

*And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white,
such as no one on earth could bleach them.*

And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, it is good for us to be here.'

(Mark 2b-5a, NRSV)

Lent 2021

Brothers and Sisters in Christ;

It's been almost a year since we first engaged with the pandemic. We shuttered the buildings, pivoted to Zoom worship and walked head-first into Holy Week. Many of us thought we'd be back in Church by Easter, then Pentecost, then by summer, then by Fall...and for a few months we did have blended Worship, yet we are back again into Zoom Worship alone.

We have been through a provincial election, watched a Presidential and Vice-Presidential election south of the border. Watching in horror as the Capitol building fell to white Nationalist Terrorists, cheering as Amanda Gorman recited "The Hill We Climb" at the Inauguration and we endeavoured to figure out just how long this pandemic is going to last.

With delight we observe the vaccines have been developed and are beginning to see the folks most at risk in our Valley receive their first dose injections. For the first time, in what feels like a long time, we feel hope. There is light at the end of the tunnel. Yet we are not there, not quite.

This holds significant parallels to the time we are entering in the Church. Transfiguration marks the last Sunday before we enter the penitential season of Lent. In all likelihood, Holy Week 2021 will be similar to Holy Week of 2020 in that we will be meeting online. Let's not get too far ahead of ourselves. Before Holy Week we must experience the 40 days plus Sundays of Lent.

Transfiguration is the 14th of February. We delight in the stories of Jesus being challenged and changed into dazzling white before the very eyes of Peter, James and John. Peter has a typical Peter reaction "Let's stay here!" while being gently chided by Jesus "We can't live on this hilltop, we have to go back to the people."

Ash Wednesday will be unlike anything we've done before. On Wednesday 17 February we will gather by Zoom, once at 10:00 am and again at 6:00 pm.

We will participate in a service that will last about 40 minutes, then we will have the option of receiving the imposition or anointing of ashes in person, from the safety of your vehicle.

The 10:00 am service will be broadcast from Christ Church and ashes will be available from 11:15 for half an hour. You must remain in your vehicle, put down the windows and turn off the engine. Please ensure you are wearing a mask. I will come to you, impose the ashes, give a blessing and then sanitize my hands before the next person. Please come to Christ Church for 11:15 to receive ashes.

The 6:00 pm service will be broadcast from Knox United Church and ashes will be available from 7:15 for half an hour. Same process as above. Please come to Knox United for 7:15 to receive ashes. Please note there will be no Communion at either service.

As we enter into this time of Lent and preparation for Easter, this is our second year in isolation. Yet, much of this is still new to us.

May we be like Peter, James and John when they saw Jesus transfigured before their very eyes. Peter said it best: "it's good to be here". The day will come when we are all vaccinated and the regulations will be relaxed and we will be able to gather again in person. It will take time, it will be in stages, yet we will get there.

Through Zoom we have become an incredible international community of faith. And even when we return to worship in buildings we will continue with online worship. It may take a different format, but there will always be a way for us to Worship together online. I promise.

Please keep the faith. Sometimes, faith is all we have. Please keep your Parish and me in your prayers. They do give us strength. Please know that all of you remain in my prayers.

Wishing you a blessed and holy Transfiguration and Lent.

Your servant,

Andrea+