, etc.... aren't necessarily bad but are no match for the pains and trials of the world. When we are completely down and out, we turn to Jesus, and it's easy for our eyes to stay focused on Jesus. What else can we do? What do we have to lose?

But in good times, it's easy to forget about God. It's easy to think we did this all on our own and are self-made people. It's easy to, slowly but surely, fill our schedules and lives with things that can't provide. There is so much to do, we don't have time for God... "God will be here next week anyhow, right?" we tell ourselves. Our eyes start to look at this activity. That goal. This thing to purchase. That place to be. And we stop staying so focused on Jesus.

In today's Gospel, in the middle of all the change, before the disciples would head back down from the mountainside, it says, "Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus."


In this time of transition and change, I would ask you, good people of First Lutheran, to join me in trying to stay focused on Jesus. As we start to be able to re-gather with family and as activities we have missed out on start again, how will we keep our eyes focused on Jesus and not simply wandering from this thing to the next? As we work to stay focused on Jesus, I believe

that focus will lead to our own clarity, helping us not to just turn back to any routine but, instead, the routines we truly desire and routines that will provide. Not being swayed by the ways of the world will be tough, First Lutheran, but we know we have been blessed this year- in spite of the challenges around us and maybe because of them. How will we carry these blessings and clarity forward? How will we fight to keep our eyes on Jesus in this time of change and in the time to follow?

It surely won't be easy, but it's never been easy. The disciples are going to head down the mountain top, mess up following Jesus all over the place, and, eventually, their Savior will be crucified and most of Jesus' followers will abandon Him. But Jesus will not abandon them. Even when their eyes stray from Him, Jesus never loses sight- or love- for His disciples. Even when our eyes stray from Him- and they do- and they will- Jesus never loses sight- or love- for us. May this assurance hold us fast as we move forward together.

HYMN OF THE DAY – “Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair” (ELW 316)


Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair



1 Oh, won - drous im - age, vi - sion fair of
 2 With Mo - ses and E - li - jah nigh the in -
 3 With shin - ing face and bright ar - ray, Christ
 4 And faith - ful hearts are raised on high by
 5 O Fa - ther, with the e - ter - nal Son, and



glo - ry that the church may share, which Christ up - on the
 car - nate Lord holds con - verse high, and from the cloud, the
 deigns to man - i - fest to - day what glo - ry shall be
 this great vi - sion's mys - ter - y; for which in joy - ful
 Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er one, we pray you, bring us



moun-tain shows, where bright - er than the sun he glows!
 Ho - ly One says, "This is my be - lov - ed Son."
 theirs a - bove who joy in God with per - fect love.
 song we raise the voice of prayer, the hymn of praise.
 by your grace to see your glo - ry face to face.

Text: Sarum, 15th cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.
 Music: DEO GRACIAS, English ballad, 15th cent.

Words

Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair

1 Oh, wondrous image, vision fair
 of glory that the church may share,
 which Christ upon the mountain shows,
 where brighter than the sun he glows!

2 With Moses and Elijah nigh
 the incarnate Lord holds converse high,
 and from the cloud, the Holy One

says, "This is my beloved Son."

3 With shining face and bright array,
Christ deigns to manifest today
what glory shall be theirs above
who joy in God with perfect love.

4 And faithful hearts are raised on high
by this great vision's mystery;
for which in joyful song we raise
the voice of prayer, the hymn of praise.

5 O Father, with the eternal Son,
and Holy Spirit, ever one,
we pray you, bring us by your grace
to see your glory face to face.

APOSTLES CREED (ELW p. 126)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

A brief silence.

For the gospel proclaimed in word and deed, for communities of faith far and near, and for all who show the face of Christ throughout the world, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Lord, we pray for our church as we start Lent in this unusual time. Guide our efforts. **Have mercy, O God.**

For those responsible for safety and protection: for emergency responders and security guards, attorneys and advocates, civil servants and leaders of governments, that they witness to mercy and justice throughout the world, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For all who suffer this day: Todd Hallstrom, Ron Almjeld, Linda Towne, Charlene Wachter, Bob Dieter, Mary Kraft, Marilyn Frisch, Julie & Denny Christensen, Dianne Sanderson, Betty Nelson; **Members in Nursing Homes:** Bobbie Elvin, Gene Wachter, Sandra Marsh; **Members in Care Facilities:** Joan Doeden, Jean Bender; **Family Members & Friends:** Josh Hansen

(Mary Ingenthron's son), Lee Morrison (Terry Morrison's son), Henrietta Lais, Tom Morgan (Sandy Randall's dad), Peggy Konold (Norma Radenbaugh's daughter), Brad Martens (Valerie Veen's son)

We especially remember Linda Towne as she recovers from back surgery. that Christ our healer transform sickness into health, loneliness into companionship, bereavement into consolation, and suffering into peace, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Lord, we pray for our schools as they continue to increase their capacity for in person schooling. Keep them safe and guide them. let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For companions on life's journey in this worshiping community, for loved ones who cannot be with us this day, and for guidance during struggles we face, that God's glory is revealed around and among us, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed who now rest from their earthly pilgrimage, that their lives of service and prayer inspire us in our living, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

OFFERING AND CGC MOMENT

OFFERING PRAYER (ELW p. 129)

Let us pray. God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 134)

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, 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; and 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, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

SENDING - God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING (ELW p. 136)

COMMISSION & BLESSING FOR TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

(Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-9, Luke 9:28-36)

Go now, and speak of what you have seen of God's glory. Do not cling to the holy moments when heaven overshadows you, but as the Lord lives, listen to Christ and follow him from the places of revelation to the places of mission. And may God shine the light of glory into your

hearts. May Christ be with you and never leave you. And may the Spirit renew the image of God within you. We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,In the name of Christ. Amen.²

SENDING SONG – “Shine, Jesus, Shine” (ELW 671)

Refrain

Shine, Jesus, Shine, fill this land with the Father’s glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light.

1 Lord, the light of your love is shining,
in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us,
set us free by the truth you now bring us,
Shine in me, shine on me: *Refrain*

2 As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
so our faces display your likeness,
everychanging from glory to glory,
mirrored here, may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me, shine on me: *Refrain*

DISMISSAL (ELW p. 137)

Go in peace. Share the good news.
Thanks be to God.

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² © 2003 Nathan Nettleton <http://www.laughingbird.net/>
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<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/follow-me/transfiguration-sunday-year-b-lectionary-planning-notes/transfiguration-sunday-year-b-liturgical-resources>.