

SA, SL, TS & DSM United Churches

Transfiguration Sunday – March 2nd, 2025

Prelude: - by Christie Coatsworth

Welcome & Announcements:

Thank you for your support of all our past services, which are posted on our websites - Talbotstreet.ca and Southbuxton.ca

Lighting the Christ Candle:

Call to Worship:

Eric: Trust in God.

People: We delight in God,

Eric: for God tends to the desires of our hearts,

People: and commits us to the bright day of justice.

Eric: Do not fret, for God is near.

People: We come to worship because God is good.

Opening Hymn: VU 395 “Come In, Come In and Sit Down”

*Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.*

You know the reason why you came,
yet no reason can explain;
so share in the laughter and cry in the pain,
for we are a part of the family.
God is with us in this place,
like a mother's warm embrace.
We're all forgiven by God's grace,
for we are a part of the family.

*Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.*

There's life to be shared in the bread and the wine;
we are the branches, Christ is the vine.
This is God's temple, it's not yours or mine,
but we are a part of the family.

There's rest for the weary and health for us all;
there's a yoke that is easy, and a burden that's small.
So come in and worship and answer the call,
for we are a part of the family.

*Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.*

Opening Prayer:

People: Come closer to us, O God: reconcile us to our brothers and sisters, care for our ageing generations, forgive us for our wrongdoing, protect us from our future famine. Come closer to us, O God, draw us nearer to each other through you. Embrace with us, weep with us, that we may be family again. Amen.

Responsive Psalm: Psalm 99

Our Lord Is King

Our Lord, you are King! You rule from your throne above the winged creatures, as people tremble and the earth shakes.

You are praised in Zion, and you control all nations.

Only you are God! And your power alone, so great and fearsome, is worthy of praise.

You are our mighty King, a lover of fairness, who sees that justice is done everywhere in Israel.

Our Lord and our God, we praise you and kneel down to worship you, the God of holiness!

Moses and Aaron were two of your priests.

Samuel was also one of those who prayed in your name, and you, our Lord, answered their prayers.

You spoke to them from a thick cloud, and they obeyed your laws.

Our Lord and our God, you answered their prayers and forgave their sins, but when they did wrong, you punished them.

We praise you, Lord God, and we worship you at your sacred mountain. Only you are God!

Children's Story:

Children's Song: "O, Be Careful"

O, be careful, little eyes, what you see,
O, be careful, little eyes, what you see,
For the Father up above is looking down in love,
So, be careful, little eyes, what you see.

O, be careful, little ears, what you hear,
O, be careful, little ears, what you hear,
For the Father up above is looking down in love,
So, be careful, little ears, what you hear.

O, be careful, little tongue, what you say,
O, be careful, little tongue, what you say,

For the Father up above is looking down in love,
So, be careful, little tongue, what you say.

O, be careful, little hands, what you do,
O, be careful, little hands, what you do,
For the Father up above is looking down in love,
So, be careful, little hands, what you do.

O, be careful, little feet, where you go,
O, be careful, little feet, where you go,
For the Father up above is looking down in love,
So, be careful, little feet, where you go.

Scripture: Luke 9: 28 - 36

The True Glory of Jesus

About eight days later Jesus took Peter, John, and James with him and went up on a mountain to pray. While he was praying, his face changed, and his clothes became shining white. Suddenly Moses and Elijah were there speaking with him. They appeared in heavenly glory and talked about all that Jesus' death[a] in Jerusalem would mean. Peter and the other two disciples had been sound asleep. All at once they woke up and saw how glorious Jesus was. They also saw the two men who were with him. Moses and Elijah were about to leave, when Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here! Let us make three shelters, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But Peter did not know what he was talking about. While Peter was still speaking, a shadow from a cloud passed over, and they were frightened as the cloud covered them. From the cloud a voice spoke, "This is my chosen Son. Listen to what he says!" After the voice had spoken, Peter, John, and James saw only Jesus. For some time they kept quiet and did not say anything about what they had seen.

Message: "Holy Mystery"

This last Sunday of Epiphany is also known as Transfiguration Sunday. Transfiguration Sunday reminds us that things are not always as they seem. We celebrate God's presence with us and share stories – ordinary events that shine with extraordinary grace. Throughout the Season of Epiphany our eyes have been opened to many kinds of events that are not what they seem.

The Season of Epiphany is one of the short seasons in the Church liturgical calendar. It ends in the shortest month of the year February. February is also reserved as "Black History Month". There are a lot of eye openers in the short month of February.

Luke shares with us the story of Peter, John, and James witnessing Jesus' transfiguration on a mountaintop. As Jesus is praying, Moses and the prophet Elijah appear with him. This event is a vibrant revelation of God's power in Christ. It is an eye opener to the disciples and a reminder to us that Jesus may not be, as they may have seemed.

Despite this amazing moment, Peter, John, and James find themselves overwhelmed with sleep. Peter groggily suggests that they build three booths, one each for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. But this is not a time to stop and commemorate; there is so much more to be revealed. As Peter is speaking, a fog covers them. The disciples are terrified when a voice from the cloud announces that Jesus is the chosen one and commands the disciples to listen to him. When the fog lifts, Jesus is alone again with the disciples. The disciples are to tell no one. How could they even tell someone – who would believe them?

Though this scene is so out of the ordinary, we can relate to some themes. Everyone goes through times when there are more questions than answers. Epiphany is about receiving glimpses of those answers. The star that shone over Bethlehem is now the same light that shines at Jesus' transfiguration. We are half way from Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan to his death on the cross and Jesus' resurrection three days later. What God spoke at the Jordan at Jesus' baptism is again spoken here on the mountaintop. "This is my beloved Son, listen to him".

Transfiguration Sunday provides an opportunity to remember those times when we encounter Holy Mystery in astounding ways. Some of you may have had mountaintop experiences that have transformed your lives. Others of us, we find God's presence to be more subtle. We find God in smaller – maybe even daily – ways.

As much as Epiphany opens our eyes to whom Jesus is to the world, including Jesus' transfiguration, Lent prepares us to be reflections of Christ. We move with opened eyes to recognizing within us the presence of Holy Mystery that will empower us for the journey into Lent. It is not an easy journey, but one we must travel. We do not travel it alone. God is always with us. Thanks be to God.

Reflection Hymn: VU 600 "When I Needed a Neighbour"

When I needed a neighbour, were you there,
were you there?
When I needed a neighbour, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty, were you there,
were you there?
I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
were you there?

I was cold, I was naked, were you there,
were you there?
I was cold, I was naked, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
were you there?

When I needed a healer, were you there,
were you there?
When I needed a healer, were you there?
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
were you there?

Wherever you travel I'll be there,
I'll be there,
wherever you travel I'll be there.
And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
I'll be there.

Invitation to Share Our Gifts:

Eric: We live in the wonderful reality of God's promise. In the name of Jesus Christ, we offer our gifts to be blessed, and shared with those in need.

Offertory: VU 541 "Praise God From Whom..."

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Offertory Prayer:

People: God bless our offerings as you have blessed our bodies and lives. Help us give more of ourselves, hearts, and resources to see your merciful love embodied in all of us. Amen.

Hymn: VU 400 "Listen To Your Children Praying"

Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace!

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer:

Closing Hymn: VU 506 "Take My Life and Let It Be"

Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, all for thee;
take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet, and let them be
swift and purposeful for thee.

Take my lips, and let them be
filled with messages from thee;
take my intellect, and use
every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine;
take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love: and I will pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

Blessing:

Eric: Bless this day, and may we share God's blessing to the world, now and forever more.

Chorus: VU 395 Chorus

*Come in, come in and sit down,
you are a part of the family.
We are lost and we are found,
and we are a part of the family.*

Amen, Amen, Amen.

Postlude: – Christie Coatsworth