

Sunday Worship on March 2, 2024

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Donald Hutchinson)

Sunday Order of Worship

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to Worship
- Praise song BOP 490 God of grace and God of glory
- Prayer for Worship and Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song BOP 441 Can a little child like me

We listen

- Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)
- First reading: Exodus 34:29-35
- Second reading: Psalm 99 (Refrain 1)
- Third reading: Luke 9:28-36
- Sermon: The Transfiguration of Jesus Christ
- Hymn BOP 177 Christ, whose glory fills the sky
- Prayer for the people

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology (BOP 79) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey BOP 687 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine

We Serve

- Benediction
- A Sung Blessing

Responsive Call to Worship

One: The church lives to praise God.

All: We have no higher calling than to offer the worship that belongs to God day by day, Sunday by Sunday.

One: Through the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments, in praise, prayer, teaching and fellowship, God sustains the life of the church.

All: We worship God, offering ourselves in the service of Christ, rejoicing in the Holy Spirit

Praise song – BOP 490 God of grace and God of glory

Prayer of Adoration

God of grace and God of glory, you reveal your presence to the world in radiant glory and gentle whispers, on mountain tops and lowly plains, in classrooms and hospital beds, in homes and churches, in the silence of nature and the sounds of cities. Yours is the presence that pushes past our fears, yours is the touch that transforms our doubts. We come before you to celebrate your goodness, to focus on your light, and offer you all praise, honour and thanksgiving, for you are our God and we are your people, now and always.

In your mercy, hear us as we confess our sins:

Prayer of confession (Unison) *(Let us come to God with the prayer of confession in unison.)*

God of mercy and forgiveness, facing the light of your goodness, we confess all that keeps us from sharing that goodness. We are distracted by the desire to have more than we need. We focus on our own disappointments rather than trust the future you create. We feel discouraged by the pandemic and fail to claim the hope you hold out to us in Christ. Transfigure us by your grace, and shape us into disciples who follow Christ's leading each day. Amen.

Heavenly Father, hear us, as we offer the Prayer that Jesus taught us: *(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 forever. Amen.

Words of Assurance

Do not be afraid. God's forgiveness shines into the world.

The morning star rises in our hearts and we are made new.

Know that you are forgiven and forgive one another in Christ's name.

May the Peace of the Lord be with you. *(Let us bless each other with the peace of the Lord.)*

Praise song – BOP 441 Can a little child like me

Prayer for Children

Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)

- First reading: Exodus 34:29-35
- Second reading: Psalm 99 (Refrain 1)
- Third reading: Luke 9:28-36

"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."

SERMON: The Transfiguration of Jesus Christ

That morning, the boy was so nervous. Because it was the first day of his high school. He went to school but people were laughing behind his back. He didn't know why, but he was bullied so badly because of his pink shirt. In the afternoon, many of the senior students passed by him wearing the same pink shirts.

This was what happened. Learning about the bullying situation with the new student, David Shepherd and Travis Price bought 50 pink shirts and encouraged their classmates to wear them to support the new student.

This happened in Nova Scotia in 2007. From then on, this kindness became a national movement to promote kindness, inclusion, and anti-bullying efforts.

Last Wednesday was Pink Shirt Day. Wearing some unique colours cannot diminish one's own identity. **What is your identity?** And what is your understanding of your identity? What kind of

self-recognition are you wearing? Is it your position, your wealth, your relationships, or your accomplishments? Your identity is a precious child of God no matter of your own understanding is.

Jesus' transfiguration reveals his true identity. About a week prior to Jesus' transfiguration, Jesus asked a few questions to his disciples. **V18, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"** The disciples answered, "people say that you are John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the ancient prophets." Then, Jesus asked this question to his disciples. **V20, "But who do you say that I am?"** Peter answered, **"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."** Jesus was very pleased with the answer.

Now, let's think about Jesus' heart.

Jesus knows what's coming. He will suffer and die on the cross. It is scary and not his favourite thing. At the same time, when Jesus thinks about his disciples, what would they do after his death without his physical presence? They would scatter away in fear. They would lose all the things they've learned from him for three years. They would lose their identity as the disciples of Jesus.

Jesus made them his disciples with purposes. Mark 3:13-15 talks about the reasons Jesus called disciples. **"[Jesus] went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve to be with him and to be sent out to preach and to have authority to cast out demons."**

#1. To be with him. #2. To be sent out to preach. #3. To have authority.

Imagine that you are with Jesus right now. He's a good teacher. He has miraculous power. He says he's God. Great. But, what if people changed their attitude and crucified him tomorrow, all of a sudden? What are you going to do after his death? Are you going to preach that Jesus is God continually? Are you going to heal the sick and open the eyes of the blind without Jesus, continually, as if nothing has happened?

We don't know what we will do. But, there would be feeling of loss. Why do we feel lost? Because Jesus is gone. He said he's God, but he seemed the same as us. And he died. We would be totally lost. This is what the disciples experienced.

In order to prepare his disciples, Jesus showed his true identity to them. Through many miracles, Jesus already showed his divine power. But, through his transfiguration, **Jesus' divine nature was fully displayed** to Peter, James, and John. And God's voice confirmed, **v35, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"**

At this moment of Jesus' transfiguration, Jesus was not just a teacher or prophet, but the Son of God.

This prepared the hearts of his disciples. The transfiguration reassured his disciples that his suffering and death on the cross was not the end. Of course, they were frightened, but Jesus gave them a series of assurance, especially, the resurrection. The sting of death was removed.

When we try to change our minds or try to accept something that doesn't align with our thoughts or a common sense, we need proof. Many times, one evidence is not enough. We need a number of proofs so we can really believe in something.

Experiencing the glory of Jesus Christ, the disciples were encouraged and prepared to face the hard times after Jesus' crucifixion. But, here, we need to ask a question. **"Why is Jesus preparing his disciples?"** For what purposes?

Jesus is God. Jesus is almighty. Jesus can do anything he wants. But, he wants his disciples to continue his works. Jesus started his ministry of salvation and entrusted this salvation work to us so that we can carry on, as his disciples. **Philippians 1:6, “He who began a good work in you will carry it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”**

Jesus is making us his disciples and continues his saving works through us. This is the purpose of Christ followers. This is why Jesus is showing glory through the transfiguration and is sending the Holy Spirit to us to be with us and to guide us.

Matthew 28:18-20, “And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

When we learn how to swim, most of the time, we learn in a swimming pool. After learning how to swim, we go to not only swimming pools, but also lakes and oceans. We are equipped, so we can go to other places.

In the same way, as disciples of Jesus Christ, we are learning how to live as his disciples. To his disciples, Jesus entrusts the mission. Matthew’s passage we just read is titled **The Great Commission**. What are the action verbs?

Go / Make disciples / Baptize / Teach

What is the most important one?

Why do we go? Why do we baptize? Why do we teach? To make disciples of Jesus Christ. We are not giving our own messages to make our own disciples, but we are giving the good news of Jesus Christ, so that they can be the disciples of Jesus Christ.

On this Transfiguration Sunday, let us remember that Jesus showed his glorious identity to encourage us to hang in there to spread his good news. Jesus worried about his disciples that they might give up the truth out of fear. So, he showed his glorious true identity and sent the Holy Spirit. We have seen the glory of Jesus Christ. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to us. The Creator God wants all of his people whom he created to come to him and to be saved. And God wants to use us in this saving ministry.

Let’s shift our focus from within ourselves to the lost. With the glorious presence of Jesus Christ in our lives, let us go and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Next Sunday is the first Sunday of Lent. In the time of Lent, let us remember the true identity of Jesus Christ. The Creator God came to the earth to be with us and to save us and to make us his disciples. May the Holy Spirit capture your heart and walk together with you.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Praise song – BOP 177 Christ, whose glory fills the skies

Prayer for the people

God of love, because of your love, you clothed in a mere human body. To be with us, the Creator God became a tiny little baby. What kind of love it is! And what kind of sacrifice you made! We cannot fathom your love. Thank you for your saving grace. Thank you for your patience for us.

Jesus revealed his glory to his disciples. Jesus encouraged them to have faith in him. Jesus prepared them for the upcoming challenges. We learn your faithfulness. We learn and we are encouraged by your delicate care for our needs. Help us follow you. Give us power to walk the path you walked.

This is the time to remember the prayer needs of people. At this time, we lift up the prayer requests of our people. Precious God, listen to our prayers. There are people with physical pains and diseases. Embrace them and recover them speedily. Be present with the medicines they take and make the best effect to take care of their bodily health. Go into the hearts who are struggling with their identity issues, with disharmony within relationships, with frustration with own emotions, and any other possible difficulties. Stay with them and let them know that you are with them. In your peaceful presence, may they experience the fullness of life, the true life. And train us. Make us your disciples. So, that we may stand firm as a life-giving church. Shift our focus to the lost souls and help us save them with your life.

Jesus Christ, you are our Saviour, Messiah. You are our King. You are our Lord. We lifted up our prayers to you. Listen to us and answer us in your ways. You gave us life. Help us share your life with our surroundings. Make us overflow with your goodness and love. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to the offering:

God has been revealed in glory for the healing of the world. We have glimpsed that healing in the hope we share in Christ, even in these challenging times. Let us present our gifts to God so that this healing and hope will continue to spread in the world God loves. As we give our offerings, let us glorify him. (*BOP #79, Praise God from whom all blessings flow.*)

Offering prayer:

Gracious God, you have given us life and blessed us in Christ with new life. Bless the gifts we offer today, and bless our lives, so that others may see his love, grace, goodness in gifts and in our lives. We offer ourselves to you. Use us for your glory. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Song for the Journey – BOP 687 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine

Now, it is the time for us to be sent to the world where God called us to be. God's glory is everywhere we live. In nature, in relationships, in art works, in daily conversations. Jesus called us to be with us before sending us out. Let us experience Jesus fully, and then we can go out to save the lost and make them disciples of Jesus Christ.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, our Father, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.