

February 11, 2024
Transfiguration Sunday

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Joyful, Joyful We Adore You" Ludwig van Beethoven arr. Martha Mier

Lighting the Christ Candle

Your Word, O God, is a lamp to our feet, **and a light for our path.**

Moment of Silent Reflection

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation

Call to Worship

You are not some distant God;

You are with us in the darkness of every night,

You greet us with each bright new dawn.

You are not some distant God;

You welcome us into the holy mystery that you are,

You invite us to share in your covenant with all of creation.

You are not some distant God;

You are as near as each breath we draw in,

You are the light that shines within and around us all.

Hymn: VU 327 "All Praise to Thee"

All praise to thee, for thou, O King divine,
didst yield the glory that of right was thine,
that in our troubled hearts thy grace might shine:
hallelujah; hallelujah!

Thou cam'st to us in lowliness of thought;
by thee the outcast and the poor were sought,
and by thy death was God's salvation wrought:
hallelujah; hallelujah!

Let this mind be in us which was in thee,
who wast a servant that we might be free,
humbling thyself to death on Calvary:
hallelujah; hallelujah!

Wherefore, by God's eternal purpose, thou
art high exalted o'er all creatures now,
and given the name to which all knees shall bow:
hallelujah; hallelujah!

Let every tongue confess with one accord
in heaven and earth that Jesus Christ is Lord;
and God eternal be by all adored:
hallelujah; hallelujah!

Opening Prayer (unison)

Who are we, O God, that you invite us to places of holiness to behold your glory? Who are we that Christ would walk among us showing us ways of freedom, peace, and blessing? Help us to be wakeful and mindful of your presence here. Transfigure us, that we may be disciples worthy of Jesus Christ. And forgive us our abiding sin. We live life as if we were gods. We miss the cloud of your glory, blinded by our pride and appetites. We sleep through the good parts: where you show us humility, our true nature as creatures made for goodness, and our deep connections with you and each other. In your mercy, hear our prayer. Send us both repentance and new life that we may grow in grace and forgive as we have been forgiven. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Anthem: "What a Friend" choral setting Jack Schrader

Psalm 50:1-6 VU 775

R: The mighty one, God the Sovereign, speaks and summons the earth.

God, the Almighty, has spoken;

and summoned the world

from the rising of the sun to its setting.

God shines out from Zion, a city perfect in beauty.

Our God appears, and will not keep silence.

R: The mighty one, God the Sovereign, speaks and summons the earth.

Before you, God, runs a consuming fire,
and a mighty tempest rages above you.

**You call on the heavens above, and on the earth below,
to witness the judgement of your people:**

"Gather my people before me,
the people who have made covenant with me by sacrifice."

The heavens proclaim your justice, for you yourself are the judge.

R: The mighty one, God the Sovereign, speaks and summons the earth.

Scripture: Mark 9:2-9 The Transfiguration

Six 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, and his clothes became dazzling bright, such as no one on earth could brighten them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us set up three tents: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As 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 other readings for this week are: 2 Kings 2:1-12; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Hymn: VU 104 "We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding"

We have come at Christ's own bidding to this high and holy place,
where we wait with hope and longing for some token of God's grace.

Here we pray for new assurance that our faith is not in vain,
searching like those first disciples for a sign both clear and plain.

Light breaks in upon our darkness; splendour bathes the flesh joined Word;
Moses and Elijah marvel as the heavenly voice is heard.
Eyes and hearts behold with wonder how the Law and Prophets meet:
Christ, with garments drenched in brightness, stands transfigured and complete.

Strengthened by this glimpse of glory, fearful lest our faith decline,
we like Peter find it tempting to remain and build a shrine.
But true worship gives us courage to proclaim what we profess,
that our daily lives may prove us people of the God we bless.

Meditation: “Transformers”

Hymn VU 480 “Let Us Break Bread Together”

Let us break bread together on our knees,
let us break bread together on our knees.
When I fall down on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
Oh, Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees,
let us drink wine together on our knees.
When I fall down on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
Oh, Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us praise God together on our knees,
let us praise God together on our knees.
When I fall down on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
Oh, Lord, have mercy on me.

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

(adapted from a prayer ©2021 Thom M. Shuman. Used with permission)

May God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts, people of God.

We open them to the One who loves us.

People of God, give thanks to the One who meets us
on the mountaintops of glory and in the valleys of service.

**It is good that we offer praise and thanksgiving
to the One who is with us in every moment.**

You crafted mountains on which we might find your majesty; you carved rivers of life where we might bathe in your grace. All things were shaped by you, Bright Glory of creation, and given that we might live in the abundance of your hopes for us. When we could have lived in that garden of serenity which you planted for us, we caught a glimpse of temptation out of the corners of our eyes, and sought gifts from sin and death, who were only too eager to offer us a double portion. You sent the prophets to lead us out of the valleys of despair back to the mountaintop with you, but we chose to remain in the company of the false gods of this world. But you would not forsake us, but became one of us, that we might be transformed into your faithful children. With the Breath of life within us, with the Word of grace in our hearts, we join all who have gone before us, and with those who are with us now, singing the ancient song of glory:

**Holy, holy, holy, God of glory and grace.
Heaven and earth sing loud songs of praise to you.
Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who comes to offer us
a double portion of grace and mercy. Hosanna in the highest!**

Mighty God, lover of justice, you summoned your Son, our Saviour, to come to us that we might be redeemed. Coming down Glory's mountainside, he does not remain silent about your hopes, but calls to us to follow him into your kingdom of mercy and love. He carried his cross to the top of that garbage heap called Calvary, to be put to death beside two thieves. Surrounded by sin and death in the tomb, he made a path through them into the new life given by God, tearing their power over us into pieces. Remembering that he could have chosen to stay with Moses and Elijah, but came to serve us, we proclaim our faith as we come to the Table:

In love, Christ died for us. In joy, Christ rose for us.

In glory, Christ will come again to us.

Now, on the gifts of the bread and the cup, and on your children gathered in this place, pour out your Spirit, God of Joy. As we share the brokenness of Christ, may we be restored to wholeness; as we drink of his forgiveness, may we become more gracious. As he prayed for us, so we too pray for one another. We pray for Christ's church, especially for Glenwood United Church in Windsor, and their spiritual leader, the Rev. Cathy Collins-Barker. We pray for the nations and their leaders, especially for Austria, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland. We pray for those who mourn, especially the friends and family of Don Rolson. We pray for all who are ill or dying, awaiting medical intervention or recovering from medical treatment, especially, ... and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts..... May Jesus' return in faith find us praying for your peace; may his return in hope, find us working for your justice; may his return in love, find us welcoming all your children. And when Christ does come again in glory, when all have received a double portion of your grace, when creation is made whole once again, and joins in the glad songs of praise, we will worship and adore you, forever and ever, God in Community, Holy in One, and we pray

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:
for yours is the kingdom the power
and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.**

Prayer Following Communion (*unison*)

Gracious God, may your gifts of love transform and enliven us that we may live lives of thanksgiving. May your presence among us provoke such longing for your realm, that we will never be satisfied until the whole earth knows your justice, your peace, and your love. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

Peter, James and John were allowed a glimpse of glory on a mountain top and then were taken right back to their everyday existence. We too glimpse awesomeness from time to time and return just as quickly to our ordinary lives. In thankfulness for both the ordinary and awe-full elements of our lives we give thanks to God with our offering.

Offertory Hymn VU 544 "In Gratitude and Humble Trust"

In gratitude and humble trust we bring our best today
to serve your cause and share your love with all along life's way.
O God, who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ, your Son,
teach us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.

Prayer of Dedication

Thank you, God, that you have blessed us from time to time with mountain top experiences, glimpses of glory that enhance our lives. We thank you also for the valley floor where most of our living occurs. It is in the balancing of these that we come to understand your movement in our lives. In Jesus' name we ask that you receive our thanks and our offerings. Amen.

Hymn VU 82 "A Light is Gleaming"

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

When light comes pouring into the darkest place,
it hurts our eyes to see the glow.

Sometimes a word of hope reminds us of our fears,
our memories and tears.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

When night is round us and every shadow grows,
a star is there to light our way.

It tells a story of Jesus who came near to say:
"God's light will ever stay."

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

And Jesus showed us a brighter path to walk.
He showed us things we hadn't seen.

Now we, like Jesus, can help creation shine,
and this will be a sign:

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

So let us live in the brightness God has giv'n,
and let us rise to see the dawn.

We trust that God is here asparkle and ablaze,
warming all our days.

A light is gleaming, spreading its arms throughout the night, living in the light.
Come share its gladness, God's radiant love is burning bright, living in the light.

Benediction

Jesus said:

“You are the light of the world.”

Let your light so shine that all around you may be moved to glorify God when they see the good that you do.

We go in peace, for God is with us.

Amen.

Response: “Go Now in Peace”

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.

God will go with you each hour of ev’ry day.

Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.

Know He will guide you in all you do.

Go now in love, and show you believe.

Reach out to others so all the world can see.

God will be there supporting us with love.

Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

Amen, amen, amen.

Postlude: “Christ Whose Glory Fills the Skies” Johann G. Werner arr. Cindy Berry

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held, following worship, on Sunday, March 3, 2024.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

St. Peter’s Anglican Church will be holding a pancake supper Tuesday, February 13, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. by freewill offering. A portion of the proceeds will go to support a hospital in Gaza that is unaffiliated with either Hamas or Israel.

Ash Wednesday Service

A joint worship service with St. Peter’s Anglican Church is planned for Ash Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 14, at St. Peter’s.

Belmont United Church is hosting a mid-week Lenten supper and worship series on Wednesdays from February 21st to March 20th (with the first session on Tuesday, February 13th at 7 p.m., following Pancake Supper.) A light supper will commence at 6:00 p.m., followed by a brief worship service at 6:45 p.m. Suggested donation for supper is \$5. Worship leaders include Karlene Kimber, Mary Dillon, David Dillon, and Mark Perry

LECTIONARY READINGS:

February 14 – Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 OR Isaiah 58:1-12; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 18 – First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15