

First Congregational United Church of Christ

*Empowered by the Holy Spirit and with the help of God,
we open our doors and hearts to all, in service and love as modeled by Jesus Christ.*



*Transfiguration of the Lord
Last Sunday after the Epiphany
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

*The Lord's Day
Transfiguration of the Lord
Last Sunday after the Epiphany
Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Nine o'clock in the Morning*

The Worship of God

Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the quickening of the conscience by God's holiness; the nourishment of the mind with God's truth; the purifying of the imagination by God's beauty; the opening of the heart to God's love; the surrender of the will to God's purpose—all of this gathered up in adoration.

~William Temple

The Prologue

There is an adage, "Where you sit or stand determines what you see." How very true is this sage statement, offering a word of profound wisdom to all of us as we interpret our reality in real time. Perspective is a valuable gift in life, a wonderful thing enabling us to sort out the complexities that often confound and confuse us. Today, we read again the strangely compelling story of Jesus' Transfiguration, a witness to the transformational power of God. As with many biblical theophanies, revelations of the presence of God in the human drama, this sacred moment takes place on a mountaintop. A view from on high always gives us a different experience, everything we expect from a breath-taking vista. Ah, if only all our attempts to worship, if even on occasion, could be like that of the mountaintop, full of awe and wonder, yes transcendence, the essence of mystery and reverence. Indeed, this rare experience is a lofty goal when we gather for this weekly dance with the Divine.

Gathering Music

The Call to Worship and Welcome

The Spirit of the still speaking God be with you.

And also with you.

The Music for Contemplation

The Lighting of the Altar Candles

The Gathering

Keep silence before the Holy all you faithful! Come one and all, listening for the voice of the Divine in these sacred moments together!

We long for a double portion of the Spirit of the Holy, transfiguring us with the light of the glory of God!

Gather before the One whose light shines forth in the darkness, transforming us this day with the righteousness of God!

“It is good for us to be here!” We long for the presence of God to be revealed in our midst as we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving!

Let us worship God!

The Introit, No. 44 (*Chalice Praise*) *Open Our Eyes, Lord*

Bob Cull

The Collect

Let us pray to the Lord,

Transfiguring God, we have gathered as your faithful to give glory to the One whose light shines in the darkness, to proclaim your transforming power in all the earth, to celebrate Transfiguration in all its many manifestations; as we listen for your voice in our midst, remove the veils that cloud our vision of the Holy, allowing you to shine forth among us; like Elisha who prayed of old, may we too inherit a double portion of your Spirit, transforming us in your image; we give you thanks for the many ways you transform our lives as we travel this journey of faith; all this we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the holy and still speaking Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Amen.

*The Opening Hymn, No. 66 *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*

ST. DENIO

*The Litany of Praise

God speaks a word, summoning the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting!

The Holy One shines forth in all the earth, reflecting the perfect beauty of God's creation!

God comes to us in myriad ways, not always silent, but sometimes appearing as a devouring fire, like a mighty tempest upon the earth!

The Holy One calls to the heavens above and to the earth below, equitably judging all people with righteousness and justice!

God gathers the faithful and makes a lasting covenant with all people everywhere!

The heavens declare the righteousness of God, a holy judge in the midst of the people! Praise the Lord!

*Glory to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Comforter!
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end! Amen! Amen!*

The Call to Confession¹

The whirlwind pace of our lives becomes so all-consuming that it is easy to forget our origins as the created image of God. Our busyness separates us from knowledge of the glory of God in the face of the transfigured Christ. Now in these quiet moments apart from our everyday distractions, we seek to renew our relationship with God, with our neighbor, and ourselves, restored to wholeness. In the silence and stillness of these moments, let us confess before the Holy.

The Silent Confession

The Corporate Confession²

Let us pray to the Lord,

When the gospel is veiled from us, transfiguring God, we feel alone. How convenient it is to lose our direction and go the wrong way! At times, we feel as if we are perishing under the demands of our day, unable to see clearly what is most important in our lives. It is easy to become enslaved to our routines, enticed by shallow distractions. We tend to fill our hours with doing, leaving little precious time for reflection and prayer. Forgive us and restore the equilibrium to our oft unbalanced lives.

The Assurance of Pardon³

Beloved faith community, hear the good news of Transfiguration! God promises light for the dark times in our lives, giving guidance for our way. In Christ, God lifts the veil allowing us to catch a glimpse of glory. There is peace to be found in the midst of turmoil. There is freedom and quiet even amid our busyness. We are released from our slavery to things and lifted up beyond the limitations of our habits. God forgives us and offers new meaning to our lives.

Thanks be to God!

The Time for the Children

Nancy Diepenbrock

The Witness from the Hebrew Bible

II KINGS 2:1-12

When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here! The Lord has sent me to Bethel." But Elisha said, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you!" So, they went down to Bethel. The company of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha and asked, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today?" "Yes, I know," Elisha replied, "so be quiet!" Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha! The Lord has sent me to Jericho." And he replied, "As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you!" So, they went to Jericho. The company of the prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you

today?” “Yes, I know,” he replied, “so be quiet!” Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here! The Lord has sent me to the Jordan.” And he replied, “As surely as the Lord lives and as you live, I will not leave you!” So, the two of them walked on. Fifty men from the company of the prophets went and stood at a distance, facing the place where Elijah and Elisha had stopped at the Jordan. Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it! The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, “Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?” “Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit,” Elisha replied. “You have asked a difficult thing,” Elijah said, “yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise, it will not!” As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind! Elisha saw this and cried out, “My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!” And Elisha saw him no more. Then he took hold of his garment and tore it in two!

Listen to what the Spirit of the still speaking God is saying!

Thanks be to God!

The Response: PSALM 50:1-6

KINGSFOLD

*The mighty One, the Lord of Hosts, speaks and the world obeys!
From dawn until the setting sun, God's wonder earth displays!
The perfect beauty all around from Zion's height shines forth!
And stars across the firmament so brightly beam their worth!*

*God comes, not with a silent form, but riding on the winds!
Before God's face, the raging storm its blast of thunder sends!
All hail the judge, in bold array, who weighs our righteousness
against all sin, and with whose grace deigns faithful hearts to bless!*

*The heav'ns declare your justice, Lord, as endless as the sky!
Against the taunts of disbelief, our God will testify!*

*Receive our heartfelt gift of thanks as honor to your might!
Refresh our faith with each new day! Protect us through the night!*

The Witness from the Gospels

MARK 9:2-9

After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them! His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love! Listen to him!” Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead!

The Gospel for today!

Thanks be to God!

The Sermon
The Hymn, No. 182
The Concerns of the Church
The Pastoral Prayer
The Lord's Prayer

Double Taking!
Transform Us

Timothy W. Shirley
PICARDY

**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.**

The Receiving of Our Gifts
The Offertory

*The Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!
Praise Christ all creatures here below!
Praise Holy Spirit, evermore!
Praise triune God whom we adore!*

*The Prayer of Thanksgiving

*The Closing Hymn, No. 595

Be Thou My Vision

SLANE

*The Benediction and Blessing

To our guests! At your choosing, we invite you to join us in a long-standing tradition at First Congregational
United Church of Christ as we form a circle, joining hands and singing together our Fellowship Song.

*The Fellowship Song

Let There Be Peace on Earth

WORLD PEACE

*Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.
With every step I take, let this be my joyous creed.
To take each moment and live each moment in peace, eternally!
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.*

The Music for Reflection

*You are invited to stand as you are able.

Lector: Ursula Charaf

Ushers: Mary Lou Congdon and Susan Krivichi

*The color for Transfiguration is White, symbolizing purity and
reflecting the themes of light, faith, innocence, and glory.*

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First Congregational UCC - Eagle River, WI

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