

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
of Stillwater, Minnesota  
February 15, 2026  
Transfiguration of our Lord

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Your presence at worship is important to God and to us! Whether you are a first-time visitor, frequent participant, neighbor, member, or friend, please take a moment as you prepare for worship to share some information on the "Welcome to Worship" card included with your bulletin. Place it in the offering plate at the time the offering is received.

Today's festival is a bridge between the Advent-Christmas-Epiphany cycle that comes to a close today and the Lent-Easter cycle that begins in several days. On a high mountain, Jesus is revealed as God's beloved Son, echoing the words at his baptism. This vision of glory sustains us as Jesus faces his impending death in Jerusalem. We turn this week to Ash Wednesday and our yearly baptismal journey from Lent to Easter. Some churches put aside the alleluia at the conclusion of today's liturgy. This word of joy will be omitted during the penitential season of Lent and will be sung again at Easter.

Many of our worship materials are taken from the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW). Page numbers are located in the front half of the book, and hymn numbers are located in the back half of the book.

The assembly **speaks** or **sings** the bold responses.



## GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

Prelude

Invocation

We begin in the name we are born children of God,  
in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the  
Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Gathering Song

*"Here I Am to Worship"*

**Light of the world,  
You stepped down into darkness.  
Opened our eyes let us see,  
Beauty that made  
This heart adore You.  
Hope of a life spent with You.**

*So here we are to worship.  
Here we are to bow down.  
Here we are to say that You're our God,  
And You're altogether lovely,  
Altogether worthy,  
Altogether wonderful to us.*

**King of all days,  
Oh so highly exalted.  
Glorious in heaven above.  
Humbly You came  
To the earth You created,  
All for love's sake became poor.**

**And we'll never know how much it cost,  
To see our sin upon that cross.  
And we'll never know how much it cost,  
To see our sin upon that cross.**

## Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

O God, in the transfiguration of your Son you confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the witness of Moses and Elijah, and in the voice from the bright cloud declaring Jesus your beloved Son, you foreshadowed our adoption as your children. Make us heirs with Christ of your glory, and bring us to enjoy its fullness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Anthem

*"Beautiful Savior"*

Chancel Choir

## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*



First Reading

Pew Bible: Old Testament Page 70

Exodus 24:12-18

*At Mount Sinai, Moses experienced the presence of God for forty days and forty nights. The "glory of the LORD" settled on the mountain, and on the seventh day God called out to Moses. On the mountain God gave Moses the stone tablets inscribed with the ten commandments.*

*At the conclusion:*

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

# Psalm 2 (paraphrase)

*The choir sings the refrain first, then all sing as invited.*

Re - joice un - der God, trem - ble now un - der God Take  
heart un - der God, be in awe un - der God,  
Why do the na - tions rage? Why do the rul - ers scheme?  
Work for the ho - ly way, jus - tice and mer - cy. \_\_\_\_\_  
We pray for wis - dom now, we pray for strength and hope.  
Men and wom - en \_\_\_\_\_ of pow - er, you serve un - der God.  
Men and wom - en \_\_\_\_\_ of pow - er, be true un - der God.  
Men and wom - en \_\_\_\_\_ of pow - er, take heart un - der God.

Why do the nations rage?  
Why do the rulers scheme?  
Men and women of power,  
you serve under God.

Work for the holy way,  
justice and mercy.  
Men and women of power,  
be true under God.

We pray for wisdom now,  
we pray for strength and hope.  
Men and women of power,  
take heart under God.

Gospel Acclamation

*"We Are One in the Spirit"*

**We are one in the Spirit.  
We are one in the Lord.  
We are one in the Spirit..  
We are one in the Lord  
And we pray that all unity  
May one day be restored.**

**And they'll know we are Christians  
By our love by our love.  
Yes they'll know we are Christians  
By our love.**

Gospel Reading                      Pew Bible: New Testament Pages 18-19

Matthew 17:1-9

*Shortly before he enters Jerusalem, where he will be crucified, Jesus is revealed to Peter, James, and John in a mountaintop experience of divine glory called the transfiguration.*

*The gospel is introduced:*

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*At the conclusion:*

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Nathan Baker-Trinity

*Silence for reflection follows the sermon.*

Hymn of the Day

ELW hymn 671

*"Shine, Jesus, Shine"*

## Prayers of Intercession

*After each prayer:*

Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

*At the conclusion:*

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

**Amen.**

## Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*All are invited to greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.*

## MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

## Offering

*Our offering is a collection of money for the church's mission, including the care of those in need, as a sign of the giving of our whole selves in grateful response for all God's gifts. Your offering and "Welcome to Worship" card may be placed in the offering plate. The QR code on the right may be used if you wish to give electronically.*



## Offering Prayer

Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

# Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts,

**We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . .

. . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and  
might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the  
high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you, O holy God: you are the Life and Light of all. By your powerful word you created all things. Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations.

Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son. He is your Light, shining in our darkness and revealing to us your mercy and might.

In the night in which he was betrayed . . .

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks . . .

Remembering, therefore, his preaching and healing, his dying and rising, and his promise to come again, we await that day when all the universe will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light.

By your Spirit bless us and this meal, that, refreshed with this heavenly food, we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**



**Communion**

*We celebrate at an open communion table. All who hear our Lord's invitation are welcome to participate. Receive the bread first with an open hand and eat immediately, followed by the juice (white) or wine (red). Gluten-free bread is available at the front end of the center aisle. Please indicate to an usher if you need to receive communion from your pew. Children who have received age-appropriate instruction are welcome to commune. If you prefer instead to receive a blessing, please indicate by crossing your arms over your shoulders.*

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say:  
 The body of Christ, given for you.  
 The blood of Christ, shed for you.  
 and each person may respond:*

**Amen.**



Communion Song

ELW hymn 661

*"I Love to Tell the Story"*

## Prayer After Communion

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## Announcements

## Charge and Blessing

Go out into the world in peace;  
have courage;  
hold on to what is good;  
return no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted;  
support the weak, and help the suffering;  
honor all people;  
love and serve the Lord,  
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**



## Sending Song

### *"Love Lifted Me"*

**I'll write myself a simple song,  
Get the whole world to sing along.  
I'll call it a love song for you.  
And who knows, I'm liable to take a song from the Bible  
And then when I'm through; I'll just sing:**

***Love lifted me; love lifted me.  
When nothing else would do;  
You know, love lifted me.***

**Everybody's looking for a way to say something nobody said.  
But that's hard to do.  
They're searchin' their minds trying to find  
the one-of-a-kind way that they could  
say something new; I just say:**

## Dismissal

**Go in peace. Serve the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.**

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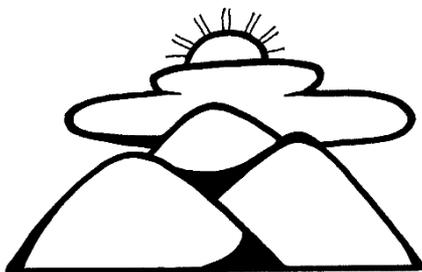
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## DAILY PRAYER For Travelers



○ God, our beginning and our end, you kept Abraham and Sarah in safety throughout the days of their pilgrimage, you led the children of Israel through the midst of the sea, and by a star you led the magi to the infant Jesus. Protect and guide those who set out to travel. Make their ways safe and their homecomings joyful, and bring them at last with us to our heavenly home, where you dwell in glory with our Lord Jesus Christ and the life-giving Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## CONNECTIONS WITH THE LITURGY On the Mountain with Jesus



Echoing the transfiguration, every baptism is a mountain top experience and moment of glory with Jesus. At baptism, the face of Jesus shines on our foreheads as we are anointed with the sign of the cross and given a candle—a sign of the light of Christ. Here we are joined with all who have been washed and forgiven in the name of Jesus. Then we are sent down the mountain and into the world to walk the way of the cross with Jesus. So each baptism recalls the transfiguration.

## CATECHISM CONNECTION

### Listen to Jesus!



The voice from the cloud at the transfiguration admonishes the disciples to listen to and trust in Jesus. But it can be heard to listen to Jesus when we are overwhelmed with feelings of inadequacy.

Martin Luther cared especially for those overwhelmed with feelings of guilt. Individual confession, a common practice at the time, often left Luther's parishioners feeling helpless and unforgiven. So Luther transformed the practice by offering instant and complete forgiveness before God. In his Small Catechism,

Luther says that after confessing our sins "we receive the absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God himself and by no means doubt but firmly believe that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven." Following the arc of the whole scriptural story, Luther was convinced that in order to amend our sinful ways, we must first be set free to completely trust that we are saved by God.

## **UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS**

**Martin Luther, renewer of the church, died 1546**

**Wednesday, February 18, 2026**

On this day in 1546, Martin Luther died at the age of sixty-two. For a time, he was an Augustinian monk, but it is his work as a biblical scholar, translator of the Bible, public confessor of the faith, reformer of the liturgy, theologian, educator, and father of German vernacular literature that holds him in our remembrance. In Luther's own judgment, the greatest of all of his works was his catechism, written to instruct people in the basics of faith. And it was his baptism that sustained him in his trials as a reformer.

## **GOSPEL MESSAGE**

### **What Goes Up**

The law of gravity dictates that whatever goes up must come down. Even with its dazzling mountaintop revelation, the transfiguration story quickly reminds us that if Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us, then not even God's beloved can escape death's inevitable pull. Jesus leads Peter, James, and John up the mountain, but very soon they will be on their way down again. Suddenly, Jesus is gloriously transformed before the three disciples; then, just as suddenly, Jesus speaks of his impending death.

The transfiguration is a story of both fulfillment and foretaste. The appearance of Moses and Elijah reminds us of Jesus' promise to fulfill the Law and the Prophets, during his sermon on another mountain (Matthew 5:17). The startling turn toward talk of his suffering and death gives us a foretaste of the "mountain" at Golgotha he has yet to climb.

For the church, coming down the Mount of Transfiguration leads directly into the season of Lent and a journey that draws out more fully for us the implications of baptism. For Jesus, his baptism by John at the Jordan was just the start of a journey to be fulfilled in all the ups and downs to come. This is how transformation tends to happen—not when we insist on playing it safe, but when we dare to enter more fully into life as it is. So, too, our baptism can be fulfilled only in the light of our mortality. God's voice on the mountaintop calls us not simply to behold God's beloved Son but also to follow where Jesus leads.

All this, however, is not meant to bring us down. Jesus' transfiguration offers a glimpse of an even bigger picture that includes both gravity and grace. It foreshadows what is to come: death—and resurrection. This promise of new life is a bright cloud that leads the church now, as it did the ancient Israelites, through the wilderness ahead.