



Our Savior's Lutheran Church

Aurora, MN

Transfiguration of Our Lord
Last Sunday after Epiphany

February 14, 2021

Pastor Greg Anderson

PRELUDE

HEARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

LBW pg. 77

HYMN

“Arise, your Light Has Come!”

WOV # 652

Arise, your light has come! The Spirit's call obey; show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today.

Arise, your light has come! Fling wide the prison door; proclaim the captive's liberty, good tidings to the poor.

GREETING

LBW pg. 78

KYRIE

LBW pg. 78

HYMN OF PRAISE

“This is the Feast...”

LBW pg. 81

C: Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

Power and riches and wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are his.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia. Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation. Blessing and honor and glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God. For the Lamb Who was slain has begun His reign:

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

FIRST READING

2 Kings 2:1-12

2Now 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.

R: The word of the Lord. **C: *Thanks be to God.***

PSALM 50:1-6(read responsively)

¹The mighty one, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

²**Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.**

³Our God comes and does not keep silence, before him is a devouring fire, and a mighty tempest all around him.

⁴**He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, that he may judge his people:**

⁵"Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!"

⁶**The heavens declare his righteousness, for God himself is judge.**

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

³And even 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.

R: The word of the Lord. **C: *Thanks be to God.***

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

LBW pg. 83

C: *Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.*

GOSPEL INTRODUCTION

LBW pg. 83

C: *Glory to you O lord.*

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.

GOSPEL RESPONSE

LBW pg. 83

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Sermon Transfiguration of Our Lord 2.14.2021

Preaching about the Transfiguration is one of my favorite Sundays. It brings an end to the season of Epiphany, which is about the starting of Jesus' ministry. We see Jesus revealed in his glory before we journey into Lent and continue toward the cross. I have included in my message a sermon outline and an excellent commentary from Melinda Quivick from Luther Seminaries Working Preacher web site. Please enjoy.

Peace,

Pastor Greg Anderson

218-234-7217

I. I believe that we are in a constant state of Transformation

- From growth to death, everything is moving and changing
- My puppy Zena was 3 and a half pounds, she grew to 49 pounds
- I watch my nieces and nephews grow up, oldest now a Physical Therapist in the cities
- watching transformation not easy

I. Is Transformation part of the Christian life? Yes! What is the goal of the Christian Life?

1. To be become unified with the Creator of the Universe
2. To be transformed (transfigured) into Christ

II. To be transformed into Christ. What does this mean?

- the sinful self will be washed away, destroyed, this is a daily happening thru Baptism
- we will be raised from the dead, new bodies
- God will make us perfect

III. Where do we see a hint of this transformation?

- Our text, In Jesus...his divinity
- At a place where Jesus is close to the cross, let there be no doubt!
- On the mountain top, This is my Son the beloved!

IV. What happens in Christ's transformation? (Greek culture)

- metamorphoo* "to change into another form"
- gods could change into other forms, a claim of divinity
- Christ face shines like the sun (*lampo*)

V. In the Transfiguration we see the promise of the future!

Luther Glorify God, Love of Neighbor...people it's not about you!

- we see the promise of the resurrection, (death is defeated)
- we see the transformation that begins at baptism (whole life)
- we see the hope that God gives us salvation for free!

Melinda Quivik

Liturgical and Homiletical Scholar

St. Paul, Minnesota

Every time we gather for worship (these days, distant from each other in person or on a screen), we are the disciples on the mountain seeing the rabbi—the carpenter from Nazareth who became our teacher—bathed in light.

At first, it seems, Jesus and Peter, James, and John are out for a hike. A high mountain: the sort of place eager mountaineers might yearn to scale for the vista. Then everything changes.

The vision the disciples behold removes the veil of Jesus' humanness to reveal his divinity: wondrous, frightening, powerful, unexpected, and rich, connecting all ages (the prophets Elijah and Moses with Jesus), giving enlightenment. His external appearance is utterly changed.

Jesus' transfiguration is not to be approached with the assumption that we can understand it. It means to draw us in toward what is abnormal, unnatural—like the burning fire that does not consume the bush (Moses' first encounter with YHWH in Exodus 3:1-6) and like the fire Elijah hoped for and received from God on the altar drenched in water to win the wager against the prophets of Baal (Elijah's story in 1 Kings 18). The Transfiguration places Jesus in the lineage and honor of the two prophets who stand beside him on the mountain.

The disciples are terrified in a way that means they fear they will be harmed (see Ezekiel 34:28). Yet, they seek for a way to remain in the presence of what terrifies them. The drama of the moment suggests that it harbors danger.

And then the cloud appears as another manifestation of the divine with the voice that reminds us of the voice from heaven at Jesus' baptism in Mark 1:11. Here, however, the voice does not speak in second person to Jesus ("You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased") but in the third person to the disciples ("This is my Son ... listen to him"). The Transfiguration gives the disciples the experience of witnessing a most amazing and unspeakable vision that draws them to want to stay there, dwell in that place of wonder, and then to be told by the voice of the divine that their job is not to abide in that wonder but to go back down the mountain. The voice in the cloud is directed at the disciples, to the church, rather than to the Son as it was at his baptism. It speaks to Jesus' identity so that the church can see what Jesus alone heard when he was baptized.

We might use the words "transfigure" and "transform" interchangeably, but there is a helpful distinction to keep in mind. To be transfigured is to be changed in outward form or appearance. Jesus' transfiguration does not alter who he is but gives to those who see the changed visage a new understanding of him because they see him outwardly in a different light. When we speak of transformation we tend to mean a complete or essential change in composition or structure. Jesus on the mountain with Moses and Elijah is not transformed (changed inwardly) but transfigured before his disciples (shown to be other than assumed). He is not made to have a new essential self but an appearance that conveys his standing in the company of Israel's greatest prophets.

In worship, week after week, through the Word of God, our vision is restored. We are enabled by God to see Jesus as savior (something more than a teacher of morality and ethics) because the dazzling clothes constitute an epiphany. His transfiguration transforms the disciples in the story and transforms us by removing the veil over our vision. The preacher

who wants to work with the imagery of veiled sight will benefit from enigmatic language about being veiled and given the light in the appointed RCL Epistle from 2 Corinthians 4:3-6. Also helpful is 2 Corinthians 3:18 with its promise that “all of us with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image...”

The Transfiguration stands between the Time after Pentecost, when we are learning to be church, and Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday, when we are thrust back into the hard truth that we are dust. The power of the Transfiguration is that it plants in our hearts and minds the brilliance of eternity on the mountain with the greatest prophets, emboldening us for the journey together as the body of Christ. The Transfiguration thus prepares us to come to terms with our humility, our soil nature, our utter dependence on God.

It is no small matter that the scene ends with the word “dead.” Jesus has embraced his identity as one who will die and be raised. He signals the journey ahead that will be coming when he and his disciples have left the mountain. It is one thing to have had a “high” experience, “a mountaintop” experience with Jesus up in the clouds where everything is brilliant, but it is not the be-all-and-end-all. The reason for the identification of Jesus with Moses and Elijah is for the church, the disciples, to realize their crucial work in the world: to accompany Jesus to the cross, to take up our crosses, to die in order to live, to be last in order to be first, to refuse the invitation to turn away from God’s laws.

The church has a responsibility: to listen to God’s Son. That listening does not result in staying aloof where the air is pure and the view is stunning. The church must listen to the voice of God’s Word in our midst so that we follow in a way that leads to the cross. We are not called to have power over others but to rise up as dust that has been formed by the breath of God and give life to others, especially those who are neglected by the powerful

HYMN

“Beautiful Savior”

LBW # 518

Beautiful Savior, King of Creation, Son of God and Son of Man! Truly I'd love Thee, Truly I'd serve Thee,
Light of my soul, my Joy, my Crown.

Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands, Robed in flowers of blooming spring; Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer;
He makes our sorrowing spirit sing.

APOSTLES' CREED

We believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. We believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. We 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

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: let us pray, **C: *Have mercy, O God.***

THE PEACE
OFFERING
OFFERTORY
OFFERING PRAYER
THE LORD'S PRAYER

LBW pg. 91

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.

BENEDICTION
SENDING HYMN

“Shine, Jesus Shine”

LBW pg. 95
WOV # 651

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.

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 on me, Shine on me.

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.

As we gaze on your kingly brightness, so our faces display your likeness, ever changing from glory to glory. Mirrored her, may our lives tell your story. Shine on me, shine on me.

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.

DISMISSAL

LBW pg. 95

Prayer Concerns

Lorna Kallio, Charlotte and Ken Carlson, Marie Anderson, Louise Ellingson, Glorene Clark, Herb Moore, Bill Utley, Bob Kallio, Marilyn Koschak, Susan (Paula Skelton's sister), Tom Lehtinen, Ruby Okstad (218-749-2866)