



**PRESTON
MEADOW**
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday Morning Grow Groups

February 14, 2021

Transfiguration Sunday

- Good day, friends, and welcome!
 - The church season of Lent starts this week on Ash Wednesday. We're planning a 7pm in-person and online worship service, but keep an eye on the weather in case Mother Nature has different plans for us this week! Stay warm!
 - Lent prayer services will be offered on the Wednesdays of Lent beginning at 7pm. We'll follow Holden Evening Prayer, and you can worship online or in-person for these times.
 - Visit <https://pmlc.org/worship/lent-2021> for more information and to pick up your copy of the PMLC Soup-Book, a collection of soup recipes from members to recreate our Lenten Soup Supper tradition at your home.
 - Pastor Jackie and Tommy Rose will be hosting contemplative prayer sessions on Monday nights for the next several weeks. This hour-long time of prayer leads participants into a closer relationship with God through a variety of prayer techniques. Email Pastor Jackie at jackie.schade@pmlc.org to receive the Zoom links to participate.
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Getting to Know You

Building personal connections is a key component of Grow Groups, and these questions will help foster deeper connections.

- *It's Valentine's Day, so let's talk sweet treats. What's your favorite gift to give? What's your favorite candy to receive?*
 - *Gary Chapman wrote a popular book several years ago called, **The 5 Love Languages**. Its basic premise is that we are not all wired the same way when it comes to receiving and showing love. We have a "love language" we use to communicate love. The languages include: Quality Time, Physical Touch, Acts of Service, Words of Affirmation, and Receiving Gifts.*
 - *Which language do you use to show love to others?*
 - *What's your preferred language when it comes to receiving love?*
 - *Learn more about the 5 Love Languages at <https://www.5lovelanguages.com/>*
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Theme: Changed by God's Grace

Today is Transfiguration Sunday when we look at a spectacular event of Jesus' life as he was surrounded by dazzling light and met by the popular figures of Jewish history, Moses and Elijah. Peter, James and John were selected by Jesus to be witnesses to this event on a mountaintop. They were surprised and frightened by what occurred, and Jesus instructed them to keep their mouths shut about it. They may have, for a while, but eventually they spilled the secrets of the miraculous encounter. As we look forward to the season of Lent, we think about how God's grace changes us and transforms how we see the world around us.

DIVING INTO THE TEXTS

(Reading today is from the New Revised Standard Version)

Mark 9:2-9

Background: It's about a week after the miraculous feeding of the "four thousand" by Jesus and his disciples. Jesus' fame with the people is growing exponentially, which is also increasing the ire from the religious leaders and power holders. His popularity is growing so much that they fear he will take away their power and make them irrelevant. Jesus withdraws with his inner circle of disciples and experiences what has been called, "The Transfiguration," a moment in time dedicated to preparing Jesus for the hardest part of his mission that awaits him -- death by crucifixion in Jerusalem.

+++ (Choose a person to read the following passage) +++

2 Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, **3** and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. **4** And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

5 Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." **6** He did not know what to say, for they were terrified.

7 Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" **8** Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

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- What do you make of Peter's response to this event? What emotions/thoughts would you have experienced?
- Why is Peter rebuked by the voice from the cloud?
- Where else have you heard the phrase, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!"? (Hint, see Mark 1:11 if you need some help.)
 - What's the point of hearing it again here?

- If we imagine that each of these three figures represents important parts of our faith (Moses, the Law; Elijah, the Prophets; and Jesus, the Gospel), then how does this phrase change how we understand each of them?
 - When the voice from the cloud says listen to Jesus, does God mean to ignore the Prophets and the Law?
 - How does Jesus help us understand the Law and the Prophets more clearly?

Reread the story again, but this time a little more slowly.

- How does this story change how you understand Jesus? Or does it?
- How do you listen to Jesus in your everyday life?
- What prevents you from hearing Jesus?
- What steps can you take to minimize those things that interfere with hearing Jesus? How can this group help you with that?
- We see Jesus move from a “regular old Messiah” (wink, wink) who can do spectacular things to one who is shining brightly and being visited by ancient figures of the faith who carry tons of weight with people. It shows us that the ‘ordinary’ can give away to the ‘extraordinary’ at any moment with God’s direction. How has God changed a situation in your life to reveal the grace that was hidden beneath it?
 - For example, we’re nearing the end of winter and the beginning of spring (although it doesn’t feel like that at all today!!), and the dead earth with its brown grass and scattered leaves will soon give way to new green, new birth, resurrection from below. How has God taken a “dead end” in your life and turned it into a starting point?

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Taking It With You

Lent is right around the corner; what plans do you have to strengthen your relationship with Jesus in the coming weeks as we get ready to celebrate, again, the resurrection of Jesus? How can this group help each other with those practices?

Closing Prayer.

Spend a few minutes collecting any special prayer requests from participants. You can finish your time of prayer with this closing prayer from the end of our worship.

God of love,
 as in Jesus Christ you gave yourself to us,
 so may we give ourselves to you,
 living according to your holy will.
 Keep our feet firmly in the way where Christ leads us;
 help our lips speak the truth that Christ teaches us;
 fill our bodies with the life that is Christ within us.
 In his holy name we pray. Amen.

Connect to Christ!