

Our Service of Worship for February 27, 2022

# TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

## THE LAST SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

Westwood First Presbyterian Church

Cincinnati, OH



### GATHERING AROUND GOD'S WORD

#### Welcome and Announcements

#### Prelude

*[During the Prelude, you are invited to take a moment to prepare for worship.]*

#### Ringling of the Tower Bell

**Choral Introit:** “*O Wondrous Sight, O Vision Fair*”

#### \* Call to Worship *(based on —responsive)*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

Beyond our busyness, above the cold winter floor, there is a glory rising born of heaven and reaching out to each one of us

**A light that shines through the clouds an invitation seeking all of who we are that transfigures the world**

That transforms darkness into hope, that brings life from a cross, where old life ends and new life is born

**In glory Jesus meets us here, raising us from depths of valley to the height of the mountain carrying the weight of our humanity to the heights of heavens glory.**

As we worship this day, may we hear again: “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!”

#### Opening Prayer *(Leader only)*

Sovereign God, on mountaintops and valley floors you reveal to us the light of your love. Our hearts desire is to bask in the amazing glory of your divine presence. With each encounter we are changed and transformed. Draw us nearer that we might receive a double portion of your Holy Spirit. Help us, Holy One, to live our lives as a reflection of divine glory. May we walk among through our lives as a blessing, bearing light into dark places, hope to displace despair, and love that casts out hate. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

#### \* Hymn No. 73: “*Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory*” \*\*

**Invitation to Confession** (*Based on Psalm 35:18—Leader only*)

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Therefore, let us admit our brokenness to God: first in the responsive Litany of Confession, followed by a moment of silent reflection.

**Litany of Confession** (*Responsive*)

God of Mercy, Jesus came to break down the walls of hostility between us:

**Yet we maintain walls that separate and isolate.**

You give us the ministry of reconciliation:

**Yet we nurse our wounds and withhold mercy and forgiveness.**

You invite us to join you on the mountain of Transfiguration:

**Yet we deny the wonders you have worked in our own lives.**

You ask us to acknowledge and share our wealth:

**Yet we refuse to recognize and relieve the poverty around us.**

You bless our lives with boundless love:

**Yet we fail to witness to that love, and so keep others from knowing you.**

Forgive our selfishness, we pray.

**Transform us by your Spirit and your Word into that which pleases you, the image of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

**A Moment for Silent, Personal Confession**

*[All are invited to take a moment for silent, personal reflection]*

**Assurance of Forgiveness** (*Responsive*)

Jesus admonished Peter, James, and John not to tell of what they witnessed on the mountain until he was resurrected. But we can tell what we have seen and heard of God's glory! Here is the good news:

**Jesus lives! He is raised! We are forgiven!**

Go, share the vision! Tell of God's love! In this God is well pleased!

**Thanks be to God.**

May Christ's light shine in you always and may His peace be with you always.

**And also with you.**

\* **Gloria Patri** (*Unison*)

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,**

**As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end.**

**Amen, amen.**

**PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD**

**Prayer for Illumination** (*Leader only*)

Reveal your presence to us this day, O God of Light, Love, and Glory. As you did to your servants at the foot of the mountain send your Spirit to show us your story. May the brilliance of your face illuminate this place as we dare to proclaim your Word and may we, your people, be never unable to tell all of that we have heard. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

**First Reading:** *Exodus 34:29-35—Moses Comes Down from Mt. Sinai*

<sup>29</sup> Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. <sup>30</sup> When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup> But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. <sup>32</sup> Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai.

<sup>33</sup> When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; <sup>34</sup> but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, <sup>35</sup> the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

**Gospel Reading:** *Luke 9:28-36—The Transfiguration*

<sup>28</sup> Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup> And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup> Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. <sup>31</sup> They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

<sup>32</sup> Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. <sup>33</sup> Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. <sup>34</sup> While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup> Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!” <sup>36</sup> When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

**Sermon:** “*Metamorphosis*”

**RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD**

**Invitation to Offering** (*Leader only*)

*[No offering will be collected. Please place your offerings in the baskets located at the entrances to the sanctuary. Thank you.]*

The offerings we make each week empowers ministry within our congregation and in response to the needs of our community and our world, supporting the work of ministries that reach people who are in desperate need to feel the touch of Christ’s love and reconciliation. Through our connectional giving, we have built a transforming gift for people in Cincinnati and throughout the world. It is a great testament to what we can do when we work together! This ministry only happens with your generous support. Thank you! You are invited once again to give generously as we worship God through sharing our gifts, tithes, and offerings.

**Offertory Prayer** (*Unison*)

Gracious God, upon this bright mountain you bless us with your presence and shower us with the gift of your grace. May this money be used to reflect that bright grace in a world in desperate need of it. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Anthem:** “*Be Thou My Vision*”—John Ferguson  
Chancel Choir

**The Pastoral Prayer**

[*During the prayer, at the pause, feel free to say the name of someone in need of prayer, or a joy or concern on your heart. The prayer concludes with the Lord's Prayer.*]

**The Lord's Prayer** (*Unison*)

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

**BEARING GOD'S WORD INTO THE WORLD**

\* **Hymn No. 379:** “*My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less*” \*\*

**Charge and Benediction**

**Choral Response:** “*Seven-fold Amen*”—John Stainer

**Postlude:** “*Gigue in D Major*” (Orch. Suite No. 3)—J. S. Bach

\* Where indicated (\*), those who are able are invited to stand.

\*\* The words to the hymns are included in the bulletin.

---

**AS OUR WORSHIP SERVICE  
ENDS, OUR MINISTRY OF  
SERVICE NOW BEGINS!**

---

**Leading Worship This Morning:**

Rev. Dr. Jeff Colarossi, *Pastor*

Heather MacPhail, *Organist/Director of Music Ministries*

Jason Dennison, *Videographer/Director of Technology*

Mary Beth Baverman, *Worship Leader*

### Announcements and Prayer Requests

- † February West-Fed Food Pantry needs: Toothpaste, crackers and bars of soap
- † Congratulations to Alex and Hannah Richmond, son and daughter-in-law of Beth and Denny Richmond, at the birth of Hudson David Richmond, last Friday, February 18.
- † The flowers this morning are given by:
  - ♥ Denny & Beth Richmond in of memory our parents, Jim & Dolores Richmond.
  - ♥ Linda Gardner in memory of Russell Lenahan, her nephew.
- † Prayers are requested for:
  - ♥ Sandy Morris, who is recovering from surgery.
  - ♥ Barb Nieman recovering from surgery to repair her broken arm.
  - ♥ Rhonda Boddy, recovering from a car accident.
  - ♥ Dominic, a teen-aged friend of the Zorn's, undergoing open heart surgery.
  - ♥ Susie, a friend of the Kochheisers, undergoing chemotherapy.
  - ♥ Kathy Kiefer, who has been hospitalized with kidney issues.
  - ♥ Linda Kugele who continues to deal with breathing issues.
  - ♥ Betsy Forte, Chancie Brown's sister, dealing with personal issues.
  - ♥ Our homebound members and friends.
  - ♥ The discernment team.
  - ♥ The members of our Session



**“Transfiguration”** by Mike Moyers

## Hymns

### **Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory—Hymn #73**

Swiftly pass the clouds of glory, Heaven's voice, the dazzling light;  
Moses and Elijah vanish; Christ alone commands the height!  
Peter, James, and John fall silent, turning from the summit's rise  
Downward toward the shadowed valley where their Lord has fixed His eyes.

Glimpsed and gone the revelation, they shall gain and keep its truth,  
Not by building on the mountain any shrine or sacred booth,  
But by following the Savior through the valley to the cross  
And by testing faith's resilience through betrayal, pain, and loss.

Lord, transfigure our perception with the purest light that shines,  
And recast our life's intentions to the shape of Your designs,  
Till we seek no other glory than what lies past Calvary's hill  
And our living and our dying and our rising by Your will.



### **My Hope is Built on Nothing Less—Hymn 379#**

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain: On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand  
All other ground is sinking sand.

His oath, his covenant, his blood, supports me in the 'whelming flood;  
When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay. [Refrain]

When He shall come with trumpet sound, oh may I then in Him be found  
Dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne [Refrain]



### **Moment for Meditation One: The Transfiguration**

Why does the celebration of the Transfiguration take place just before Lent in denominations that follow the Revised Common Lectionary? We celebrate the revelation of Christ's glory "before the passion," so that we may "be strengthened to bear our cross and be changed into his likeness." The focus of the Lenten season is renewed discipline in walking in the way of the cross and rediscovery of the baptismal renunciation of evil and sin and our daily adherence to Christ. At Easter, which reveals the fullness of Christ's glory (foreshadowed in the Transfiguration), Christians give themselves anew to the gospel at the Easter Vigil where they share the dying and rising of Christ.

In the biblical context, the synoptic gospels narrate the Transfiguration as a bridge between Jesus' public ministry and his passion. From the time of the Transfiguration, Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem and the cross.

~ [www.umcdiscipleship.org](http://www.umcdiscipleship.org)

The season of Epiphany focuses our attention on Jesus as the Christ, the beloved Son of God, the Messiah. Like the scene of Jesus' baptism, we hear God's voice not only identifying Jesus as God's Son, but also imploring the disciples to listen to him. The presence of Moses and Elijah connect Jesus with the law and the prophets; Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophetic voices of the Hebrew Bible. Like we were at Jesus' baptism, we are presented with a dramatic scene that compels us to explore and experience this intersection of the divine and our humanity.

Luke wants to leave us with no doubt that God has revealed himself through Jesus. The liberating work of Moses in the Exodus is magnified; we are liberated in our life in Christ. The powerful words and motifs of justice, mercy, and righteousness that we experience through the prophets are exemplified by Elijah, and will be made manifest and embodied in the work of Jesus. As we continue to engage this intersection of the divine and humanity, we do so through the lenses of justice, mercy, and righteousness that Jesus embodies as the Christ and as fully human. This exemplifies that as we journey with Christ and in Christ, these should be the pillars of our lives as well.

~ Rev. Patrick Burke, [www.episcopal church.org](http://www.episcopal church.org)



### **Moment for Meditation Two: Lent is Coming!**

Mardi Gras (literally translated “Fat Tuesday”) is the final day before the observance of Lent. While Mardi Gras has gained a reputation for its hedonism, Lent is known as a time of prayer, repentance, and recommitment leading up to the celebration of Christ's resurrection at Easter. Starting with Ash Wednesday (this coming Wednesday, March 2), the day after Mardi Gras, and culminating 40 days later, Lent is a time of spiritual preparation for the most important religious holiday for believers. (Sundays are not included in the observance of Lent as Sundays are supposed to be holy days of celebrating the resurrection for all Christians.)

The Forty days of Lent are also a time of grief. All Christians celebrate the resurrection of Christ each Easter. This tradition begins with the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday. Ashes are put on believers' foreheads on Ash Wednesday as a sign of repentance. The practice of putting ashes on one's head is an ancient sign of mourning that was often done at funerals or similarly sorrowful occasions. In this case, the ashes represent sorrow over our sins and the pain and death caused by sin. Perhaps if we are to truly appreciate the great cost to Christ of our salvation, we should meditate on our sinfulness.

This meditation should lead observers of Lent to turn away from their sins and recommit themselves to holiness. Perhaps, after we examine our hearts and lives, we will be led to cry out to God as David did, “Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:9-10).

# The Transfiguration

As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. Luke 9:29 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 9:28-36 (NIV).



D Y G M S T A L K I N G I M J  
 L E N U O E U S G S F P E F O  
 A T S C S U E M E D T C P A H  
 B E K E H M N L L W A G M P N  
 J R S J A A P T G F C U J P I  
 K O I J I I N N A R G O T E I  
 M V N G C Z I G J I K P G A B  
 P X M S H N Q B E Y N Q V R Y  
 R I I W T T I Y T D J F U E C  
 A D D H D V R M K P E L G D H  
 Y E G U H X A F N E K A V E O  
 W I O D E P X Q B T W S O J S  
 L L R V E T R R F E E H I Z E  
 C C L O T H E S H R E E C X N  
 C D H N P Y E L I J A H E J F

FLASH	LIGHTNING	MOSES	JOHN	MOUNTAIN
CLOUD	PETER	CHANGED	VOICE	JESUS
JAMES	PRAY	CHOSEN	CLOTHES	ELIJAH
TALKING	FACE	BRIGHT	APPEARED	DISCIPLES