



Transfiguration February 23, 2020 10 a.m.

*GATHERING

There are rare, precious times when the awesome power of God strikes us. Then our whole being is filled with light and our spirits are illuminated. What was clouded before suddenly becomes clear, faith that had been uncertain is confirmed. We do not create these awesome moments: they are gifts to us from the Holy One, our gracious God.

The peace of the Holy One is always with you.

All: And also with you.

*HYMN

We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding
This is Hymn 182 in The New Century Hymnal.

HYFRYDOL

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 through our clouds and shadows,
splendor 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.

***PRAYER**

On the mountain, Holy One, your Christ knew your glorious presence. Grant us today the wonder of your glory and the grace of your presence that we might be transformed to his Way.

That the radiance of Christ may shine into the dark corners of our minds, where we nurse and grow our anger:

All: Redeemer Christ, come and heal; radiant Christ, come and transform.

That the radiance of Christ may shine in the dark depths of our souls, on our burden of guilt and regret:

All: Redeemer Christ, come and heal; radiant Christ, come and transform.

That the radiance of Christ may drive out the darkness of sin and ignorance, and renew the fullness of our lives:

All: Redeemer Christ, come and heal; radiant Christ, come and transform.

Sisters and brothers, the radiance of Christ leaves no trace of our being untouched, no wild part of our spirits unchallenged, and no thirst for righteousness unsatisfied. Rejoice and give thanks, for we are made new in that glorious light for now and forever.

All: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

All: On the mountain, Holy One, you showed your glory in the transfigured Christ. Give us eyes to see beyond the turmoil of our world and to behold our Christ in all his glory. Amen.

A LESSON FROM THE LAW

Exodus 24:12-18

Listen for a word from God from the Law.

The Holy One said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them." Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the Holy One settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day the Holy One called to Moses out of the cloud. Now the appearance of the glory was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

God is still speaking. Thanks be to God.

A LESSON FROM PSALM 99

ELLACOMBE

All sing: The glory of the Holy One now rules o'er all the earth!

You rule, Holy One, in glorious majesty, all the nations of earth tremble!

All: You wear the light of galaxies; all the peoples stand in awe!

Greater than anything we know, you shape all time and space.

All: We, your people, praise your name, and worship you, the Holy One!

Great Ruler, lover of justice, you uphold truth and goodness.

All: You establish the rule of justice and call your people to righteousness.

Let everyone sing your praise and stand before you in worship.

All: To all who call on your holy name, you are present with great power.

O unspeakable Name, even now you hear your people.

All: You will utterly destroy all evil, yet you embrace us with forgiveness.

We celebrate such awesome love; we exult in the Holy One our God!

All: You rule, Holy One, in glorious majesty, all the nations of earth tremble!

All sing: The glory of the Holy One now rules o'er all the earth!

A LESSON FROM THE GOSPELS

Matthew 17:1-9

Listen for a word from God from the Gospel of Matthew.

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, "Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

God is still speaking. Thanks be to God.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Adapted from Teilhard de Chardin

All: We believe in you, our transfigured Christ, whose brow is of snow, whose eyes are of fire, whose feet are more dazzling than gold poured from the furnace; whose hands hold captive the stars.

You are the first and the last, the living, the dead, and risen again. You gather up in your superabundant oneness, every delight, every energy, every phase of existence.

To you our very beings cry out with a longing as vast as the universe, for you are indeed our Christ and our God. Amen.

***HYMN**

O Wondrous Sight, O Vision Fair

O WALY WALY

*This is Hymn 184 in The New Century Hymnal.**We will sing it to a more familiar tune from Hymn 362.*

O wondrous sight, O vision fair
of glory that the church shall share,
which Christ upon the mountain shows,
where brighter than the sun Christ glows!

From age to age the tale declare,
how with the three disciples there,
where Moses and Elijah meet,
they with the Christ God's future greet.

The law and prophets there have place,
two chosen witnesses of grace;
the voice of God out from the cloud
proclaims this chosen One aloud.

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

PRAYERS

OFFERING

PRAYER

All: Receive, Holy One, all we bring before you – ourselves, our gifts, this bread, this cup. Bring us now to that radiant glory which we see in the transfigured Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Holy One is with you.

All: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them with great joy.

Let us give thanks to the Holy One our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

We do offer thanks and praise, Holy One, for you are glorious in power and grace. We have seen your glory in the pillar of fire as you led your people from slavery to freedom. We have seen your glory in the word of the prophets who proclaimed in the darkness a great light would shine. We have seen your glory in Christ as he was transfigured before Peter, James, and John. In that moment of glory, he heard again your great affirmation: he is your Beloved. Therefore, with all your people of every time and place, of every race and tongue, we celebrate your glory with hearts overflowing with gratitude and joy.

Your Christ, the transfigured one, is the promise and the hope that is ours for now and forever.

At table with friends, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them, saying: Take and eat. This is my life, broken for you, broken for all.

In the same way, he took the cup, blessed it and gave it to them, saying: Take and drink. This is my love, poured out for you, poured out for all. Do this often and remember: I am with you always.

Obedying Christ's command, with all who gather at this Table, remember the mystery of our faith:

All: You, O Christ, are Life and Love for us and for all – in times past, in this time, in all time and forever. Thanks be to God.

By the power of your Spirit, Holy One, bless us, your people gather here, and bless these gifts – this bread, this cup. In them, may we taste and see your glory as we are filled with the life and love of Christ. Then, transformed by his Presence, send us out to be your own light in the world living, loving, and serving in his name.

All: Blessing and honor, glory and power are yours, Holy One, with Christ and with the Spirit, in this place and everywhere, on this day and forever. Amen.

OUR REDEEMER'S PRAYER

Sung

HOLY COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

All: Holy One, we see your glory in the transfigured Christ. May we who have known his Presence at this Table carry his life and love in our words and deeds that all the world may know your glory and grace. Amen.

*HYMN

Christ, Be Our Light

The music for this hymn is provided as it is not in the hymnal.

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.

Longing for truth, we turn to you.

Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.

Shine through the darkness.

Christ, be our light!

Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.
Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

***BLESSING**

Not all is as it appears:
there is a glory hidden in everything
waiting to be revealed
to the eyes of those who believe
not in what seems inevitable
but in the promises of the Holy One.

So, hold on to the vision, walk the more difficult path,
and seek always the greater glory that is to come.

Go in peace; go in hope; go in love.
All: Amen.

***CLOSING PRAISE**

All sing: Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.