

The Transfiguration of Our Lord

February 11, 2024

We have reached the zenith of the Epiphany season. Christ stands upon the mountain peak and reveals His majesty as true God, giving His disciples a glimpse of His power and glory before He goes down the mountain to suffer and die for the sins of all mankind. We, too, will one day see our Savior with unveiled eyes when we enter heaven. Until that day we live on the plain, our hearts eager to see His awesome majesty. We remember His promise, "Lo, I am with you always."

Alleluia! Let Praises Ring

Lutheran Service Book 822, Lutheran Worship 437, The Lutheran Hymnal 23



1 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! To God the Fa -
2 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to the Lamb
3 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to the Ho -
4 Al - le - lu - ia! Let prais - es ring! Un - to our tri -



ther let us bring Our songs of ad - o - ra - tion.
of God we sing, In whom we are e - lect - ed.
ly Ghost we sing For our re - gen - er - a - tion.
une God we sing; Blest be His name for - ev - er!



To Him through ev - er - last - ing days Be wor - ship, hon -
He bought His Church with His own blood, He cleansed her in
The sav - ing faith in us He wrought And us un - to
With an - gel hosts let us a - dore And sing His prais -



or, pow'r, and praise, Whose hand sus - tains cre - a - tion.
that bless - ed flood, And as His bride se - lect - ed.
the Bride-groom brought, Made us His cho - sen na - tion.
es ev - er - more For all His grace and fa - vor!



Sing - ing, ring - ing: Ho - ly, ho - ly, God is ho - ly;
Ho - ly, ho - ly Is our u - nion And com - mu - nion.
Glo - ry! Glo - ry! Joy e - ter - nal, Bliss su - per - nal;
Sing - ing, ring - ing: Ho - ly, ho - ly, God is ho - ly;



Spread the sto - ry Of our God, the Lord of glo - ry.
His be - friend - ing Gives us joy and peace un - end - ing.
There is man - na And an end - less, glad ho - san - na.
Spread the sto - ry Of our God, the Lord of glo - ry!

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L In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

L Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth. (*Psalm 124:8*)

L Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

C Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. (*Psalm 19:12, 13*)

L If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand?

C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. (*Psalm 130:3–4*)

L Let us, confess before God that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and as His people let us take refuge in His infinite mercy seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, saying:

C God, be merciful to me, a sinner, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen. (*Luke 18:13*)

L Almighty God, merciful Father, in Your holy Church, You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Introit Psalm 99:1–5; antiphon Psalm 99:9

L Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain;
for the Lord our God is holy!

C The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble!
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

L The Lord is great in Zion;
he is exalted over all the peoples.

C Let them praise your great and awesome name!
Holy is he!

L The King in his might loves justice.
You have established equity; you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

C Exalt the Lord our God; worship at his footstool!
Holy is he!

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

L Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain;
for the Lord our God is holy!

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

L Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

C Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father: We worship You, we give You thanks, and we praise You for Your glory.

L Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, You are Lord and God, You are the Lamb of God:

C Lord Jesus Christ, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

L Lord Jesus Christ, You are seated at the right hand of the Father; and we ask you to graciously receive our prayer.

C For You alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect of the Day

L Let us pray: O God, in the glorious transfiguration of Your beloved Son You confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah. In the voice that came from the bright cloud You wonderfully foreshowed our adoption by grace. Mercifully make us co-heirs with the King in His glory and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

2 Kings 2:1–12

¹Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ²And Elijah said to Elisha, "Please 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. ³And the sons of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take away your master from over you?" And he said, "Yes, I know it; keep quiet."

⁴Elijah said to him, "Elisha, please 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 sons of the prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take away your master from over you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know it; keep quiet."

⁶Then Elijah said to him, "Please 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 sons of the prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. ⁸Then Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the water, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground.

⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you." And Elisha said, "Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me." ¹⁰And he said, "You have

asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so.” ¹¹And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²And Elisha saw it and he cried, “My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

Gradual Psalm 117:1–2a; 96:8

L Praise the LORD, all nations!

G Extol him, all peoples!

L For great is his steadfast love toward us,

G and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.

L Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;

G bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Psalm 50:1–6

L ¹The Mighty One, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

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

L ³Our God comes; he does not keep silence; before him is a devouring fire, around him a mighty tempest.

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

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

G ⁶The heavens declare his righteousness, for God himself is judge!

2 Corinthians 3:12–13; 4:1–6

¹²Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, ¹³not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end.

^{4:1}Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. ²But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God. ³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only 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 what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. ⁶For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day: Psalm 45:2a

L Alleluia. You are the most handsome of the sons of men;.

G Grace is poured upon your lips. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Mark 9:2–9

L The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 9th chapter.

G Glory to You, O Lord.

²And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. ⁵And Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” ⁶For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, “This is my beloved Son; listen to him.” ⁸And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only. ⁹And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

L This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

The Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

'Tis Good, Lord, to Be Here

Lutheran Service Book 414, Lutheran Worship 89, The Lutheran Hymnal 135



1 'Tis good, Lord, to be here! Thy
2 'Tis good, Lord, to be here, Thy
3 Ful - fill - er of the past And
4 Be - fore we taste of death, We
5 'Tis good, Lord, to be here! Yet



glo - ry fills the night; Thy face and gar - ments,
beau - ty to be - hold Where Mo - ses and E -
hope of things to be, We hail Thy bod - y
see Thy king - dom come; We long to hold the
we may not re - main; But since Thou bidst us



like the sun, Shine with un - bor - rowed light.
li - jah stand, Thy mes - sen - gers of old.
glo - ri - fied And our re - demp - tion see.
vi - sion bright And make this hill our home.
leave the mount, Come with us to the plain.

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Devotional thoughts:

My wife and I watch Jeopardy most nights. The contestants display an astounding amount of knowledge on a variety of subjects. I'm particularly happy when I know the correct response and all three contestants are stumped! In the last few years, there have been several individuals with incredibly long winning streaks. Day after day, I would watch to see if their streak would continue. Eventually, they all faltered and a new champion was crowned. Even "Know-it-alls" don't know it all!

I like science and technology. I was intrigued when I came across a video titled, "How we know that Einstein's General Relativity can't be quite right." In short, the video stated, "General Relativity cannot be quite right because it does not fit together with another well-confirmed theory that is quantum mechanics." Imagine that! Even Einstein didn't know it all!

All human wisdom and knowledge are limited. In times past, Christians were ridiculed for confessing in the Nicene Creed: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. Secularists scoffed at the idea that there were invisible things created by God!

Today, no one doubts the existence of invisible things. We know that diseases can be caused by invisible things known as viruses and bacteria. We have learned to have respect for the unseen dangers of atomic radiation. We all benefit from the wireless communication of cell phones and Wi-Fi internet.

When it comes to God, we must confess our lack of knowledge. There are people who have convinced themselves that their personal opinions about God are far superior to what God has revealed to us in Holy Scripture. Jesus' Transfiguration is a reminder that religious "Know-it-alls" don't know it all.

Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him to the top of the Mount of Transfiguration. They were among the first disciples called. They had witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter, the Feeding of the Five Thousand, and many other miracles. Peter confessed Jesus to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). But there was much more to Jesus than even they knew.

Luke tells us that the appearance of Jesus' face was altered. Matthew recorded it this way, "He was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun" (Matthew 17:2). Luke states that His clothing became dazzling white. I confess that I am partial to Mark's account in the King James Version which says, "His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them" (Mark 9:3). Peter, James, and John suddenly realized how limited their knowledge of Jesus was.

If this wasn't amazing enough, Moses and Elijah appeared talking with Jesus. The Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets had long foretold the events of Jesus' life that would lead to the salvation of sinners. Now as Jesus' mission to complete God's plan of salvation was coming to its culmination, Luke tells us that Moses and Elijah were talking with Jesus about His journey to the cross in Jerusalem. There would be much more for Peter, James, and John to learn in the weeks ahead.

Small children sing, "Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so!" We would do well to echo this excellent faith. On our own, we can know very little about God. By our natural knowledge of God, we know that He is powerful. Our conscience provides us with a rudimentary understanding of right and wrong. It is only through the Bible that we learn, "Jesus loves me!"

Throughout this Epiphany season, we have reviewed the amazing truth that Jesus of Nazareth is the very Son of God who came into the world to save sinners. We end the Epiphany season on top of the Mount of Transfiguration where we hear the voice of God tell us, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" (Luke 9:35).

Peter, James, and John may have thought that they knew Jesus very well. Jesus' transfiguration revealed just how much more there was to Jesus than they could have imagined. They were granted a brief glimpse of His glory.

Through the coming weeks of the Lenten Season, Holy Week, and Easter, God will again reveal to us the depth of love Jesus has for us. With the hymn writer Samuel Crossman, we will soon declare:

My song is love unknown,
My Savior's love to me,
Love to the loveless shown
That they might lovely be.
Oh, who am I
That for my sake
My Lord should take
Frail flesh and die?

He came from His blest throne
Salvation to bestow!

We don't know it all. One day we will. "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12). Until then we rejoice that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4-7).

God's richest blessings to you in Christ.

Prayers

L Holy Father, with the appearance of Moses and Elijah at our Lord's glorious Transfiguration, You reveal to us that the Law and the prophets are fulfilled in Him. Send Your blessing upon all pastors and servants of Your Church, that their preaching and teaching would flow from this right understanding of Christ and His work for our eternal salvation.

C Amen.

L Heavenly Father, bless our families and all those living alone. Grant that parents would teach the faith to their children and that the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in all our households. Remember expectant mothers that they and their babies would be kept safe and healthy throughout their pregnancies.

C Amen.

L Heavenly Father, You revealed Your glory in the Transfiguration of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who dwelt among us in the flesh. Open our eyes that by faith we would see Him continuing to be among us. Grant that we would heed Your admonition to "listen to Him" through Your holy word of scripture.

C Amen.

L Almighty God, Creator of the world, You hold sway over all the powers of nature and the rulers of the earth. Graciously preserve our land, its produce and industry, and our leaders together with our people. Do not disregard us for our sins, but renew us, that our lives may be peaceful and our country governed according to Your will.

C Amen.

L O God of peace, during this time of war in the ancient land of Jesus' birth and in Ukraine, we pray that You would grant a swift end to the conflict and lasting peace, that right and justice would prevail, and that You would grant Your mighty hand of protection to the innocent and helpless.

C Amen.

L Guard those who protect us, especially our armed forces, police, and firefighters.

C Amen.

L Visit us in Your compassion, O Lord. Deliver the sick from their infirmity, the troubled from their afflictions, the grieving from their sorrow, and the dying from their fear. May all who cry to You receive grace according to Your will.

C Amen.

L Lord God, heavenly Father, we gratefully remember on this day the glorious manifestation of Your Son's divinity on the Mount of Transfiguration. Teach us to listen to Jesus and ever fix our eyes on Him and His innocent suffering and death for our forgiveness. By Your grace and mercy, strengthen us to remain faithful in all circumstances of trial, temptation, and persecution. Preserve us to the end, that we may die a blessed death believing in Your beloved Son with whom You are well pleased; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

C 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.

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

L The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C Amen.

From All That Dwell Below the Skies

Lutheran Service Book 816, Lutheran Worship 440, The Lutheran Hymnal 15



1 From all that dwell be - low the skies Let the Cre - a - tor's
2 E - ter - nal are Thy mer - cies, Lord; E - ter - nal truth at -
3 All praise to God the Fa - ther be, All praise, e - ter - nal



praise a - rise; Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
tends Thy Word. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Son, to Thee. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Let the Re - deem - er's name be sung Through ev - 'ry land by
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore Till suns shall rise and
Whom with the Spir - it we a - dore For - ev - er and for -



ev - 'ry tongue. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
set no more. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
ev - er - more: Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Farewell to Alleluia

Today we have reached a turning point in the Church Year. We leave the Christmas season and look forward to Easter. Before we can rightly celebrate Easter we will experience the forty days of spiritual renewal called “Lent.” Lent begins this week with Ash Wednesday. So today, Transfiguration Sunday, we put away the singing of “Alleluia.” During the season of Lent, we avoid singing “Alleluia” as a way to help us focus on the solemnity of Jesus' suffering and death on the cross for our sins. On Easter morning, when we celebrate our Lord's Resurrection, we will again sing “Alleluia” with joy and thanksgiving.

Service Notes:

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

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Enhancing Your Worship

Meditating on God's Word and Works

I will meditate on your wondrous works. Psalm 119:27
My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. Psalm 119:148 NKJV

The Week of The Transfiguration of Our Lord February 12 - 17, 2024

Introduction

Most modern forms of mediation turn a person inward. Biblical meditation turns a person outward toward what God has said and done especially what He has said and done through Jesus for our salvation.

Each Sunday has its own special theme directing us to meditate on God's word and actions. This theme is found in the Propers of the Day (the parts of the service that change week to week). From Advent through the Easter season these themes focus our attention on the life of Jesus from His birth to His death and resurrection. There is always much more in the propers than can be covered in any Sunday service. God willing, I will use the propers for Sunday to provide you with a devotion each day to help you meditate on what God has done for you.

Monday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Psalm 45:2a

- L** Alleluia. You are the most handsome of the sons of men;
C Grace is poured upon your lips. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Introit Psalm 99:1–5; antiphon Psalm 99:9

- L** Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain;
for the Lord our God is holy!
C The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble!
He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!
L The Lord is great in Zion;
he is exalted over all the peoples.
C Let them praise your great and awesome name!
Holy is he!
L The King in his might loves justice.
You have established equity; you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.
C Exalt the Lord our God; worship at his footstool!
Holy is he!
C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.
L Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain;
for the Lord our God is holy!

Kyrie

- L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.
L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.
L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

The Lord reigns! These are the first words of Psalm 99. He is holy. He is great and awesome. He loves justice. This is the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Our sinful world wants nothing to do with the great King or His kingdom. We live in rebellion. We don't like His holiness or justice. We are doomed to live in sinful pride and arrogance. This leads to eternal death.

On Transfiguration Sunday, we remember that Jesus is the Son of the great King who loves us in spite of our sinful rebellion. He gave His life for us on the cross so that we can live in His kingdom with Him for all eternity.

By the working of the Holy Spirit, may we also love our great King and His kingdom.

- L** Let us pray. O Lord, move us to love You. Thank You for the gift of Your only-begotten Son who loves us and gave Himself up for us on the cross.
C Amen.

I Love Your Kingdom, Lord

Lutheran Service Book 651, Lutheran Worship 296, The Lutheran Hymnal 462



- 1 I love Your king - dom, Lord, The place of Your a - bode,
2 Be - yond my high - est joy I prize its heav'n - ly ways,
3 I love Your Church, O God, Your saints in ev - 'ry land,
4 For them my tears shall fall; For them my prayers as - cend;
5 Sure as Your truth shall last, To Zi - on shall be giv'n



The Church our blest Re-deem-er saved With His own pre-cious blood.
Its sweet com-mu-nion, sol-emn vows, Its hymns of love and praise.
Dear as the ap-ple of Your eye And grav-en on Your hand.
For them my cares and toils be giv'n Till toils and cares shall end.
The bright-est glo-ries earth can yield And bright-er bliss of heav'n.

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Tuesday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Psalm 45:2a

- L** Alleluia. You are the most handsome of the sons of men;.
C Grace is poured upon your lips. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.
L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.
L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L Let us pray: O God, in the glorious transfiguration of Your beloved Son You confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah. In the voice that came from the bright cloud You wonderfully foreshowed our adoption by grace. Mercifully make us co-heirs with the King in His glory and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen

On the Road to Emmaus, Jesus walked with two disciples who were discussing the empty tomb. Jesus said to them:

“O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24:25-27).

Moses and the prophets wrote what we call the Old Testament. They were the Scriptures of Jesus’ day. The Old Testament Scriptures spoke about Jesus. To be faithful to Moses and the prophets we, too, should see Jesus in the Old Testament.

At Jesus’ transfiguration, Moses and the great prophet Elijah were there talking to Jesus. God gave them the privilege of seeing the Savior that they had spoken of so many centuries before.

May our hearts be open to believe all that the prophets have spoken about our Savior and the gift of eternal life.

Let us pray: O God, in the glorious transfiguration of Your beloved Son You confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah. In the voice that came from the bright cloud You wonderfully foreshowed our adoption by grace. Mercifully make us co-heirs with the King in His glory and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday Prayer

Gracious Savior I fall at your feet this day as your Church once more enters the Lenten season to meditate upon your passion, by which we have been eternally redeemed.

In spirit I appear before you in sackcloth and ashes in true repentance; let me receive your full pardon. Do not let the pleasures of life, the worries of the day, and the activities of my daily routine crowd You out of my heart and out of my thoughts. Draw me to Your wounded side, and cleanse me with Your most precious blood. Bring healing to my soul and peace to my mind. By Your grace, let me crucify my sinful affections, lusts, and desires. Make me more than a conqueror over every temptation.

I confess to You all my sins. Let none of them cling to me. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Teach me to love You more and more. Give me grace to Confess You as my Savior, who has redeemed me on Calvary, lifting me out of the darkness of sin to be Your own. Gracious Savior, let Your constraining love keep me and all God’s children steadfast to the end. Amen.

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Psalm 51:1–13

L ¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

C ²**Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!**

L ³For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

C ⁴**Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.**

L ⁵Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

C ⁶**Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

L ⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

C ⁸**Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.**

L ⁹Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

C ¹⁰**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**

L ¹¹Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

C ¹²**Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.**

L ¹³Then I will teach transgressors your ways,

C **and sinners will return to you.**

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** **Have Mercy on us.**

L O Christ, **C** **Have Mercy on us.**

L O Lord, **C** **Have Mercy on us.**

Joel 2:12–14

¹²“Yet even now,” declares the LORD,
“return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
¹³and rend your hearts and not your garments.”

Return to the LORD, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
and he relents over disaster.

¹⁴Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for the LORD your God?

2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

^{20b}We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

^{6:1}Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

L The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 9th chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹[Jesus said:] “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

²“Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. . . .

¹⁶“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

L This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Devotional Thoughts

Yesterday was Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday). It was a day of revelry before the somber season of Lent. Strictly speaking, there is nothing inherently wrong with festivities at any time of the year. However, approaching a season of repentance with a party does seem contrary to the spirit and purpose of Lent. Nevertheless, it does illustrate an important point about repentance.

Repentance is not something that can be forced! True repentance comes from the startling recognition of sin and its consequences. This is something that cannot be programmed. It is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Martin Luther calls this the alien or foreign work of the Holy Spirit. The proper work of the Holy Spirit is bringing forgiveness through faith in the Gospel that Jesus is the savior who died for the sins of the world. But before that can happen, the Holy Spirit must convince us of our need for a savior.

King David was fully convinced that his scheming had covered up the consequence of his twin sins of adultery and murder. If God had not sent the prophet Nathan to challenge His unrepentant heart, David would have gone to His grave without true repentance.

By the working of the Holy Spirit through the words of the prophet, David repented. He left us a remembrance of his repentance in Psalms 32 and 51.

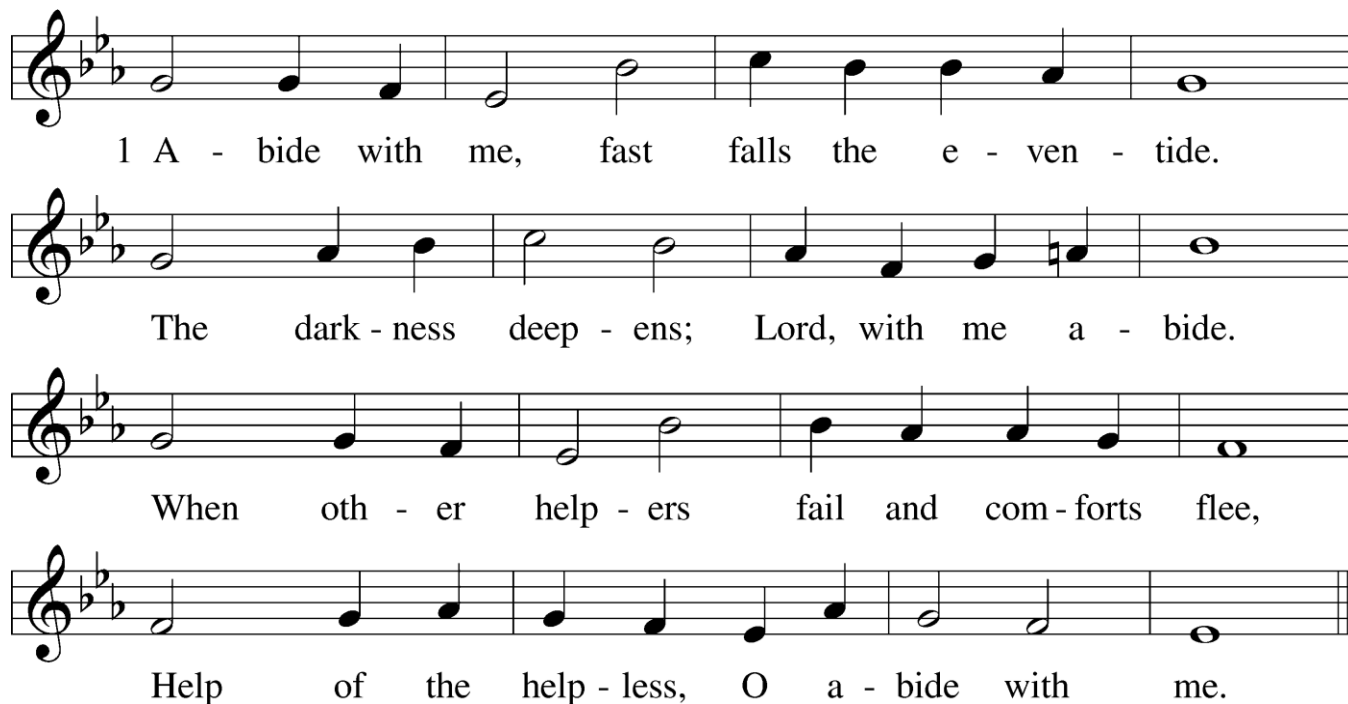
Read Psalm 51 again and imagine what David experienced in his heart. As far as possible make his words, your words.

- ¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
- ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
- ³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
- ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
- ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- (Psalm 51:1-4; 10-12)

Prayer: Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Abide with Me

Lutheran Service Book 876, Lutheran Worship 490, The Lutheran Hymnal 552
Stanzas 1 & 6



1 A - bide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.

The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.

When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,

Help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.

6 Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

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Thursday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
G Amen.

Verse of the Day: Psalm 45:2a

L You are the most handsome of the sons of men;.
G Grace is poured upon your lips.

2 Kings 2:1–12

¹Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ²And Elijah said to Elisha, “Please 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. ³And the sons of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take away your master from over you?” And he said, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.”

⁴Elijah said to him, “Elisha, please 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 sons of the prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take away your master from over you?” And he answered, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.”

⁶Then Elijah said to him, “Please 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 sons of the prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. ⁸Then Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the water, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground.

⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you.” And Elisha said, “Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me.” ¹⁰And he said, “You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so.” ¹¹And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²And Elisha saw it and he cried, “My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more.

It's understandable that 2 Kings 2:1–12 would be selected for the Old Testament reading for Transfiguration Sunday considering that Elijah and Moses were speaking with Jesus. However, this is such a well-known text that it could stand alone on its own Sunday.

Having transitioned from full-time active ministry to emeritus status, these verses from 2 Kings speak to me in ways that they haven't before. I have become acutely aware of the need for transitions in ministry and the importance of finding quality successors to carry on the Lord's work.

We first learn of Elisha when, after fleeing Jezebel, Elijah complained to God that he was the only one left and that they were trying to kill him, too. God assured Elijah that He had reserved 7,000 in Israel for Himself who had not bowed down to Baal. Elijah was directed to anoint Elisha to be a prophet in his place. Elisha followed Elijah without looking back (1 Kings 19:14-21). In today's reading, Elisha must take up the task given to him.

Elijah felt all alone. He felt defeated. The task before him seemed too great. Elijah had forgotten that God was still in charge. He had not only preserved thousands of faithful believers, but He already had chosen

Elijah's successor.

This is a difficult time for churches that need to call a pastor. Vacancies are lasting longer than ever. It is easy to be like Elijah and become discouraged. However, we should not lose heart. God is still in charge. He has not abandoned His flock. He already knows who the next pastor will be.

As time passes, each of us soon realizes that there will be a time in life when the world will go on without us. Whatever illusion we may have had about controlling our own fate slips away.

God is in charge of all our transitions in life. We can work hard to make them as smooth and painless as possible but we must never forget that all of our times and seasons are in the Lord's hands. He works everything out in our lives for our good and blessing.

Along the way, the road may be bumpy and long. However, for each Elijah, God provides an Elisha.

Elijah was the only person taken to heaven in a chariot of fire. It was a spectacular sight. Soon he was gone.

It has been almost 3,000 years since Elijah went to heaven. Yet God's people are still here. Age after age God has sent prophets, Apostles, pastors, and teachers to proclaim His Word of sin and grace.

Whether you are at the beginning, middle, or nearing the end of your chosen vocation, God goes with you. He blesses our activities according to His own plan and purpose, often in ways that we cannot understand at the time. May we never become discouraged but always remember that He is in charge. We never go it alone. He is always with us.

It is appropriate to pray again the ending of Luther's Morning Prayer:

Prayer: Into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Friday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Psalm 45:2a

L You are the most handsome of the sons of men;.

C Grace is poured upon your lips.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

2 Corinthians 3:12–13; 4:1–6

¹²Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, ¹³not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end.

^{4:1}Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. ²But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. ³And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only 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 what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

These are powerful words from the Apostle Paul. There is such an abundance and wealth in what he says that it is hard to choose just one thing to consider. For this brief meditation, I would like to focus on 2 Corinthians 4:2, “But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God’s word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God.”

It is sad but true that there are those in the church who practice disgraceful and underhanded ways to accomplish their purpose. Unfortunately, I have witnessed this often both in the church at large and in the local congregation.

Satan often whispers in our ears, “You’re a clever person. You can outsmart these people. Go ahead and play their game. I’m sure that you will win.” And so he tempts us to abandon God’s plan and His word of truth and to rely on underhanded ways. When we listen to him, even if we win, we lose!

Paul refused to listen to this temptation to practice cunning or tamper with God’s word. It would be a great blessing if those in the Church today would follow Paul’s lead. But this takes faith.

Satan would have us believe that it’s okay to sin for a good cause. He wants you to abandon God’s clear and unwavering standards for a “higher” cause. Resist that temptation. Trust God to bless your faithfulness. He will never fail you.

God used the cross to defeat Satan. He sometimes uses the small crosses in our lives to accomplish His will. Do not lose heart.

Prayer: O Lord, grant us faith to trust the truth of Your word and trust that You will accomplish Your purpose through our faithfulness through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Saturday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Gradual Psalm 117:1–2a; 96:8

L Praise the LORD, all nations!

C Extol him, all peoples!

L For great is his steadfast love toward us,

C and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.

L Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;

C bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Verse of the Day: Psalm 45:2a

L You are the most handsome of the sons of men;.

C Grace is poured upon your lips.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Psalm 50:1–6

- L** ¹The Mighty One, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.
C ²**Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.**
L ³Our God comes; he does not keep silence; before him is a devouring fire, around him a mighty tempest.
C ⁴**He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, that he may judge his people:**
L ⁵“Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!”
C ⁶**The heavens declare his righteousness, for God himself is judge!**

Psalm 50:6 sets the stage for the rest of the psalm. It declares that “God Himself is judge!” As important as this is, we will have to save the rest of the psalm for another day.

These first six verses proclaim the glory and splendor of God. He is the Mighty One (verse 1). He is the perfection of beauty. He shines forth (verse 2). He is surrounded by a devouring fire and a mighty tempest (verse 3).

These verses give us a glimpse of God and help to explain the appearance of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. Matthew’s account gives us a very vivid picture of what Peter, James, and John witnessed. It says, “He was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light” (Matthew 17:2).

This verse makes it clear that Jesus shares the same glory and splendor of God, the Father. He is indeed:

God of God and Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven.

As we journey through Lent, let us never forget that God, Himself, came down from heaven to be our Savior in the person of the only-begotten Son of God, Jesus Christ.

O God of God, O Light of Light

Lutheran Service Book 810, Lutheran Worship 83, The Lutheran Hymnal 132



1 O God of God, O Light of Light, O Prince of Peace and
2 For deep in proph - ets' sa - cred page, And grand in po - ets'
3 That life of truth, those deeds of love, That death so steeped in
4 Then raise to Christ a might - y song, And shout His name, His



King of kings: To You in heav - en's glo - ry bright The song of
wing - ed word, Slow - ly in type, from age to age The na - tions
hate and scorn— These all are past, and now a - bove He reigns, our
mer - cies tell! Sing, heav' - n - ly host, your praise pro - long, And all on



praise for - ev - er rings. To Him who sits up - on the throne,
saw their com - ing Lord; Till through the deep Ju - de - an night
King once crowned with thorn. Lift up your heads, O might - y gates!
earth, your an - them swell! All hail, O Lamb for sin - ners slain!



The Lamb once slain but raised a - gain, Be all the glo - ry
Rang out the song, "Good - will to men!" Sung once by first - born
So sang that host be - yond our ken. Lift up your heads, your
For - ev - er let the song as - cend! Wor - thy the Lamb, en -



He has won, All thanks and praise! A - men, a - men.
sons of light, It ech - oes now, "Good - will!" A - men.
King a - waits. We lift them up. A - men, a - men.
throned to reign, All glo - ry, pow'r! A - men, a - men.

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