



## Transfiguration of Our Lord

February 27, 2022

### Introduction

*Witnesses to the glory of God in the face of Jesus reflect that glory in the world. It was true for Moses. It was doubtless true for Peter, James, and John. We pray that it will be true of all of us who see God's glory in the word and in the supper and who are being "transformed into the same image" by God's Spirit.*

### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit who creates us, redeems us, and calls us by name. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Most merciful God,  
**we confess that we have sinned against you  
and your beloved children.  
We have turned our faces away from your glory  
when it did not appear as we expected.  
We have rejected your word  
when it made us confront ourselves.  
We have failed to show hospitality  
to those you called us to welcome.  
Accept our repentance for the things we have done  
and the things we have left undone.  
For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.  
Forgive us and lead us, that we may bathe  
in the glory of your Son born among us,  
and reflect your love for all creation. Amen.**

Rejoice in this good news:

In ✚ Christ Jesus, your sins are forgiven.

You are descendants of the Most High,  
adopted into the household of Christ,  
and inheritors of eternal life.

Live as freed and forgiven children of God. **Amen.**

**Opening Hymn ELW # 834 / LBW # 526** *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

*Listen and sing along [here](#).*

## Prayer of the Day

Holy God, mighty and immortal, you are beyond our knowing, yet we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Transform us into the likeness of your Son, who renewed our humanity so that we may share in his divinity, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## First Reading: Exodus 34:29-35

*Moses' face shone with the reflected glory of God after he received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. The sight caused the Israelites to be afraid, so Moses wore a veil to mask the radiance of God's glory, taking it off when he spoke directly with God.*

*Read the complete text [here](#).*

## Psalm: Psalm 99

- <sup>1</sup>The LORD is king; let the people tremble.  
The LORD is enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth shake.
- <sup>2</sup>**The LORD, great in Zion, is high above all peoples.**
- <sup>3</sup>Let them confess God's name, which is great and awesome;  
God is the Holy One.
- <sup>4</sup>**O mighty king, lover of justice, you have established equity;  
you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.**
- <sup>5</sup>Proclaim the greatness of the LORD and fall down before God's footstool;  
God is the Holy One.
- <sup>6</sup>**Moses and Aaron among your priests,  
and Samuel among those who call upon your name, O LORD,  
they called upon you, and you answered them,**
- <sup>7</sup>you spoke to them out of the pillar of cloud;  
they kept your testimonies and the decree that you gave them.
- <sup>8</sup>**O LORD our God, you answered them indeed;  
you were a God who forgave them, yet punished them for their evil deeds.**
- <sup>9</sup>Proclaim the greatness of the LORD and worship upon God's holy hill;  
for the LORD our God is the Holy One.

## Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2

*In his debates with the Corinthians, Paul contrasts the glory of Moses with the glory of Christ. The Israelites could not see Moses' face because of the veil. But in Christ we see the unveiled glory of God and are transformed into Christ's likeness.*

*Read the complete text [here](#).*

## **Gospel: Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]**

*The conversation about Jesus' suffering and death is enclosed in a dazzling foreshadowing of the resurrection. God affirms Jesus' identity, the disciples are stunned speechless, and Jesus resumes his mission with a demonstration of his power over evil.*

*Read the complete text [here](#).*

### **Reflection on the Text**

Transfiguration Sunday is always the last Sunday before the beginning of Lent. It marks the last Sunday after Epiphany and the Sunday before Ash Wednesday. On this Sunday, we always get a Gospel text about Jesus going up the mountain and being transfigured while with Moses and Elijah.

When I read text in preparation for writing a sermon, several questions always come to mind. For this text, the first is a simple question – how did Peter know that Jesus was talking with Moses and Elijah? They are not, as best we can tell, wearing name tags. I don't think Peter could have looked them up on Facebook, or Twitter, or Instagram and look at their profile pictures. So how did he know? As I did some research, I found that it turns out, no one knows. We simply cannot tell if Peter heard or saw something that made him sure who was standing there with Jesus, but he was sure that it was Moses and Elijah.

The next thing I noticed is that in Luke's gospel, Jesus went to pray. We are not told this elsewhere, but in Luke's Gospel, right before anything of significance happens, Jesus goes to pray. Luke tells us that Jesus spends a lot of time in prayer, and that seems to be intentional, maybe like Luke is trying to tell us something.

I cannot image that any of us would say that we spend too much time in prayer, and most of us would probably admit that we could spend MORE time in prayer. I think Luke is pointing that out. If Jesus spends a lot of time in prayer to his Father in Heaven, then so should we.

Another thing that stands out to me in Luke's Gospel is the conversation itself. If you read verse 31 and think about it – this is a pivotal point in Jesus' ministry, and most likely explains why Moses and Elijah are there, and even helps us to understand why it had to be Moses and Elijah. Verse 31 reads: "They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." The word used for departure is Exodus – just like the exodus that Moses led. According to N.T. Wright, Moses led the people out of slavery to the promised land; just as Jesus will lead the people out of slavery to sin and death and home to their promised inheritance to the new creation in which the whole world would be redeemed. (N.T. Wright, **Luke for Everyone**, p 115)

Who better for Jesus to talk to about an exodus of the people than Moses? While Jesus is not leading the people through a physical wilderness, those of us on the journey often talk of feeling like we are lost in the wilderness and looking for a burning bush to tell us what is going on and which way to go. Especially after two years of dealing with Covid, we are unsure of what is next and which way to turn. The reference to Moses and the Exodus begins to make a lot of sense. As for Elijah, he is the one taken up by God – ascended into heaven – just as Jesus will do after the resurrection. Again - it begins to make a lot of sense why these two Old Testament figures are present at this decisive meeting.

Then there is the voice from heaven – “Listen to him” - a voice directed at the disciples. A voice telling them, and through them – telling us, to listen to what Jesus tells us. It is important.

This leads us back to the present. What are we to hear in this text? How are we to use this in our lives?

I think it goes back to prayer. Prayer must be an important part of our life. We must learn to pray for ourselves and for others. We must learn to pray for our friends and our enemies. We must learn to pray for our needs and for our discernment. We must learn to pray for peace, here and now.

And we must listen. We must listen to Jesus. Not just for his voice now, but to what he tells his disciples. Especially the commands he gives to love one another. The command to love God. The command to pray for one another. The command to love unconditionally, just as God loves us.

Pray, and listen. Hear what God might be saying to you. Love God and love neighbor. See what God is showing you. Listen as you pray, listen as you love your neighbor, listen as you love God. See what might be revealed to you, just as Jesus was revealed to Peter, and James, and John on the mountain as the Son of God, the one sent to lead us out of our sin and into eternal life. Amen.

**Hymn of the Day 315/ LBW # 89**

***How Good, Lord, to Be Here!***

*Listen and sing along [here](#).*

**Nicene Creed**

*We profess our faith with the whole church in all times and places:*

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### **Prayers of Intercession**

The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

*A brief silence.*

Transform us by your greatness, O God. Send us down the mountain to share joy with all people. Make us agents of change, confident that your hope will vanquish despair and your goodness will conquer evil. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

The mountains and valleys sing your praise. Dazzle us with your presence in every landscape: bluffs built by ancient glaciers, canyons carved by flowing rivers, flat horizons with uninterrupted views, and sands shaped by ocean tides.  
God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You love justice and establish equity. Strengthen leaders of local governments, community nonprofits, and grassroots campaigns. Bless them with gifts of integrity, creativity, and sound conscience. Build up safe and joyful communities where all people may thrive. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Heal those who are in distress. Give patience to those waiting for answers. Grant hope to those who have reached the limits of treatment. Give compassionate hearts to those who accompany loved ones through illness and uncertainty. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Today we shout alleluia from the mountaintop; this week we enter the wilderness of Lent. Bless all who prepare and lead us in worship during this change of season: pastors, musicians, and all who contribute to our worship life. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

It is your will to hold both heaven and earth in a single peace. Let the light of your great love shine upon us, and give peace to your church, peace among nations, peace in our homes, and peace in our hearts. We pray especially for peace between Russia and Ukraine. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Blessed are they who listened to Christ's voice in this life and now rest with him. Transform us from glory into glory, and give us your peace, that we do not lose heart. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

### **Lord's Prayer**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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.**

**Closing Hymn ELW # 318/ WOV # 654**      *Alleluia, Song of Gladness*

*Listen and sing along [here](#).*

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Today's reflection was written by Pastor Ray Sipe.