



Sunday Feb 14th , 2021
Transfiguration of Jesus
The Fig Tree Worship Resource

Gathering & Lighting the Candle

Come into this place of peace
 Come into this space of grace
 Come alone, together,
 one with each other and with God

Come, leave the door open and let the light in.
 Come, leave your heart open and let the light in.

Come, open your ears, eyes and mind
 to the wonder that is before you
 this day and every day. Come ...

Light your candle:

2 Corinthians 4:6 *For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

Call to worship (Based on Psalm 50)

The almighty God, the Lord, speaks;
 he calls to the whole earth from east to west.

**God shines from Zion,
 the city perfect in its beauty.**

Our God is coming, but not in silence;
 a raging fire is in front of him
 a furious storm around him.

**He calls heaven and earth as witnesses
 to see him judge his people.**

He says, "Gather my faithful people to me,
 those who made a covenant with me
 by offering a sacrifice."

**The heavens proclaim that God is righteous,
 that he himself is judge.**

Acknowledging



**Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
 Christian Congress**

As we gather we acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and the waters that surround us, and pay respects to their elders past, present and emerging. Led by Christ, we

commit ourselves to working for justice and peace, walking together as First and Second Peoples.

Singing Here in this place TIS 474

Here in this place new light is streaming
 Now is the darkness vanished away
 See in this space our fears and our dreamings
 Brought here to you in the light of this day

*Gather us in, the lost and forsaken
 Gather us in, the blind and the lame
 Call to us now and we shall awaken
 We shall arise at the sound of our name*

We are the young, our lives are a mystery
 We are the old who yearn for your face
 We have been sung throughout all of history
 Called to be light to the whole human race

*Gather us in, the rich and the haughty
 Gather us in, the proud and the strong
 Give us a heart so meek and so lowly
 Give us the courage to enter the song*

Here we will take the wine and the water
 Here we will take the bread of new birth
 Here you shall call your sons and your daughters
 Call us anew to be salt for the earth

*Give us to drink the wine of compassion
 Give us to eat the bread that is you
 Nourish us well and teach us to fashion
 Lives that are holy and hearts that are true*

Not in the dark of buildings confining
 Not in some heaven light years away
 But here in this place the new light is shining
 Now is the kingdom, now is the day

*Gather us in and hold us forever
 Gather us in and make us your own
 Gather us in, all peoples together
 Fire of love in our flesh and our bones*

Marty Haugen 1950 - TIS 474 *Used with permission.*
 CCLI 241 739

Where are we? In the cycle of the church year, last week was the end of the season of Epiphany. Next week we begin the journey of Lent towards Good Friday and Easter. Today we celebrate the

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Transfiguration of Jesus. This is a mountain top day; a climb, a blinding vision, a voice saying, 'listen' and a coming back down to earth. This is a time to reflect on the mystery of God and the moments when we have been overwhelmed by God's presence.



Prayer

Loving and surprising God,
 we come with hearts full of gratitude
 for those mountain-top moments
 when we sense your presence so close.

Often in grief, sometimes in delight,
 and even when we're doing something ordinary
 you come with your startling light.

In the hand of a friend,
 in the prayers of the faithful,
 in the words of a song,
 in the sun rising to bless another day;
 you come to us and tell us to listen
 to the one who calls us by name.

In the quiet we bask in your light
 feeling the warmth of your love
 flow through our bodies from the earth below,
 feeling the breath of your Spirit
 fill up our lungs from the air around us,
 feeling the mystery of the stars
 draw us closer to you from beyond our knowing,
 we are still in your presence...
 (time of quiet)

Loving and surprising God
 mixed with our gratitude is fear;
 we are afraid of failing, of getting it wrong,
 of messing things up, of saying the wrong things.
 Forgive us when we hurt others
 by what we do and say
 and what we fail to do and say.
 And sometimes when you tell us to listen
 we shut down and turn away, because of our
 fear.
 Forgive us when we talk instead of listening,
 when we're too full of ourselves

to let you or others in.
 (time of quiet)

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
 God is with us, on the mountain top
 and at the kitchen sink,
 in the playground, the office
 and the nursing home,
 at the break of day and in the darkest night
 bringing light, healing and hope.

Be assured, we are forgiven
thanks be to God, Amen.

Listening

Read: 2 Kings 2:1-12
 Mark 9:2-9

For these words of faith
 and for Jesus the Word: **Thanks be to God.**

Reflecting - Rev. Jennie Gordon

The beginning of A.A. Milne's poem *Us Two* reminds me of today's reading from 2 Kings:

*Wherever I am, there's always Pooh,
 There's always Pooh and Me.
 Whatever I do, he wants to do,
 "Where are you going today?" says Pooh:
 "Well, that's very odd 'cos I was too.
 Let's go together," says Pooh, says he.
 "Let's go together," says Pooh.*

Elisha was not letting Elijah out of his sight. He was going wherever Elijah was going, whatever it took. Three times Elijah told Elisha to 'stay here' and three times Elisha kept on going beside Elijah. Until he couldn't. He couldn't go on that final journey, in the chariots of fire, and when Elisha finally lost sight of his master he tore his clothes in grief.

In the reading from Mark, Elijah, Moses and a dazzling Jesus are standing on a mountain top and the only thing Peter can think of is that he wants to keep them all there together. So he will build them a little village to dwell happily ever after. He wants to hold on to the moment, to the company, at least until he understands what's



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going on. But he can't. Elisha wants to hold on to Elijah, but he can't and at least he asks for a double share of his spirit so he can always carry a significant part of his beloved teacher with him.

Does Peter want to keep them all on the mountain because he's afraid of what lies ahead for Jesus and for himself? The walk down the mountain begins the journey to Jerusalem. Does Elisha want to keep Elijah with him because he's afraid of what God might ask him to do, on his own?

Peter has the image of the transfigured Jesus to accompany him through the dark and troubled times ahead. Elisha has the image of the chariots of fire and the mantle of Elijah to accompany him through the troubled times ahead. Is Jesus encouraged and empowered by the events of the transfiguration and the encounter with Elijah and Moses? Does he carry that with him to the cross?

I wonder what you carry? What mountain top memory, or psalm, hymn or text assures you that God is with you, gives you comfort and helps you keep going? I was with my younger sister when she received the worst news possible from her oncologist about the multiplication of her brain tumours. We sat together in a small waiting room and Psalm 23; *The Lord is my shepherd...*, came tumbling out through our tears.

Wherever I go, there's always Pooh... Wherever I go, there's always the presence of the risen Christ, the shepherd, often in a stranger's guise, sometimes in my own. We are not alone. We go together, each of us, all of us in the company of the Spirit of Wisdom. Sometimes we are given dazzling mountain-top moments where we get to glimpse God's glory, but most often we are not. Still we carry with us the assurance we need to keep us going, down the mountain and on through life. May it be so, Amen.

Responding:

Prayers for World & Community

Father God, you have chosen us to serve you in this world. We come before you to hear your

Good News and pray that you will draw us to yourself. Lord Jesus Christ, you have said, "I leave you peace, my peace I give you; Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom. Almighty God, we pray that in every heart there will be the true love of peace. Guide us with your wisdom and those who take care of the nations of the earth that justice and peace may increase, until the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love.

We pray for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed and those in prisons. We pray for those in any need or trouble, gracious God, the comfort of all who sorrow, the strength of all who suffer, and hear the cry of those in misery and need. In their afflictions show them your mercy, and strength so that they remember you in their sufferings.

We pray for the Fig Tree Project of the Church, for the coming God's kingdom among the Gippsland community. May our lives bear witness again to your work of transfiguring even us into the likeness of your Son. We pray for your Church, with its feet on this earth yet already feeling the pull of another world. Help your people to be faithful in their belief, and bring us all in the end to rest in the love through which nothing will separate us from you.

Thank you for bringing the nations of the whole world into your ministry, to convey the Good News of Christ. Lord our God you have made all diverse nations and cultures to be one family in your church. We pray that you may be glorified in all the churches. God, the giver of eternal life, we give you thanks and praise you for the wonderful grace and virtue that exists in your church. Grant us the hope of a future, a share in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ and fullness of joy in the fellowship of your peoples.

God we thank you for your goodness. You are worthy to receive glory and honour and power. We give you thanks for your presence with your people during the pandemic Covid-19.

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In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. As we pray together:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins,
 as we forgive those who sin against us.
 Save us from the time of trial
 and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power, and the glory
 are yours
 now and for ever. Amen.

Passing the peace

May the Peace of God shine in your life:
and also in yours.

Offering

All that we have is yours, God of life. Bless these gifts we offer that they might be used to bring hope, help and healing through the work of your church, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Notices

Look out for Lent! Shrove Tuesday is just around the corner - have you planned a Covid-safe Pancake Day? It might be too late to get the host pack, but you can still register your event at <https://pancakeday.com.au/vic-tas/>

Do you have a Lenten study or daily devotion happening? Check the Gippsland Presbytery website for what's on offer. <https://gippsland.unitingchurch.org.au/>

Singing How good Lord, TiS 234

How good, Lord, to be here!
 Your glory fills the night;
 Your face and garments, like the sun,
 Shine with unborrowed light.

How good, Lord, to be here,
 Your beauty to behold
 Where Moses and Elijah stand,
 Your messengers of old.

Fulfiller of the past
 And hope of things to be,
 We hail your body glorified
 And our redemption see.

Before we taste of death,
 We see your kingdom come;
 We long to hold the vision bright
 And make this hill our home.

How good, Lord, to be here!
 Yet we may not remain;
 But since you bid us leave the mount,
 Come with us to the plain.

J. Armitage Robinson 1858-1933 TIS 234
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Blessing

Merciful God, you protect us with great love and care in your mercy. Please help us always, and keep us in your care. We trust you wherever we can see your light. May you guide us from this place, as we witness to the Good News.

Through grace may we face the future with renewed hope and deeper understanding. God, strengthen us and sustain us to serve your people. Fill us with your Spirit and peace.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

If you want something fun as people leave you might want to play this: Chi Coltrane - Go like Elijah
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p97oV12IA3k>

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