

twelvebaskets



TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY B

A complete Sunday service ready to use
for worship and inspire ideas in your church

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Transfiguration Sunday - Year B

11th February 2024



Order of Service

Call to worship

Hymn:

28 STF – Jesus calls us here to meet him OR

6 STF – Father, we love you

Opening Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

Hymn:

357 STF – Jesus – the name high over all OR

318 STF – Christ, our King before creation

Readings: 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Hymn:

557 STF – Let him to whom we now belong OR

564 STF – O thou who camest from above

Reflections on the readings

Hymn:

683 STF – Great is our redeeming Lord OR

418 STF – We have a gospel to proclaim

Intercessions

Offering / collection

Blessing the offering

Hymn:

546 STF – Behold the servant of the Lord! OR

747 STF – Give me the wings of faith to rise within the veil, and see

Blessing

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Call to worship

We gather this day, to worship the living God.
We gather together with the body of Christ, around the world and across history.
We gather to pray, to sing, to reflect and to be transformed,
By your Spirit, Lord God.
Amen.¹

Hymn:

28 STF – Jesus calls us here to meet him OR
6 STF – Father, we love you

Opening Prayers

Source of creation and love, move like air on the breeze within and amongst us today.

Tend in us a spark of curiosity for what is growing in the earth beneath our feet.

Stir in us a flicker of awe at the buds and shoots stretching steadily from oak, ash, rowan and beech.

Prune from us all that we no longer need to take with us as we journey further towards the season of blooming and growth.

Help us to see the ever-changing landscapes around us and the ever-changing landscapes within ourselves. May we feel our place in the wonder of creation, leaning into the coming days ahead.

Amen.²

We say together the Lord's Prayer

All Age Talk

We're fast approaching the season of Lent this week, with Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day AND Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day all to come! But before we get to that, we need to talk a little about Jesus walking up a mountain.

Now, we know that Jesus loved to have a good wander around! There are many examples of Jesus going off into a garden, up a mountain, to an isolated island, into the desert, but this walk up a mountain is a little bit special.

Let's set the scene: Jesus has just had a conversation with the disciples in a village. He asked them a simple question: "Who do the people say I am?"

The disciples gave all the answers they knew, and some of those answers were rebuked by Jesus. But he asked them to keep the true answer quiet, at least for now. Jesus, of course,

¹ Call to worship written by Tim Baker

² Opening prayers written by Hannah Baker

is talking about being the Messiah. He even says to the disciples “Some of you who are standing here are going to see it happen, see the kingdom of God arrive in full force.”

Now, they might have been a little confused by this. I’d be a little confused! But Peter, John, and James were about to see what Jesus meant.

They joined Jesus on this walk up a mountain. When they were high up: Jesus transformed.

When we think of transformation, we might think of it like Dr Who regenerating: a massive light show, fiery explosions, full of emotion, then a brand-new Dr is before us! Or we might think about it like in Sailor Moon: an upbeat soundtrack is playing as Jesus is covered in light, new clothes form on him, his hair looks amazing, and he strikes a pose at the end. Or perhaps we think about it like a Pokémon Evolution: Jesus becomes a silhouette of light, slowly changes, then suddenly, the light breaks, Jesus’ new form is there, covered in sparkles, and he shouts out his own name “Jesus!”

Mark puts it as this:

Read Mark 9: 2-10 in a version that you are comfortable with.

Not only did Jesus transform, but Moses and Elijah appeared before them as well. To the disciples, this is suddenly being in the presence of titans of history. And not just that they appeared, but they were in deep conversation with Jesus! I don’t know what it was like for them, but to me it would be suddenly discovering that a good friend has been friends with movie stars or pop stars!

Just as soon though as seeing all this, the disciples saw only Jesus once again. And what does Jesus say to them? “Don’t tell a soul what you saw. After the Son of Man rises from the dead, you’re free to talk.”

We can’t have Lent and Easter without today. Unlike the disciples though, who had to wait through Lent and Easter before they could share what they saw, we can do that today.

Dear God, may we be transformed by the love and example of Jesus, be as faithful as the disciples, and find those moments like Jesus where we can wander and encounter you.

Amen.³

Hymn:

357 STF – Jesus – the name high over all OR

318 STF – Christ, our King before creation

Readings: 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Hymn:

557 STF – Let him to whom we now belong OR

564 STF – O thou who camest from above

³ All Age Talk written by Tim Annan-Hood

Reflections on the readings

I stayed awake all night wondering where the sun had gone, then suddenly it dawned on me!

Themes of darkness and light stream through the Bible from the dawn of the first day to the depths of the end times. We were born out of the darkness of the abyss and always live in danger of returning there, maybe more so now than ever as the earth is scorched without the protection of an ozone layer. Light is often associated with enlightenment, with insight with revelation whereas darkness is the chaos of destruction, the stalking of doubts at nightfall. And yet, we need both. Without darkness there is no respite from the bright glare of the persistent daytime and without light there is no vision of this great and glorious world. How can we hold the two in balance, how can we live the diurnal rhythms of faith?

One way through this might be to resist the association of light and darkness with moral values but rather return to the material world of here and now – at which point you might say I am deviating too far from the Scripture of today as we read in 2 Corinthians but bear with me a moment. Our natural world is always held in the balance between day and night, the rhythm of the moon's waxing and waning, the shoreline between incoming and outgoing tides. We live within the here and now as the world takes breath through the leaves and roots of the trees. We are coming and going people who wake from sleep and collapse into bed each day and night with the rising and setting of the sun. As such we live in the half-seeing that comes between total certainty and complete despair. We view the world through dark glasses, live between glare and gloom.

The story of Jesus reminds us of this, he was born by starlight, died in the full glare of the afternoon sun and raised at day break. The story of the incarnation is one of a human who not only saw huge visions but also knew the depths of despair, who scaled mountains and weathered storms, who cried at nightfall, ate a last supper but cooked a breakfast as the sun rose again. It is within the rhythms of the earth that we see the life of Jesus held, not by some ethereal magic but by the here and now of what it means to be a human inhabiting the grounded heave and ho of existence.

And so, we cannot avoid the dark places, neither should we. For some of us they will be the chaos of mental anguish, for others the fragmentation of relationships. For some of us there are the prowling lions of despair that prowl around our well being for others a political exasperation that means we lose sight of hope or lasting change. But for some of us the darkness is welcome respite from the frenzied glare of the day or the time we sit with our fractious babies or elderly relatives in the dark watches of intimacy. Doubts and confusions are not failure, they are part of the way of things.

There is the story of the little child who had just moved to a new house but could not sleep in his new bed room as everything seemed so strange. Tired of trying to console him, his mother picked him out of the bed and they stood in the garden together looking at the night sky. 'Look', she said, 'there is a new moon tonight!' there was a pause and then, with the contempt known only to three year olds he said, 'No, Mummy, it is the same moon we had at our old house!'

This pattern of things is embedded in the story of Jesus with his disciples. Together they go to the mountain top and see a marvellous vision of how the story of God and their story coincide. They understand with clarity how everything fits together, Moses and the prophets, their life with Jesus and the future hope for the world. Everything is clear, they are euphoric and want to capture this moment for ever. But in the blink of an eye they are down at the bottom of the hill again with the pressures of the crowd and they do everything wrong once again. It was morning and it was evening of the same day as they learned to live in the hinterland between heaven and earth.

Light and darkness are the natural way of things. The bright warm sun will call the scattered seeds to life under the dark soil. Their shoots will push the earth aside once again as the frosted soil breaks open for new life to come to birth. The same soil that has been broken open to bury those we love the most, will bring new life as the greening earth turns once again towards the sun. The same clods that has made the clay pots to hold the treasures of the kingdom will break open to reveal something beyond our imagination, the earthed, raw, glorious and abiding love of God.

In darkness and in light we pray to you, God of love,
That in the grey skies or glorious views,
In the anguish or euphoria,
In the desperation or possibilities of this day,
You will walk with us.

Show us the connections that make sense of the world
And hold us in the seemingly meaningless disconnections
That we may walk with you in darkness and light alike
Until we know you, as you know us
Until we love you, as you love us.

Amen.⁴

Hymn:

683 STF – Great is our redeeming Lord OR

418 STF – We have a gospel to proclaim

Prayers of intercession

Today, instead of using lots of words for our prayers of intercession, our prayers for the world, we are going to hold a couple of times of quiet, and I simply invite you to bring your own prayers into those spaces.

Firstly, I invite you to spend a moment praying for those close to you: people in your family, your friends, perhaps members of this church, who are in your thoughts. It might be the people you are worried about, or just someone who you know needs to feel God's presence today.

In the stillness, hold that person, and their situation, in the light of God's love.

[Pause for a minute or two. You might like to play some quiet music during the stillness].

Come Lord God. Answer our prayers, in Jesus name.

And now, in this space, I invite you to bring a situation or person further afield. Perhaps a story from the news, or a situation or story that has found its way to you. It is probably about people or a person you will never meet, but in this moment, you want to hold those people in prayer.

In the stillness, we pray for a better world.

[Pause for a minute or two. You might like to play some quiet music during the stillness].

⁴ Reflection written by Barbara Glasson

Come Lord God. You know the names, the faces, the situations that we've held in our hearts and minds over these past few minutes.

Answer our prayers, in Jesus name.

Amen.⁵

We will now take up the offering.

Holy God, you are the source of all we have received and all we are.
In this moment, we return to you the gifts we have received, and our whole lives.
Take us as we are, and use us to bring about transformation and change,

In Jesus' name,

Amen.⁶

Hymn:

546 STF – Behold the servant of the Lord! OR

747 STF – Give me the wings of faith to rise within the veil, and see

Blessing

Go out from this place, inspired and uplifted to bring about change in the world.
Go out into the world, amongst all the disheartening and disappointing moments of life, and know that the God of love goes with you, before you, alongside you and within you.
Go to be a people of love, grace and peace.

Amen.⁷

⁵ Prayers of intercession written by Barbara Glasson

⁶ Additional prayers by Tim Baker

⁷ Additional prayers by Tim Baker