**Sunday 14th February 2021** WORSHIP AT HOME: **Mark 9.2-9** Transfiguration

Welcome to our act of Worship

A Gathering Prayer *based on Psalm 50*

From the rising of the sun until its setting,
the Lord God has spoken.
God shines out perfect in beauty.
Our God is coming and will not keep silent.
The heavens proclaim God’s justice,
for God himself is judge.
Come worship the Lord our God with me.
Come celebrate his faithfulness.
Come to the mountain of transfiguration and be blessed.
**Amen.**

Call to worship Psalm 50v1-3a,6

1 The mighty one, God the Lord,
   speaks and summons the earth
   from the rising of the sun to its setting.
2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
   God shines forth.

3 Our God comes and does not keep silence…
6 The heavens declare his righteousness,
   for God himself is judge.

HYMN *T How great thou art*

**O Lord my God, When I in** [**awesome**](https://www.definitions.net/definition/awesome) **wonder,**

Consider all the [worlds](https://www.definitions.net/definition/worlds) Thy [Hands](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Hands) have made;

I see the stars, I hear the [rolling](https://www.definitions.net/definition/rolling) thunder,

Thy [power](https://www.definitions.net/definition/power) throughout the [universe](https://www.definitions.net/definition/universe) displayed.

*Then* [*sings*](https://www.definitions.net/definition/sings) *my soul, My* [*Saviour*](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Saviour) *God, to Thee,*

*How* [*great*](https://www.definitions.net/definition/great) *Thou art, How* [*great*](https://www.definitions.net/definition/great) *Thou art.*

*Then* [*sings*](https://www.definitions.net/definition/sings) *my soul, My* [*Saviour*](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Saviour) *God, to Thee,*

*How* [*great*](https://www.definitions.net/definition/great) *Thou art, How* [*great*](https://www.definitions.net/definition/great) *Thou art!*

When [through](https://www.definitions.net/definition/through) the woods, and [forest](https://www.definitions.net/definition/forest) glades I wander,

And hear the [birds](https://www.definitions.net/definition/birds) sing [sweetly](https://www.definitions.net/definition/sweetly) in the trees.

When I look down, from [lofty](https://www.definitions.net/definition/lofty) mountain grandeur

And see the brook, and feel the [gentle](https://www.definitions.net/definition/gentle) breeze.

And when I think, that God, His Son not sparing;

Sent Him to die, I [scarce](https://www.definitions.net/definition/scarce) can take it in;

That on the Cross, my [burden](https://www.definitions.net/definition/burden) gladly bearing,

He bled and died to take away my sin.

When [Christ](https://www.definitions.net/definition/Christ) shall come, with [shout](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shout) of acclamation,

And take me home, what joy [shall](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shall) fill my heart.

Then I [shall](https://www.definitions.net/definition/shall) bow, in [humble](https://www.definitions.net/definition/humble) adoration,

And then proclaim: "My God, how [great](https://www.definitions.net/definition/great) Thou art!"

HP, MP506, RS117, STF82

(Some of the hymn books widely used in the Wiltshire United Area)

*Prayers of Praise*

God of glory,

In the darkness of chaos, before the world began, you said, ‘Let there be light’ and light shone out, revealing order, bringing hope.

In the darkness of thunder clouds, on a mountain top, you spoke to Moses of law and liberation and your glory fired the people with hope.

In the darkness of a stable, in an obscure village, a light flickered as a baby was born, God with us, bringing hope.

In the darkness of an occupied land, Jesus was transfigured, and his friends were dazzled by hope beyond hope.

In the darkness of this passing age, a light dawns in our hearts; the gospel of glory of Christ, giving us hope. **Amen.**

*Prayer of Confession*

Loving God, you have brought us out of darkness and into your glorious light.
Forgive us for the times when we have continued to live as though we were still in darkness.
Show us the way to life eternal, that may we share your light for all eternity.
**Amen.**

HYMN

**Lord, the light of Your love is shining**
In the midst of the darkness, shining
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us
Set us free by the truth You now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me

*Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth Your word, Lord, and let there be light*

Lord, I come to Your awesome presence
From the shadows into Your radiance
By the blood, I may enter Your brightness
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness
Shine on me, shine on me

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy
Send forth Your word, Lord, and let there be light

HP, MP445, RS, STF59

Ministry of the Word of God

Lectionary Bible readings for RCL Transfiguration Year B

2 Kings 2.1-12; Psalm 50.1-6; 2 Corinthians 4.3-6; **Mark 9.2-9**

**2 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, 3and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. 4And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. 5Then Peter said to Jesus, ‘Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ 6He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. 7Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, ‘This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!’ 8Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.**

**9 As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.**

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

Reflection

How many times have I climbed a mountain? It takes dedication and commitment, especially when the terrain becomes steep and rugged. You become hot, your breathing alters, your rucksack appears heavier. Then as the summit draws closer how often, especially in the Lake District, have clouds descended. It is no fun walking in cloud, they are cold, and damp and it is easy to lose your way.

Perhaps the disciples had a foretaste of something remarkable as they climbed with Jesus. Perhaps they were thinking Old Testament passages: Moses on Mount Sinai, Elijah on Mount Horeb - both experienced the presence of God on a mountain top?

What occurs removes the veil of Jesus’ humanity to reveal his divinity: wondrous, frightening, powerful, unexpected, and rich. We should not approach Jesus transfiguration with the assumption that we can understand it. It means to draw us towards what is beyond us —like for Moses and the burning fire that does not consume the bush (Exodus 3:1-6) or the fire Elijah hoped for and received from God on the altar drenched in water to win the wager against the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18).

What we need to remember is that Christ’s transfiguration transforms the disciples and transforms us by removing the veil over our vision.  2 Corinthians 3:18 says: **“all of us with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image…”**

Witnessing the most amazing and indescribable experience the disciples want to stay and dwell in that place of wonder. But the divine voice reminds their job is not to abide there but to go down the mountain. During this time when churches remain closed for public worship, we might do well to dwell on this. I am reminded of the statue of Mary outside Salisbury Cathedral it is not facing inwards towards the beauty, majesty and wonder of the building but outwards towards the wider world.

The Transfiguration leads us into the threshold of Lent which begins with Ash Wednesday, when we are thrust into the hard truth that we are dust. The power of the Transfiguration is that it plants in our hearts and minds the brilliance of eternity whilst emboldening us for our journey as the body of Christ. The Transfiguration thus prepares us to come to terms with our humility, our mortality, our utter dependence on God.

It is no small matter that the scene ends with the word “dead.” It is one thing to have a “high”, “a mountaintop” where everything is brilliant, but it is not the be-all-and-end-all. The reason for the identification of Jesus with Moses and Elijah is for disciples and us to realise our crucial work is in the world: to accompany Jesus to the cross, to take up our crosses, to die in order to live, to be last in order to be first, to refuse the invitation to turn away from God’s laws.

We have a responsibility: to listen to God’s Son. That listening does not result in staying aloof where the air is pure and the view stunning. We must listen to the voice of God’s Word in our midst so that we follow in a way that leads to the cross. We are not called to have power over others but to rise up as dust that has been formed by the breath of God and give life to others, especially those who are neglected by the powerful.

Prayer of Response:

Today we give thanks for your glory shown on the mountain of Transfiguration where you pulled back the veil of heaven and Jesus was revealed in majesty.

Raise our expectations
of what it means to encounter you
not just in this place but in every place.
Help us every day to discover something new
about your ways, about what you want of us –
and change the way we see the world,
and the way we act.

In Jesus’ name. **Amen.**

HYMN *T Unde et Memores*

**Stay, Master, stay, upon this heavenly hill;**
A little longer, let us linger still;
With all the mighty ones of old beside,
Near to God’s holy presence still abide;
Before the throne of light we trembling stand,
And catch a glimpse into the spirit land.

Stay, Master, stay! We breathe a purer air;
This life is not the life that waits us there;
Thoughts, feelings, flashes, glimpses come and go;
We cannot speak them—nay, we do not know;
Wrapped in this cloud of light we seem to be
The thing we fain would grow—eternally.

No! saith the Lord, the hour is past, we go;
Our home, our life, our duties lie below.
While here we kneel upon the mount of prayer,
The plough lies waiting in the furrow there!
Here we sought God that we might know His will;
There we must do it, serve Him, seek Him still.

HP158, MP, RS, STF

Our Prayers

God of glory,
we see you in the beauty of the universe,
we meet you in the love of our friends and families,
we find you in our joys and in our pain –
faithful and true.
We see you revealed to us in Scripture,
we hear you speaking to us in the silence,
we know you in our hearts,
and we find you in the person of Jesus.
As we look at the events in our world,
help us to see where you are at work.
In our homes and in our daily lives,
help us to notice the glimpses of your glory
shining through the ordinary fabric of our lives.

You are the God who comes close to us:
though we are far apart from each other
**Surround us with the light of your presence.**

God of glory,
we live with so many uncertainties.
We pray for people whose lives are always uncertain:
for people in war torn parts of the world;
for all who wonder where their next meal will come from;
for people who are unemployed or homeless;
for all who are fleeing from domestic violence.
Help us to make our churches sanctuaries of peace and safety.
May we be ready to respond to the need of others
and to do what we can to tell the story
of the love that will never let us go,
the love that can change us and the world.
Help us to love one another as you have loved us.

You are the God who comes close to us:
though we are far apart from each other
**Surround us with the light of your presence.**

God of glory,
we pray for situations in the world that need hope and healing.
And in particular for Yemen, for Russia, and for Myanmar.
We ask for words and actions that are full of hope and not hate,

of forgiveness and unity and not division.
May we all be mindful of the power of our words,
and use our speaking to build others up, not to tear them down.
May we always shine a light of truth in the darkness of discord and lies.
As a second impeachment trial begins in America,
we ask that the truth would be told and honoured.
We pray for all who work in communications and the media, that they would report with honesty and integrity.
This week, may we seek to respond to the needs of others with messages, words and actions of hope and comfort.

You are the God who comes close to us:
though we are far apart from each other
**Surround us with the light of your presence.**

God of glory,
we thank you for the tireless effort of medical teams caring for patients, especially those who are suffering from Covid.
As discussions begin about a future return to school, we pray that the needs of children and young people would be central to the thinking.
We pray for all who have been kept apart from those they love;
for those who have not been able to mourn for friends and family who have died,
and we pray especially for relatives of people in care homes –
surround them all with your healing presence.
We remember people in our own communities who are suffering
asking that you would lighten the pain and distress of daily life.

You are the God who comes close to us:
though we are far apart from each other
**Surround us with the light of your presence.**

God of glory,
open our eyes and open our hearts.
**Help us to see Jesus.**

God of glory,
change us and renew us by your Spirit.
**Make us more like Jesus. Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

**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,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

HYMN *T To God be the glory*

**To God be the glory, great things He hath done,**
So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,
And opened the life gate that all may go in.

*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,*

*let the earth hear His voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,*

*let the people rejoice!
Oh, come to the Father,*

*through Jesus the Son,
And give Him the glory,*

*great things He hath done.*

Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
To every believer the promise of God;
The vilest offender who truly believes,
That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Great things He hath taught us,

great things He hath done,
And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;
But purer, and higher, and greater will be
Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

HP463, MP708, RS289, STF94

Blessing

*From Numbers 6.24-26*The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face to shine upon you,
and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
and give you peace.
**Amen.**

**Song for Little People on Transfiguration. Tune:** *My God is so big, so strong and so mighty*

This story’s so big, so good and amazing, it tells us that Jesus is king.
Transforming his face, his clothes and his body
so everyone knows he is king.
Yes, Jesus is good, his love is so good – his acts are amazing and new.
This story’s so big, so good and amazing, it tells us that Jesus is king.

Rev David Coppard Superintendent @ Wiltshire United Area

Team Chaplain @ Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton

***Our churches may not all be open, but the Church is active and alive.***

*This is service is offered to any and all, with love and prayers.*

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