

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Thunder Bay
<http://standrewspres-tbay.ca> - Minister: Rev. Joyce Yanishewski
Transfiguration Sunday - March 2, 2025

Call to Worship

Light of the world, your love shines in the darkness
and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Even as we stand in the shadows, your presence surrounds us.

Make our faces shine with your glory, reflect your image through us.

Shine on us, Jesus, shine.

[CTW: Shine, Jesus — LiturgyLink](#)

Hymn

Arise, your light is come

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| <p>1. Arise, your light is come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.</p> <p>3. Arise, your light is come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the broken-hearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.</p> | <p>2. Arise, your light is come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.</p> <p>4. Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.</p> |
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"Arise, your light is come." Words by Ruth Duck. ©1992 GIA Publications, Inc.
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Prayer of Adoration and Confession

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:

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 events in our lives and in the world
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.

God of all wisdom and truth, we seek your guidance as we hear the Scriptures read and interpreted today. Send your Holy Spirit to open our minds and hearts, to give us fresh understanding and a renewed commitment to follow your Word. Amen

The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Worship Planner. Transfiguration Sunday. March 2, 2025. Year C.

Assurance of Forgiveness (2 Corinthians 4:6)

It is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The good news is that we are not only enlightened by our belief in Christ, we are cleansed and we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

Written by Moira Laidlaw on [Liturgies Online](https://www.liturgiesonline.com/). Re-posted on the re:Worship blog at <https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2012/01/confession-litany-transfiguration.html>.

Scripture Readings

Exodus 34:29-35

²⁹Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. ³⁰When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. ³¹But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. ³²Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. ³³When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; ³⁴but whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, ³⁵the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

¹²Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, ¹³not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. ¹⁴But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. ¹⁵Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; ¹⁶but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

⁴Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. ²We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practice cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.

Luke 9:28-36

²⁸Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³⁰Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. ³¹They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. ³²Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. ³³Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" —not knowing what he said. ³⁴While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. ³⁵Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" ³⁶When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

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Message Shining

Have you noticed how a little child smiling or laughing can just bring out the joy in everyone. It is like their light shines and that little light radiates joy that is contagious. I think of times when I have been in a restaurant and a child nearby catches my attention and I theirs. I get a little grin and then I smile and it becomes this back and forth of exchanging joy. I have seen it happen in church where a little one happens to be looking back at people in the pew behind them and people light up either trying to elicit a smile or giggle or returning a smile. Before you know it a whole host of people are no longer focused on worship but rather the little person who in that moment of exchange is lighting up the space. I have seen it at hockey games and concerts alike.

You may have met people who have that effect. It may be that when they enter a room there is a shift, you feel their presence. There is something about them that just makes you feel joy, or love, peace, or something. You may not even be able to identify what it is, you just know there is something about that person. I have also met those of who it is not at first obvious how their light shines, but through conversation or even just observing how they treat others you get the sense that there is something uniquely beautiful about how this one walks in the world.

I don't often have three separate scriptures read on any given Sunday, but on this Sunday, which is known in Christian traditions as Transfiguration Sunday, these three scriptures all speak about how someone appeared to shine. The first story speaks about Moses, the larger-than-life prophet and guide to the people of Israel who spent intimate time with God on Mount Sinai. When Moses came down from that mountain top experience with God his face was shining. He didn't realize it, but everyone else could see it. And for a few reasons others asked him to veil his face. You see coming that close to God's glory changes a person. It is transforming. God's glory is amazing, compelling,

and frightening. When God's glory is encountered it changes those who come in contact with it. It can be frightening because people don't like change, even though it is constantly happening around us, we get comfortable with familiar habits and circumstances and we can insulate ourselves from change and transformation. Moses' face was a reminder of the glory of God that has power to transform who we are.

In the second letter to the Corinthians, once again Paul talks about the ancient story of Moses as handed down through the ages through the Jewish tradition. He puts his own spin on it, but essentially Paul is saying that the veil protects people from seeing God's glory. We prefer to harden our minds rather than consider what God is up to in and around us. But when we live with Christ at the center of our being then the veil is lifted and once again the glorious shining of God's light radiates in and through us.

Finally, we come to the story of the transfiguration of Jesus. Here Luke tells the story where "Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. ²⁹And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white."

Did you catch all of that...another mountain top experience. Here too, not only is Jesus' face changed but all of Jesus is dazzling white. God's glory was not contained. And with him, two giant personalities in Jewish tradition are seen, both Moses who had led the people of Israel out of captivity and had experienced God's glory and so his face shone and also Elijah who is also associated with big changes in the lives of the people of Israel.

Still, where Moses' face shone, all of Jesus was a dazzling white. Jesus was God in the flesh. Jesus was both fully human and fully divine and so it should not surprise us that all of God's glory shone in and through Jesus. Yet again, this was more than others could take in. Peter wanted to hold it all in place, make dwellings. Where the people had Moses wear a veil, Peter would put up buildings to contain God's glory. But God will not be harnessed. The moment passes, the crew come down from the mountain top, and the experience is not again shared until after Jesus death and resurrection, but you can be sure, just from the fact it is shared in the gospel account that it was never forgotten.

We do not forget our mountain top experiences. They may not happen on a literal mountain, but most everyone gets to have a mountain top experience. A moment of revelation of something wonderful and glorious, even if it feels a little dangerous. In fact, one may wonder if you can have a mountain top experience without it having some aspect of fear.

To only do what you have always done, to only see the world through a particular lens, does not lend itself to mountain top experiences. It is only when one puts themselves in a position of vulnerability, whether it is exploring a new place in the world, or taking the chance to speak to someone you have never spoken to before, it is then that one opens themselves to an experience that has the potential to change how you engage with the world.

It takes courage to allow ourselves to be vulnerable, and being vulnerable is not comfortable, it has its own element of danger and may make us fearful. Yet without opening ourselves to something new nothing can change, just like the Israelites, or Peter, we will want to hide or contain things to protect us from what we cannot understand or don't want to deal with. But the power that we feel, or maybe the better way to say this is, the empowerment that we experience when we allow ourselves to be vulnerable and engage with something or someone new can be transforming.

Now think about this in terms of God. God is glorious! But God is also dangerous. We cannot contain God. We try, but really we are fooling ourselves. But what happens when we allow God to work in and through us, through our church and in community can be powerful beyond our imagining. Yet, we just keep trying to contain God in our wonderful sanctuary rather than letting God burst out of here. Now, God is not just here, but in our minds we limit God and God's power. We like the safety of our traditions and our way of doing church and our way of walking in the world. God may challenge you and us in our way, but we may choose to veil God or build a dwelling place for God, hence our church building, situating God in certain ways and places in our lives.

But again, God cannot be contained and as soon as we open ourselves up to that thought and let God loose through the power of the Holy Spirit, well, who knows what can happen here, in us, and in the world. To be sure it will be scary, maybe even dangerous. But it will be amazing. God will shine in and through us.

How do we make this happen. Well, it starts with relationship. It starts with taking time for God in one's daily life through prayer, scripture reading, and conversations. Getting intimate with God. It means trusting God enough to use you and transform you into God's likeness, as image bearers of God, with us becoming more Christlike.

We never hit perfection, but we take all of our experiences, both the mountain top experiences and the valley experiences shape us. We love mountain tops, yet valleys are also beautiful places. Valleys are where the work happens. It is in valleys that forests and fields can most fully yield fruitfulness. It is in the valleys of life, the everydayness, that we tend to grow more deeply in relationship with God and with others. Mountain tops take our breath away. It gives us a view that we could not otherwise have, but valleys breath life into us. It is often in the valleys of life where we become most fully who we are called to be.

What is most amazing is that in and through it all, you may find yourself shining, not in a way that makes you popular, or important, but in a way that people wonder what is going on with you. It will be in a way that draws people to you, they will want to know the peace, joy, hope, love, and grace that seems to radiate or even glow from you.

It is also the way our church can and maybe even should be. A shining, glowing presence in the midst of struggle and challenge. I believe that people should feel something when they are in this building and when they are encountering us. It should be beautiful, encouraging, maybe even transforming, not because of who we are, but

because God is present and shining in and through us. May it be that we shine because God's glory is present with us.

We may not be transfigured as Moses and Jesus were, we are just ordinary people, but as Paul writes in the letter to the Philippians, may we shine like stars in the world. The world could use some light right now and God is calling us to shine.

Prayers of the People

Revealing God, you bless us with your presence and wisdom,
and we marvel at the wonders of your love.

You created a beautiful world that reveals your majesty.

You sent your Son to show us how to live with compassion.

Your Holy Spirit guides us on our way.

Thank you for opening our eyes to your presence each day.

Help us to recognize you not only in mountaintop experiences,
but also in everyday tasks and in times of great challenge.

Loving God,

Much in this world needs the transformation only you can provide.

Where there is violence, bring calm; where there is poverty, send sustenance;

where there is confusion, bring wisdom; where there is chaos, create order;

where minds and hearts are troubled, bring comfort;

where pain is crippling, grant release.

Move the hearts of the rich to share with those in need;

and call the powerful to act with justice for those at risk.

Give us all the will to work for the wellbeing of the earth

and to live with respect for the fragile balances within your creation.

Hear us now in this time of silence

as we raise to you the names and situations on our hearts this day:

Hear the cries of all who suffer and bring each one hope of new life with you.

Eternal God, we pray for your church around the world and for our congregation.

Give your people the energy to shine

wherever there is persecution, despair or discouragement.

Bless each congregation with wisdom and vision,

as we face the changes that we see around us.

Renew our imagination and commitment

to develop new forms of ministry and mission for the days ahead.

Inspire us with greater delight in your mystery,

and greater joy in seeking your presence.

We ask all these things through Christ Jesus, who revealed your will to us through
your revolutionary love, and taught us to pray these words together:

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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

Invitation to the offering

As we remember Christ's transfiguration, we stand in awe of the glimpse of his glory revealed on the mountain. Just as Peter, James, and John witnessed the radiant presence of Christ, we, too, are transformed by God's love and grace. We offer our tithes and offerings, praying that these gifts reflect the warming light of God's love in our lives.

[Discipleship Ministries | Transfiguration Sunday, Year B - Offertory...](#)

We give thanks for the support we receive for the ministry here at St. Andrew's in Thunder Bay. Head to our website at <https://standrewspres-tbay.ca/>

Hymn

Lord, the light of your love is shining

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1. Lord, the light of your love is shining
in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us.
Set us free by the truth you now bring us.
Shine on me; shine on me.

Refrain

*Shine, Jesus, shine; fill this land with the Father's glory;
blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow; flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light!*

2. Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
from the shadows into your radiance;
by your blood I may enter your brightness.
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me; shine on me.

Refrain

3. As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
so our faces display your likeness,
ever changing from glory to glory;
mirrored here may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me; shine on me. “

Shine, Jesus, Shine (Lord the Light of Your Love." Words by Graham Kendrick © 1987 Make Way Music
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Refrain

Benediction

May the glory of the Lord shine upon you, the Word of the Lord live within you,
and the Spirit of the Lord give you peace.