

# THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

February 14, 2021 – 9:30 a.m.

**PRELUDE** “El Shaddai” -Michael Card

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**People: But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**People: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

## SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: 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.

**People: Amen.**

## FIRST READING *2 Kings 2:1–12*

When the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. And 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. And 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.” Elijah 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. The 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.” Then 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. Fifty men of the sons of the prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then 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. When 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.” And 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.” And 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. And Elisha saw it and he cried, “My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!” And he saw him no more.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE** *2 Corinthians 3:12–18; 4:1–6*

Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, not 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. But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. 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. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In 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. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For 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.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** *Mark 9:2–9*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the ninth chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

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, and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. And 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.” For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, “This is my beloved Son; listen to him.” And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only. And 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.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**SERMON** “Jesus Only” Mark 9:2-9

- I. Refocus and Readjust
- II. What Do the Disciples See (9:2-9)?
  - What other events do Peter, James, and John witness?
  - What does Mark focus on and why?
  - What is the last thing that they see?
- III. What Do We See?
  - Sometimes, we see \_\_\_\_\_ much.

- Sometimes, we see what we don't \_\_\_\_\_ to see.
- Other times, we don't \_\_\_\_\_ what we see.
- What does it mean to see Jesus only?

Sometimes our eyes need to readjust and focus. For example, you are reading a book for awhile and then suddenly look up, and the eyes aren't working so well. You need a second or two to refocus. Or maybe, you get a new prescription strength for your glasses, and your eyes need an adjustment period. I remember when I got my last pair that everything I saw was curved. Letters curved on the pages of a book. Door frames bowed out. Everything had a florescent glow to it. It was like looking through a fun house mirror except, I wasn't in a fun house. I told the doctor about the issue and she said that it could take about two weeks for my eyes to get used to it! I know that we certainly have had this one happen before. You are sleeping, or are watching a movie in a dark room, and then someone enters and turns on the lights! Boy, can that be a shock and adjustment! You are practically blind for a few moments. Sometimes our eyes need to refocus. As we leave the season of Epiphany, and as we head toward the season of Lent, our eyes and lives need refocusing. Today, we have a text that focuses on sight. It is all about what people *see*. What do we see? What do we need to focus on? What do the disciples see?

Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up on a high mountain. They are part of that "inner-three" of Jesus who often witness special events. They are three of the first four disciples called in Mark. They witness the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead. They ask Jesus about the signs of the close of the age, and receive teachings from Him about it. They are also with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. What a group to be part of! Like in those other instances, they will witness something special here. It is a onetime event in the history of the world!

What do they see? They see Jesus transfigured before them. Jesus reveals the glory that is intrinsic to Himself, and His person. He shines with the glory of the divine nature, which had been veiled, or hidden. St. Mark interestingly focuses on the clothes. He says, "**His clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them.**" Perhaps the word "bleach" jumps out at us during this COVID-era. Mark is the only one who mentions *bleach*.

Bleach in those days was a paste made from clean clay in which white cloths would be soaked, and then stretched out to dry in the sun. Once it dried, the clay paste would be washed away. Mark's point is that Jesus' glory is beyond that of *any* king. His bright clothes reflected His divinity as that of God's Son. In other words, He is dressed like a King, *the* King. The sights don't stop yet.

The three disciples see Moses and Elijah talking with Jesus. You have Moses, the representative of the Old Covenant that Jesus will fulfill. He represents the Law/Torah, which contains not just the Ten Commandments, but also the Gospel promises! You have Elijah, the appointed restorer of all things. His presence shows the fulfillment of all things has arrived in Jesus. Both of these men had received an appearance of God at Mt. Sinai, and had heard from Him. Now, we see that again, but in a greater way with Jesus. The sights continue.

Mark says that a cloud overshadowed them all. When you see a cloud in the Old Testament, you shouldn't think of a rainy day, but the presence of God! God lead Israel in the desert by a pillar of cloud. In Exodus 16, the glory of the Lord appears in one. In chapter 24, when Moses goes up Mt. Sinai, a cloud covers the mountain. In 40, the glory covered the tabernacle and in 1 Kings 8, it covers the temple. The presence of the divine glory was associated with clouds. And, in this cloud, a voice speaks. It says, "**This is my beloved Son; listen to Him.**" It confirms Jesus' identity, and announces God's approval of Him.

Mark then records the last thing that the disciples see. "**And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.**" The disciples saw many things that day, but in the end, they see Jesus, and Him only.

What about us, though? What do we see? Sometimes, we see *too much*, and that isn't helpful. When our lives are going well, we can see many good things. We see what Martin Luther calls "First Article Gifts." They are things like house, home, health, and heat. They are food, drink, and hobbies. They are our family, friends, body, and soul. They are everything that God richly and daily provides us with to support our bodies,

lives, and loved ones. However, we can see so many good things that we can be blind and miss the Giver of them! Our eyes aren't able to adjust or focus.

When our lives aren't going well, we can see many bad things: disease, death, disappointment, shortfalls, suffering, setbacks, stresses, and slander. They can make us blind to the Sustainer, the One Who holds us tight and gets us through those difficult patches. Sometimes, we see *too much*, and our eyes cannot properly focus.

Other times, we can see what we *don't want to see*. We can see a past riddled with destruction, and stupid, unfixable mistakes. We can see a present full of people that we have let down, disappointment, or hurt. We can see a future devoid and bankrupt of hope and happiness, or cloaked in the unknown. We can see many things, and none may be pleasing to the eye. We might not be able to focus on something else.

We also don't *know* what we see. In our day and age, we can struggle with our ability to see things as they really are. It can be hard to see which reports, posts, pictures, or headlines give the most realistic and accurate picture of a story. The other day, I saw a meme that said, "Parenting Done Right" and it had a toddler pickup up a hockey puck on a homemade rink. As I looked at the picture, I noticed something was off. The kid wasn't on the ice but was photo chopped on. It is a great irony, is it not? It can be hard to see the truth. And, you know what, we can even avoid seeing the truth. We all know some people who cannot see the truth right before their eyes; oftentimes, it can be us! Who knows what we see. Our eyes need to be readjusted and focused. But, to what? What do we see the world through? Whom do we see it through? We see it through *Jesus only*.

To see Jesus alone is not to be blind to everything else, but is to see everything through Him. Let me repeat that. To see Jesus alone is not to be blind to everything else, but to see everything *through Him*. It is the readjusting and focus our eyes, and lives, need, that He provides through our baptism, His Supper, Word, and the work He does by His Spirit.

When we see Jesus only, we see that Jesus is the forgiver of our past (and present and future, for that matter). Jesus not only erases our long lists of sins, but He writes in their place His lifetime of good deeds. His love changes our past by making our past *His* own.

When we see Jesus only, we see that He is the companion of our present. He keeps the promises He made to us in baptism, that we are God's beloved and forgiven children that He will never leave or forsake. We see that He is the Giver of all that we have, and how He works through doctors, nurses, medications, our jobs, family, friends, service personnel and volunteers to provide for us. We see that in the challenging times that He is the One Who gets us through it.

When we see Jesus only, we see that He is our hope for tomorrow. That thundering storm on the horizon He will quite with His grace. As one writer says, "His resurrection molds our future. In His empty tomb is fullness of hope for our future yet un-lived. No matter what the future holds, Christ will hold us fast." We don't know the future, but we know the One Who holds it, and us. Like the disciples, we want to see Jesus only.

Very soon, we are going to start the season of Lent, which is a time to help us see Jesus only. Where does your gaze shift? What are your eyes fixed on? Lent helps us to see that. Lent helps us to see our sin and need to repent, but also the amazing mercy and grace of our Savior. This year, Zechariah will show us Jesus and His passion like none other.

The prophet says, "**Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.**" In the ashes of repentance on Wednesday, we see the One Who welcomes us back! Zechariah shows us Palm Sunday: "**Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O Daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is He, humble and mounted on a donkey**" (9:9). He takes us to Maundy Thursday, where we see Christ's betrayal: "**And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver** (11:12)." We see scattered disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane: "**Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered** (13:7)". We are shown Christ crucified with these words: "**And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on Him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him** (12:10)" and "**and I will remove the iniquity of the world in a single day** (3:9)!" The prophet will then bring us to Easter as he closes his book with everything being made new. Zechariah will help us see Jesus only.

As we begin the season of Lent, and as we close out the season of Epiphany, let's allow the words of verse eight apply not just to the disciples, but to us as well: **"And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only."**

## **NEW MEMBER INSTALLATION**

Pastor: Dear Friends in Christ, on this day we have the joyful privilege of welcoming into our fellowship at Emmaus Lutheran Church these fellow saints in the body of Christ now present here before you. To those of you who are becoming members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, I would now ask you in the presence of God and this congregation:

Do you acknowledge and confess the teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church to be the true and unaltered teachings of the Word of God? If so, answer, ***"I Do."***

Do you desire in the sincere obedience of God, to be received into the communicant fellowship of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and of Emmaus congregation? If so, answer, ***"I Do."***

Do you intend to continue in the confession of this Church, to make diligent and faithful use of His Word and Sacrament, and to lead a sober, righteous and God-pleasing life, even unto the end? If so, answer, ***"I do so intend, with the help of God."***

Do you desire to become a member of the family of Christ's people at Emmaus, do you intend to join us in faithfully using His precious means of grace: His Word and Sacraments, and do you commit yourself to mission and ministry which He has given us to do in this place? If so, answer, ***"Yes, with the help of God."***

Please join with the people of Emmaus in confessing our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**All: 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.**

Pastor: In the Name of our Gracious God and on behalf of the people of Emmaus, I bid you welcome as members of Emmaus Lutheran Church and encourage you to faithfully continue with us in worshiping God, in hearing His Word and sharing His Supper, in proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ through word and deed, and in striving for justice and peace in all the earth. May the blessings of the Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit rest upon you and abide with you. Depart in peace, serving the Lord!

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**MUSIC DURING PREPARATION "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"**

## **PREFACE**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose great glory was revealed on the

Mount of Transfiguration. Having experienced that glory through the faithful witness of the disciples, grant that we confidently share the hope that is ours in Jesus, who is our light and our life. With Moses and Elijah and with all the company of heaven, we praise You evermore.

## **SANCTUS**

**People: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:**

**Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.**

**Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross. Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Pastor: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**People: 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.**

## **THE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

## **PAX DOMINI**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People: Amen.**

## **DISTRIBUTION**

*You are invited to receive the Lord's Supper if you believe and confess that Jesus Christ is your Savior from sin, you are a baptized child of the Triune God, and you believe that He gives you His body and blood in the bread and wine you receive. White grape juice can be found in the center of each tray for those who cannot receive alcohol. Children are welcome to come forward for a blessing.*

*In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:*

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart in peace.

**People: Amen.**

## MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION

### POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

**People: Amen.**

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### POSTLUDE “Alleluia, Song of Gladness” *LSB* 417

- 1 Alleluia, song of gladness,  
Voice of joy that cannot die;  
Alleluia is the anthem  
Ever raised by choirs on high;  
In the house of God abiding  
Thus they sing eternally.
- 2 Alleluia, thou resoundest,  
True Jerusalem and free;  
Alleluia, joyful mother,  
All thy children sing with thee,  
But by Babylon’s sad waters  
Mourning exiles now are we.
- 3 Alleluia cannot always  
Be our song while here below;  
Alleluia, our transgressions  
Make us for a while forgo;  
For the solemn time is coming  
When our tears for sin must flow.
- 4 Therefore in our hymns we pray Thee,  
Grant us, blessèd Trinity,  
At the last to keep Thine Easter  
With Thy faithful saints on high;  
There to Thee forever singing  
Alleluia joyfully.

Text: Public domain

“Shine, Jesus, Shine”

### Acknowledgments

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### **BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**GENEROSITY THOUGHTS:** *Mark 9:6 -- “For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified.”* Soon enough, the disciples’ terror turned into joy, for when Jesus is with us, there is no need to fear. He loves us and cares for us and will never abandon us. That assurance is the basis of all generosity – for only those who are set free from worry can learn the joy of giving.

**LENTEN MIDWEEK WORSHIP** will be held at Emmaus beginning Ash Wednesday, February 17, at 11:30 a.m. There will be an evening service at Bethel Lutheran Church at 7 p.m.

**PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY:** Wednesdays at 2:15 p.m. we will have a prayer and Bible Study group. Each week, we will gather together to pray and study a text. We will be meeting in-person and virtually. For those that attend virtually, we will have you join us via Zoom (contact Pastor Kooi for the link). Please contact Pastor Kooi for more details.

**CA OPEN HOUSE ON FEBRUARY 23:** Concordia Academy’s in-person open house on Tuesday, February 23, 6:00-8:00 PM, gives parents and students a great chance to see how CA honors God through excellence in academics, arts, athletics, and more! COVID-19 safety protocols will be in place; reservations are required. Get more details and reserve your spot at [www.concordiaacademy.com/openhouse](http://www.concordiaacademy.com/openhouse).

**REGISTER FOR CONCORDIA ACADEMY CAMPS:** This summer, Concordia Academy offers over 30 sports, arts, and STEM summer camps for elementary, middle, and high school students. New offerings include Cardboard Creations, Coding, Stop Motion Animation, and Sweet Treats & Healthy Eats! Go to [www.concordiaacademy.com/camps](http://www.concordiaacademy.com/camps) to get details and register.

**HEAR “THE LUTHERAN HOUR”** on Sunday mornings at 6:05 a.m. on WCCO 830 AM radio. Next week’s broadcast: “Do You See Anything?” Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler. The world wields power with blunt force, but God hides His power in suffering, weakness, and humility. (Mark)