

**Worship Service: TRANSFORMATION**  
**Transfiguration Sunday (near Valentine's Day)**

**Helpful Elements:**

White table cover

Potted, blooming hyacinth (which has a lovely scent)

Hyacinth bulbs or other dried flower bulbs

**Welcome:** Welcome! Thank you for coming to our service today. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'll be leading our worship time. This week we celebrate Valentine's Day, named after one of the early Christian martyrs, St. Valentine. It is also Transfiguration Sunday, remembering the day Jesus' appearance was transformed into brilliant light and God proclaimed him as His beloved Son. That's why our table covering today is white.

Please pray with me as we open our time together.

**Opening Prayer:** Great and loving God, we ask that your Holy Spirit bless our time together and to refresh us with your presence. In the midst of a world full of trouble and strife, we thank you for watching over us, guiding us, and especially forgiving us. Enable us to enter your presence joyfully and reverently, and let us depart today with the assurance that our sins are forgiven. Fill us, O God, with the peace which passes understanding. Amen.

**Opening Hymn: Doxology, p. 1**

**Statement of Faith:** Let us affirm our statement of faith by reciting Psalm 23 together:

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

<sup>3</sup> He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

**Hymns:**

**For the Beauty of the Earth, p. 2**

**Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us, p. 3**

**Amazing Grace, p. 4**

**First Reading: Exodus 34: 29-35**

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.<sup>30</sup> Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. [Wow! That *would* look scary, wouldn't it!] <sup>31</sup> But Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them.<sup>32</sup> Afterward all the people of Israel came near, and he commanded them all that the LORD had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup> And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face.

<sup>34</sup> Whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out. And when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded, <sup>35</sup> the people of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face was shining.

This is the word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

**Hymns:**

**Holy, Holy, Holy, p. 5**

**Jesus Loves Me, p. 6**

**Second reading: Mark 9: 2-8**

<sup>2</sup> And 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, <sup>3</sup> and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them.<sup>4</sup> And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus.<sup>5</sup> 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." <sup>6</sup> For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. <sup>7</sup> And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." <sup>8</sup> And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only.

This is the word of the Lord; thanks be to God.

### Hymns:

**Softy and Tenderly, p. 7**

**Leaning on the Everlasting Arms, p. 8**

### Interactive Homily:

- In both cases of “transfiguration,” first with Moses and then with Jesus, the presence of God made their faces *shine*. Why do you think that is?
  - God’s presence is light, love, special
- When Peter, James, and John are up on the mountain with Jesus, and Jesus is shining like the sun ... as if it weren’t already scary enough, God’s voice then booms out and says, “This is my beloved son.”
- What does it mean to be beloved? (An appropriate question for Valentine’s Day too!)
  - you are chosen, focused upon, made a fuss over
- What kind of things would you put in a love letter?
  - attributes of the person that you love
- What does God the Father put into his message about Jesus?
  - raises him up above all others; calls him “MY son,” and says “listen to *him*.”
- Have you ever heard “love is a verb”? What does that mean?
  - Not just a feeling, but action
  - What kinds of actions are loving? giving; listening; looking for the other’s benefit; giving flowers, candy, gifts
  - What happens to candy, flowers, gifts? get eaten, fade away
  - What happens with God’s love? It is eternal! Never fades.
- How does God communicate his love to us?
- God’s love *transforms* us, just the way a dried flower bulb blooms into what it is meant to be, a beautiful fragrant flower. All of your faces are shining with the love and presence of God!

Let us pray together to that we would be able to hear God’s voice, and to know his love that transforms us.

**(Silent Prayer)** ... Lord, hear our prayers. Now let us say the Lord’s prayer together:

**Lord's Prayer:** 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, the power, and the glory forever, Amen.

**Hymns:**

**This is My Father's World, p. 9**

**It is Well with My Soul, p. 10**

**Standing on the Promises, p. 11**

**Third Reading:** Valentine's Day Quotes

"To love someone deeply gives you strength.

Being loved by someone deeply gives you courage." – Lao Tse

"A life with love will have some thorns, but a life without love will have no roses."

Love comfortheth like sunshine after rain. –William Shakespeare  
[William Shakespeare]

"When I have learned to love God better than my earthly dearest,  
I shall love my earthly dearest better than I do now." – C.S. Lewis

A heart that loves is always young. – Greek Proverb

To keep your marriage brimming,  
With love in the loving cup,  
Whenever you're wrong, admit it;  
Whenever you're right, shut up. –Ogden Nash

**Hymns:**

**Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, p. 12**

**Shall We Gather at the River, p. 13**

## **Fourth Reading:** Short stories about love<sup>1</sup>

Today, I got a phone call from my daughter's kindergarten teacher. She asked me why I wasn't providing lunch for my daughter over the past few days. Confused, I hung up the phone and asked my daughter what she was doing with her lunches. She said, "Katie's mom is in the hospital and hasn't been able to make any meals for the last week, so I gave a few of my lunches to her."

Today, I finally stopped being foolish and called an old best friend I hadn't talked to in over a year. He singlehandedly got me through one of the toughest times of my life, and in my depression I lashed out at him and dropped him from my life for selfish reasons. He answered the phone with: "Ready to pick up where we left off?" It instantly made me smile.

Today, my dad handed me a bottle of Windex and a roll of paper towel as we got in the car. He turned to me and said, "I just talked to your mom while she was on her lunch break. She mentioned her windshield got covered in bugs on the drive to work. Since we're going to drive right by her work anyway, I figured we'd clean them off for her. It's the little things, kiddo, that keep love going."

Today was my little sister's 14th birthday. She has Down Syndrome and doesn't have many friends. My boyfriend picked me up for dinner with flowers, but said they weren't for me. He came inside and handed them to my sister. She was so excited. He then took us both out to dinner to celebrate.

### **Hymns:**

**Blest Be the Tie that Binds, p. 14**

**I Need Thee Every Hour, p. 15**

### **Closing Blessing:** (Strike bell as you say the word "Lord")

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and grant you peace. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> selections from <http://www.marcandangel.com/2013/02/13/60-short-love-stories-to-cheer-you-up/>

## Closing Hymn: Doxology, p. 23

**[walk around and let people smell the blooming hyacinth]**

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1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

<sup>4</sup> Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant <sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; <sup>6</sup> it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup> Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

<sup>8</sup> Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. <sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup> but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. <sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

<sup>13</sup> So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.