



'Worship at home' February 11th 2024



We come to worship with joy in
anticipation of knowing God's
presence revealed among us.

Opening

God, you call us to worship:

we come to be nourished, to be renewed,
to grow in faith.

God, you are revealed in our world:

sometimes in shining glory,
sometimes in tears and struggle.

God as we worship you:

open our eyes to see you anew,
that your grace may be made known among us.

~ adapted from prayer by Rev Gord <http://worshipofferings.blogspot.ca/>



This week we hear the story of Christ's transfiguration. The word *transfigure* means literally to "change" (*trans*) "shape" (*figure*). Jesus' outward appearance was transformed, and the disciples saw a glimpse of the glory of God, shining as dazzling light.

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.

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These events are difficult to understand. It is suggested that this story is meant to be savoured as presented, rather than to be explained. There are moments when we experience God's presence in amazing ways.



<http://caitlintrussell.org/tag/transfiguration/>

When have you experienced the presence of God, perhaps in a surprising or unexpected way?

Sometimes we experience God in such a powerful or dramatic way that we are changed... we see things in a new or different way. We can imagine that those who witnessed these events came to a new and different understanding of who Jesus was. Firstly associating him with Moses and Elijah, the great fathers of their faith, they suggest building a tabernacle as a permanent memorial of the event. Even without understanding what was going on, they realise the significance of their experience. Then they are told not to tell anyone what they had seen.

Have you ever experienced something so special that you found it difficult to put into words?

The glory of God is indescribable and uncontainable. Such revelations of who God is cannot be reduced to words.



What words would you use to describe God to someone who has not experienced the presence of God for themselves?

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but

Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ.

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The glory of God is indescribable, and difficult to comprehend. However, we can see and understand the outward display of life and love that is manifest when we base our lives on Christ. When we come into relationship with Christ, we are changed, and we respond in new and different ways. We are called to shine the light of God's presence to those around us.

Coventry Cathedral - John Piper's baptistry window,
<http://diqlib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54907>

What are the outward signs of your Christian life?

What makes you shine with God's glory?

How might you more intentionally be the presence of God to another?

Pray

- for your eyes to be opened to the presence of God in the world
- for your eyes to be opened to seeing the needs of those around you and for your heart to be prompted to respond
- that you might shine the light of Christ to others
- for those in the church to work together for peace and justice
- for all to come to know God for themselves



The story of Jesus' transfiguration is often understood as a moment where everything comes into focus; it is a story through which the gospel writer wants us to see all the other stories of Jesus, affirming Jesus as the Son of God.



How does Jesus' transfiguration inform the other stories of Jesus we have heard during Epiphany – Jesus' baptism, the calling of the disciples, the healing stories?

<http://standrewsamarrillo.org>

This is the last Sunday of the liturgical season of Epiphany. This week many of us will celebrate Shrove Tuesday, eating up the luxury items of eggs and butter as pancakes, before the season of Lent which prepares us for the events of Easter.

How might this sacred story of Christ's transfiguration prepare us to follow more deeply into Lent?



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Closing

In the coming week,
may you experience the presence of God with joy.

May the holy cloud comfort you.
May the divine voice encourage you.
May the power of the Spirit
transform you,
transform us,
transform our world.

Open our eyes, Lord,
that we might see you,
and participate in
this transformation of all things.

~ adapted from prayer written by Joanna Harader <https://spaciousfaith.com/>