

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

February 14th, 2021—10 a.m.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD



140 Russell Avenue

St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1

Church: 905-685-8294 Fax 905-685-7661

www.christlutheransc.ca

February 14th, 2021

Valentine's Day

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Church: 905-685-8294, Fax 905-685-7661, www.christlutheransc.ca

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Church Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC

Bulletin by email: Judy Mason, chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.

Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

Prayer: O God, in the glorious transfiguration of Your only-begotten Son You once confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of the ancient father, and in the voice that came from the bright cloud You wondrously foreshowed our adoption by grace. Therefore mercifully make us coheirs with our King of His glory, and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Service: 10 a.m. (*printed copy of service at back of bulletin—also find Feb. 17th Ash Wednesday Service*)

Musician - Sunday: Mayumi Munoz

Wednesday: Carole Pink

Reader - Sunday: Greg Jack

Wednesday: Howard Bogusat

Sunday School: Fruit of the Spirit #7-Faithfulness -- <https://youtu.be/OgCH69eqZ5s>

Precious Moments: <https://youtu.be/-dNucwPwWkk>

Children's Message: <https://youtu.be/U90I4VUKLVg>

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Exod. 34: 29-35

Wed.: 11 Cor. 4: 13-18

Friday: Matt. 16: 24-28

Tuesday: 11 Cor. 4: 3-6

Thurs: Gal. 1: 11-24

Saturday: Phil. 3: 20 – 4:1

We pray the Lord's comfort and peace be with the family and friends of Elke Laumann who passed away on Tuesday, February 9 her children; Peter, Michael (Monica) and granddaughter Kayla Laumann; Heike (Gino) and grandchildren Annika, Karoline and Michael Mazarella; Monika (John) and grandchildren Christopher, Nico, Jakob and Mackenzie Semenchuk.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: What should a Christian life look like? Join us as we study the book of James (Jesus' brother) and journal what it means to live authentically and victoriously through challenges of life! Join us on Zoom **bi-monthly at 7:00 p.m.** as we learn through our Right Now Media Ministry with Dr. Lina AbuJamra. For more information, or to receive the link contact Louise 905-329-8579.

ASH WEDNESDAY: February 17, 7-8 pm. Live-stream Worship Service of Confession and Forgiveness. (order of service included at the end of this bulletin).

For Lenten midweek this year, something new will be offered:

1. **A Devotional Message:** Recorded by Pastor Todd and uploaded to his YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3a4p6prdJGEyP5S-q-cNSq>. Featuring "The Crosses of Lent" every Wednesday morning leading up to Holy Week.
2. **A ZOOM Lenten Bible Study:** 7 - 8 PM every Wednesday in Lent leading up to Holy Week, focusing our eyes on the suffering and death of Jesus as recorded in Mark's Gospel.

LWMLC/MARY MARTHA MEETING: We encourage all ladies of 'Christ' Lutheran Church, to join us this **Tuesday, February 16th at 7pm** for our LWMLC/Mary Martha meeting. There will be 3 ways to join us. First, there will be an email which will include a devotion and recorded music for you to enjoy at home at 7pm. Second, you will be able to enjoy the devotion and music at a time of your own choosing. Third, we will send out an invitation by email, to join a virtual devotion and meeting on Zoom. *"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave or forsake you."* Deuteronomy 31:6. Contact Lorraine Kaija if interested.

Attention Donors to Mary Martha: the National LWML-C Triennium of 2018 - 2021 is almost done so all are encouraged to submit your mites to Ivy ASAP by mail or drop off at the church. We are hoping to fulfill all the Mission Projects before March 31. Thanks to all who continue to support the Lord's command. Fran Porteous, Zone President.

Last Sunday Attendance: Feb. 7, 2021

| | <u>Budget</u> | <u>Weekly Need</u> | <u>Last Sunday</u> | <u>Year To Date</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Current: | | | 2,597.00 | 11,179.17 |
| Missions | | | 720.00 | 1,323.50 |
| Property Improvement: | | | 290.00 | 538.50 |

SUPPORTING YOUR CHURCH DURING THE PANDEMIC:

it's important for members to keep in mind that expenses for payroll, utilities, maintenance, etc. continue to accumulate even when in-person services are not available.

1. THROUGH EFT DONATIONS:

Lutheran Church - Canada, East District Corporation continues to facilitate this service for us. To assist you in continuing your financial support to your church, we encourage you to fill out the form that is available for printing at:

http://christlutheransc.ca/?page_id=96 and then mail the form along with a voided cheque to:

Lutheran Church - Canada, East District Corporation,
275 Lawrence Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 1Y3 Attn: Darryll Holland

2. BY MAIL: cheques can still be mailed to:

Christ Lutheran Church,
140 Russell Ave. St.Catharines, ON L2R 1W1

or dropped in the Church mailbox at the East entrance.

3. ONLINE VIA LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA: Lutheran Church-Canada has opened a web portal that allows parishioners to donate directly to their home church. Just visit:

<https://lutheranchurch-canada.tng-secure.com/?pageId=donation-edit&categoryId=10972>

select "St. Catharines-Christ Lutheran-30950" from the drop down menu, enter the amount of your donations and LCC will transfer your donation to Christ. Donation is via VISA or Mastercard. Tax receipts will be issued by LCC (not Christ). This opportunity will be in effect until the COVID-19 emergency is over.

Almighty God, heavenly Father, give us grace to trust You during this time of illness and distress. In mercy put an end to the epidemic that afflicts us. Grant relief to those who suffer, and comfort all who mourn. Sustain all medical personnel in their labours, and cause Your people ever to serve You in righteousness and holiness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

[From the Lutheran Service Book: Pastoral Care Companion]

The Marks of Love ---- Our Refugee Family, February 14, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I just received my Lenten devotion book from Lutheran Hour Ministries entitled: "**The Marks of Love**"! How appropriate as we think and pray for Kareem and his family of Jesus' marks of love that we can pass His love on to Kareem, Hamida, Ameer, and little Asser. It has been 2 months since I have given you and the Council an update. The last time was during Advent and we are now at the very end of Epiphany. I think my mind went on lockdown too!

We were all so excited that the application by CLWR was finally sent away by December 7th and that Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada had responded with a file number by December 10th. Then the waiting began for Kareem and his family to have their interview. Jennifer emailed me this message:

"Interviews will be arranged when a visa officer travels to Kareem's region and conducts the interview at a local embassy or consulate. Kareem will need to be able to travel to a local embassy in Greece, as instructed to him by the visa officer. Due to the pandemic, this interview is not expected to take anytime soon, unfortunately. We cannot estimate the timeframe of when it will occur."

But you know God's timing is always the best. At the same time as all of this was happening the Greek government was moving all of the refugees out of the hotel where Kareem and his family were staying. There was a big chance that they would be sent with other refugees to a camp 7 hours from Athens, and made to stay in a room 3 metres by 3 metres with only a public washroom to use. Kareem was very worried and I kept reassuring him that we were praying for somewhere safe for his family. And of course, God answered our prayers as they were put out by our prayer warriors here at Christ! **And get this!** Kareem and his family were sent to an apartment building in Athens on December 24th, 2020 (Christmas Eve). They must share the apartment with 2 other refugee families, a 3 bedroom apartment with a large kitchen and salon (living room). Their room has a set of bunk beds in it, so Ameer sleeps on the bottom bunk, and Kareem, Hamida, and Asser sleep on mattresses on the floor. But it is a newly built apartment building and they are on the 6th floor with a couple balconies. Kareem had to put screening around the balcony railing for the protection of the children. God has been answering our prayers for their safety in Greece until they can come to us. I am in almost daily contact with Kareem, as he speaks English well, and Asser cries when Daddy is talking to me because he wants the phone to look at me and kiss me. Ameer has got in on the action now as well, he used to always run away when Kareem tried to get him to see me on the phone. It has been so amazing watching Asser grow from a baby last spring to a toddler this January. His first birthday was on January 9th (actually that was my father's birthday also). Asser can motor now and it won't be long before his big brother Ameer won't be able to push him out of the way or keep him from his toys. All of this and more cements and confirms that our heavenly Father wants us to bring them here to Canada so we can show them the marks of Jesus' love for them, and give them the safety they so desire. Kareem is so thankful to all of you for being willing to sponsor his family to come to Canada. He wants so much for his wife Hamida to be able to go to school, as she was never given the opportunity as she grew up. There is so much more I can share with you and will over the next few months, and when they arrive. I know we are in the middle of this covid pandemic, but God is still in control. I ask all of you to fervently pray that Kareem and family will soon be given an interview. I know in the eyes of us humans it seems impossible, but nothing is impossible with God. I truly believe that as we press our prayers before the throne of our heavenly Father through our Lord and Saviour Jesus the Christ that he will work to move and grease the wheels of this immigration process. Canada needs immigration for our well-being and also economically, here we are providing our government, as good citizens should, the opportunity to bring Kareem and his family to live and work and contribute to our country. Thomas doubted until the Lord asked him to put his fingers and hands in the wounds from the cross. We believe by our God-given faith those marks of the cross where Jesus bled and died for us. **Do not doubt**, but continue to bring our petitions through Jesus as we see many times in Holy Scripture where he answered.

Be encouraged dear brothers and sisters in Christ even in this time of covid weariness because the light of Christ and His love shines through the darkness.

God bless each and every one of you,

Pastor John Makey

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Transfiguration of our Lord

Last Sunday after the Epiphany
February 14, 2021 + Valentines' Day

FIRST HYMN

"When Love Is Found"

Tune: "O Waly Waly" LSB 595

Words © 1983 Hope Publishing Company, 380 S Main Pl, Carol Stream, IL 60188

- 1. When love is found and hope comes home,
sing and be glad that two are one.
When love explodes and fills the sky,
praise God, and share our Maker's joy.**
- 2. When love has flow'ed in trust and care,
build both each day, that love may dare
to reach beyond home's warmth and light,
to serve and strive for truth and right.**
- 3. When love is tried as loved-ones change,
hold still to hope, though all seems strange,
till ease returns and love grows wise
through listening ears and opened eyes.**
- 4. When love is torn, and trust betrayed,
pray strength to love till torments fade,
till lovers keep no score of wrong,
but hear through pain love's Easter song.**
- 5. Praise God for love, praise God for life,
in age or youth, in calm or strife.
Lift up your hearts! Let love be fed
through death and life in broken bread.**

ADORATION SENTENCES FOR THE SERVICE

In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, before Whose presence the angels veil their faces,

With worship and love we acknowledge Your glory, O holy Three in One;

Blessing and honour and glory and power

Be unto You, our God, forever and ever, Amen.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

In every place incense is offered to Your name, O Father, a pure offering:

For Your name is great among all the nations!

[Brief prayerful silence]

Eternal God, we confess that we have tried to hide from You, for we have done wrong. We have lived for ourselves. We have refused to help bear the troubles of others and have turned away from our neighbours. We have ignored the pain in the world and passed by all the oppressed and suffering. O God, in Your mercy, forgive us our sins and free us from selfishness, that we may do Your will and keep Your Word, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God is merciful and gracious, giving forgiveness to all who confess their sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all of your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SUNG KYRIE *[tune – Amazing Grace]*

**Have mercy on your people, Lord,
Have mercy Je-sus Christ!
Have mercy on Your people, Lord;
Have mercy, give us peace...!**

HYMN OF PRAISE *"Praise To The Lamb" Revelations 5 & 19* *[tune: Love Lifted Me]*

Heav'nly hosts in wor-ship sing, Ho - ly, Ho - ly, cry; He the First and
He the Last, God the Lord Most High. Glo-ry, hon-our, pow'r and praise
be to Him al-one! We, with all cre-ation fall, be-fore His throne.
Praise to the Lamb, praise to the Lamb; By His great

off-er-ing, we are set free!

Praise to the Lamb, praise to the Lamb; Now and for-

ev - er - more! --- Praise to the Lamb!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

We pray --

Hear us, great God:

Lord God, Heavenly Father, in the glorious transfiguration of Your only-begotten Son You once confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of the ancient fathers, and in the voice that came from the bright cloud You wondrously foreshadowed our adoption by grace. Therefore mercifully make us coheirs with our King of His glory, and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE SCRIPTURES

The Old Testament: *Exodus 34: 29-35*

Moses 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. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. Afterwards all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; but 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, the 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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Epistle

1 Corinthians 13: 4-13

[St. Paul writes:] Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SUNG GOSPEL VERSE

"Praise To The Lord, The Almighty"

LSB # 790 VS 1

Reprinted from -- <https://hymnary.org/text/praise-to-the-lord-the-almighty-the-king>

**Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and salvation!
Come, all who hear;
now to his temple draw near,
join me in glad adoration.**

The Holy Gospel

St. Mark 9: 2-9

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Mark, the 9th chapter: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

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, 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; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!' Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life + everlasting. Amen.

SERMON SONG --

"King of Kings"

**In the darkness, we were waiting
Without hope, without light
Till from heaven You came running
There was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfill the law and prophets
To a virgin came the Word**

**From a throne of endless glory
To a cradle in the dirt**

**Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings**

**To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation
You did not despise the cross
For even in Your suffering
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation
Jesus for our sake You died**

**Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings**

And the morning that You rose
All of heaven held its breath
Till that stone was moved for good
For the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
And the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
To the Father are restored
And the church of Christ was born
Then the Spirit lit the flame
Now this gospel truth of old
Shall not kneel, shall not faint
By His blood and in His name
In His freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
Who has resurrected me

Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings
Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings
Praise forever to the King of Kings

MESSAGE: *1 Cor. 13 & Mark 9 + "The Greatest LOVE Of All"*

THE PRAYERS

THANKSGIVING

Praise be to You, O God the Father,

Who created all things by Your power and wisdom and did so love the world as to give Your Son as our Saviour.

Praise be to You, O God the Son,

For You were made a human, like us in all things but without sin, and were put to death for our sin and raised for our justification.

Praise be to You, O God the Holy Spirit,

That You have led us into all truth and do pour into our hearts the love of God.

All praise and glory be to You, O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, forever and ever.

Amen.

SPECIAL INTERCESSIONS

Almighty God and merciful Father: thank you for all your goodness and love - to us and to all people. We bless you for our creation and preservation, and for all the blessings of this life. But above all we thank and praise you for the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. Give us such an awareness of your mercy, that our hearts may be thankful and that we may praise you all the time – not just with our words, but with our whole life.

Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great!

Almighty and eternal God, you have let us share in your glory. Increase in us a life of faith and love so that your glory may shine through us in the sight of others. Bless our Synod and Regional leaders, our clergy, professors, church lay leadership and all congregations. Pour out your continual blessing on them that they may truly please you.

Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great!

Almighty God, ruler of all – in your kingdom there is peace and righteousness. We pray for nations now in conflict. Take away prejudice, cruelty and revenge. Grant that barriers which divide may crumble, suspicions disappear and hatreds cease.

Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great!

Lord of the nations, we pray for HGM the Queen, our Prime Minister, Premier and parliaments of our nation,. Direct their work and influence their decisions to the advancement of your glory, and the safety and welfare of this country. Let peace and joy, truth and justice be established among us. Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great!

Heavenly Father, your Son Jesus shared in Nazareth many an earthly home with table guests. Bless our homes & family lives, we pray, that parents and children may be bound to each other by mutual love and honour, and come to knowledge of your love for them.

Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great!

We commit to you all who are unwell or in need and those who care for them, especially those we know to be in need.....[names given here...]. May Your Son's transfigured glory fill them with all hope and peace as you bring healing and relief in your own time and will;

Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great!

And finally, O Heavenly Father, because of your great love you work for our good in all things. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you. Teach us to seek you and to rely on you in all our needs, so that our deepest desires may be satisfied, and we may finally see you face to face. We pray through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in Your Kingdom, and teach us to pray:

Our Father, Who are in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name....

BLESSING

The Lord Almighty order our days and our deeds in His peace.

Amen.

Let us praise the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The blessing of our Almighty God, the Father, the Son + and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"Beautiful Saviour"

LSB # 537

- 1. Beautiful Savior, King of Creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love Thee, Truly I'd serve Thee,
Light of my soul, my Joy, my Crown.**
- 2. Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands,
Robed in flowers of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer;
He makes our sorrowing spirit sing.**
- 3. Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight,
Bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer,
Than all the angels in the sky.**
- 4. Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be Thine!**

LUTHERAN SERVICE OF PRAYER & PREACHING

Worship Supplement 1969 Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

REV. TODD HOEFFS

TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS SUNDAY

Scripture: 1 Cor. 13 & Mark 9

"The Greatest LOVE Of All"

February 14, 2021

A young couple moved into a new neighborhood.

The next morning while eating breakfast, the young woman saw her neighbor through the window hanging the wash outside.

"That laundry is not clean," she said. "She doesn't know how to wash correctly. Perhaps she needs better laundry soap".

Her husband looked on, but remained silent.

Every time the neighbour would hang laundry to dry, the young woman would make the same comments.

About one month later, the woman was surprised to see nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband: "Look, she has learnt how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this!" The husband replied: "I got up early this morning and cleaned our windows."

And so it is with life. What we see when watching others depends on the purity of the window through which we look.

It's all about our point of view and how we view others through that lens.

Yet we tend to forget- our window isn't that clean after all.

God cleans up our life's window with His Word.

Washed clean in Jesus with Baptism. With another chance for God to use you as an instrument of His peace, His love, His mercy.

Love is the lens by which we as Christians should view all of life, especially other people. Even more-so with Valentines' day in view.

Love does no harm to our neighbour. Kindness is never lost.

Understanding is never a waste.

Love for the Christian isn't always the kind set amid a backdrop of romance in a Valentines' theme.

Love is always centred in Christ and His Love for us in giving Himself totally to us by faith. Today even more-so.

By offering us a loving glimpse of wonder and awe before His suffering and death.

The last Sunday before Ash Wednesday is always the Transfiguration of Our Lord.

The time when Jesus' earthly figure is transfigured in a way that illumines his divine nature coming through His human body. The radiance of his clothes,

his conversation with Elijah and Moses, and God's declaration from the clouds that Jesus is the Beloved Son all paint a picture of a man who is more than a prophet.

He's the Messiah, the one that Peter and James and John have been waiting for... The one we've been waiting for.

This passage in Mark not only reveals the transfiguration of Jesus, but also gives us a glimpse of the transformation that's taking place for Peter, James, and John.

LOVE Can only start with God's gift of Christ to the world.

Love described so perfectly by Paul, a man transformed by Christ to be more than a persecutor of the church but a Spirit-led passionate pastor for all nations.

Who has found the love of Christ so compelling He can only be an ambassador, a follower, a preacher, a disciple of the one Who loves him

And with that he writes --

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails." [1 Corinthians 13](#): 4-8

He's not writing about romance!

But in a passionate love that sacrifices the self, the inner desires for the God desire to serve Him by serving other people.

1. Love Is about Living the Spirit-Filled Life

[1 Corinthians 13](#) follows directly on the heels of chapter 12 after a lengthy discussion on spiritual gifts.

Paul advises the Corinthians to "eagerly desire the greater gifts...by following the most excellent way" (12:31). This "most excellent way" (of living the Spirit-filled life) is the way of love.

Love is how Christians live out their relationship with Jesus Christ, empowered by the [Holy Spirit](#).

Love expresses how the Christian life has been transformed.

Spiritual gifts, such as tongues, prophesy, or words of knowledge, are not exercised to the bolstering of the spiritual ego.

They had only meant to serve as manifestations of love.

If our workings of spiritual gifts do not lead others, or ourselves, into a deeper experience of Christian love, then we have missed the way of Jesus.

The same is true for Christian ministry.

The Christian community is a body.

Just as a body is made up of many parts,

so too the Christian community involves a multitude of people, all working together for a common purpose.

Each component of the community is honored and uplifted.

So then, how do we know that one is engaging in ministry in the way of Christ?

The answer is love.

For Paul, for us, for Jesus Himself, everything holds together through the empowering work of love.

Love transforms us. Love flows through us.

Love is fundamental to living a Spirit-filled life.

If we don't have love, we are merely a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

We may know many things, but without love, they are of no use to us because we are unable to use them to God's glory.

2. Love Is Rooted in Jesus

For love here the Greek word Paul uses is *agape*.

While our use of 'love' can be quite broad, *agape* was narrowly defined.

It was not used for love of spouse or partner, nor did it express the camaraderie of friendship.

Agape is a unique type of love.

The word describes the selfless, sacrificial manner of love, seen primarily in God's love toward humanity.

It is best to understand *agape* as the love that finds its source in the presence of God. In fact, John the Apostle literally writes, "God is *Agape*" ([1 John 4:8](#)). Ultimately, this divine, sacrificial love of God is seen in the great Nativity of our Lord.

Jesus is *agape*.

Love is not a principle.

Love is not a philosophy.

Love, in this context, is certainly not an emotion.

For the follower of Jesus, love is always centred in Him.

When God incarnated himself in human flesh, Love walked upon the earth.

It was Love that was born in a manger; Love was crucified on the cross.

Agape expresses the reality of God's presence amid human life.

By Jesus allowing Himself to be seen as God emanating from His flesh and bones Shows how much He loves us.

That HE would hide Who He is— Let Jesus be as a man.

Let Him walk and journey and suffer and feel everything we feel.

But this hidden quality shows love in another way ----

That the holiness and divinity and righteousness of Jesus proves

The life He lays down He can take up again.

Transfiguration Sunday is a small picture of Easter.

A change before the event that changes all things,.

That makes all things new. His love makes all things new.

Agape love describes God's unyielding, unstoppable, self-sacrificing love toward the world, seen in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We cannot understand the call to love without being deeply rooted in our Lord.. Without Jesus in our lives, the call to love expressed in 1 Corinthians 13 is nonsensical. When Paul writes about love he is speaking about a way of life that is empowered by the Spirit and connected to Jesus.

3. Love Embraces Community

This is also our call as Christians in living in the world.

He is not speaking about the romance of two lovebirds but of the witness of the Christian community.

Love speaks to how Christians express Christ's love to the world.

Christians ought to *agape* others.

To be patient and kind, for example, is to act in the same manner as Christ.

Our patience toward one another is ultimately rooted in Christ's eternal patience toward us.

The kindness we receive in Jesus must be mirrored in the kindness we share with others.

To do otherwise is to undercut the flow of the Spirit within us.

Whenever we are rude or aggressive, we're negating the very life to which Christ calls them.

A calling to love others transforms us to see others as worthy of this love.

We simply cannot be dismissive of someone to whom Christ's love is directed.

After all, if Christ is patient, kind, and forgiving toward others (as he is towards us), what right do we have to be anything different?

We cannot enjoy Christ's offer of *agape* love and refuse to express that in our lives.

To do so would be the highest form of insult – to Christ and to our neighbor.

And this makes God a liar. Why would we want God to be considered a liar?

Only by ignoring self-sacrificing love and clinging to self-seeking ideals.

Those run against God, against Jesus and against love.

A Radical Word

In an age known for its 'cancel-culture,'

the call to be patient and kind is radically transformative.

Christ calls us to express love to those *outside* our circles of friendship and [communion](#).

If we find ourselves hating another group of people,

for any reason, we can be sure that it is to *them* that Christ's love is to be expressed.

Christians are called to express *agape* love to the very people we may be tempted to disregard, even reject.

It is to those who differ from us,

who may even be opposed to us, we are called to be patient rather than dismissive. Instead of being rude, opinionated, or aggressive, Christ calls us to kindness. Pride, boastfulness, arrogance, or vanity destroys the work of Christ's love in our lives. There is no place for these things in the loving heart of the Christian. Of course, we all have people we dislike. We all have people we would rather not associate ourselves with. This occurs as much for those within the church as those outside the church.

Whether our separations are based on political, social, or theological divides, we all have people that we see as "the other."

This is a part of the fallen nature of humanity.

Christ, however, empowers us to move beyond this.

Christ calls us to love those whom he loves, to serve those whom he serves, and to be as radical in our expressions of this love as he was.

If Christians would but fully embrace the spirit-filled, Jesus focused way of *agape love*, we could, quite literally, change the world.

Although we may not have experienced the Transfiguration of Our Lord on that mountain with the disciples,

we have all witnessed the power of God's rich and abundant love in our lives and in the lives of others.

We see the beautiful sunrises and sunsets.

We encounter someone whose kindness lifts us up, if even for a brief moment. We catch a glimpse of one person reaching out to another in their pain.

Even when we long to share this Good News with others, we sometimes hold back.

Maybe we're afraid of what others will think.

Maybe we're afraid that we won't tell it "right."

Maybe we think our stories are not important enough.

But anytime we share the Good News of what God's love does in the world, in our own lives and in the lives of others, it's life-changing.

Even when we think we don't have just the right words, it's life inspiring.

Even when we're not quite sure how such love touches others, God is glorified.

We are nonetheless transformed in Jesus' transfiguration.

His love is our love, for we are His body in the world, bright and shining light for all to see.

Baptized into His Baptism, into the beloved Son of our Great God.

The power of God's love to change transform us and the world.

It's how we view life. How we view ourselves.

The way of Christ. The way of transformation.

Following the greatest LOVE of all.

Amen.

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 17, 2021

FIRST HYMN

"Drawn To The Cross"

LSB # 560

**1 Drawn to the cross, which You have blessed
With healing gifts for souls distressed,
To find in you my life, my rest--Christ Crucified, I come.**

**2 How well you know my griefs and fears,
Your grace abused, my misspent years!
Yet now to you with contrite tears --Christ Crucified, I come.**

**3 Wash me and take away each stain;
Let nothing of my sin remain.
For cleansing, though it be through pain -- Christ Crucified, I come.**

**4 Then all that You would have me do
Shall such glad service be for you
That angels wish to do it too -- Christ Crucified, I come.**

INVOCATION, CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

As we worship our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, in spirit and in truth, it is proper that we examine ourselves. The Ten Commandments reveal to us the severity of our sin, for they call us to love God with our whole being and love our neighbours as ourselves. You shall have no other gods.

We confess that we put other things above our fear, love, and trust in God.

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

We confess that we do not call upon His name in every trouble, nor do we always pray, praise, and give thanks to God for all that we have.

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

We confess that we do not always hold it sacred and gladly hear and keep God's Word.

Honour your father and your mother.

We confess that we do not always honour them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them, nor others in authority over us.

You shall not commit adultery.

We confess that we are not pure in all we say and do, and we do not always love and honour our spouses nor avoid desires of the flesh.

You shall not steal.

We confess that we do not always help our neighbours to improve and protect their possessions and income. We also have not shared our possessions and income with all those in need.

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

We confess that we do not always defend our neighbours, or speak well of them, or explain everything in the kindest way.

You shall not covet.

We confess that we do not always help our neighbours keep their property and family relationships.

For all of our thoughts, words and actions, sinful things known and unknown to us, whereby we have brought offence to You, O Father, and to one another, we are truly sorry and seek mercy, forgiveness and newness of life. Amen.

God has promised forgiveness of sins to all who repent and turn to Him in faith. In the place of Christ and by His Holy Command, I therefore forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

SUNG

LORD HAVE MERCY

[Tune: "Lord Jesus, Think On Me"]

Have mercy on us, Lord, And hear our solemn prayer.

We come to hear your living word; It saves us from despair.

Have mercy on us Christ, And wash away our sin.

Pour out your grace and make us whole That new life may begin.

Have mercy on us, Lord; Make sin and shame depart.

Renew us with your saving pow'r; Create in us new hearts!

GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you:

And also with you.

Let us pray: Almighty and ever-living God, You hate nothing that You have made and You forgive the sins of all who are sorry and seek renewal. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, by turning away from our sinful ways, we may receive from You, the God of all mercy, full forgiveness and freedom; we ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE SCRIPTURE READINGS

The Old Testament: *Joel 2: 12-19*

"Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, ministers of the LORD, weep and say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" Then the LORD became jealous for his land and had pity on his people. The LORD answered and said to his people, "Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations. This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Epistle: *1 John 4:7-16*

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SPOKEN GOSPEL VERSE

Matthew 11:28-30

**Jesus says: "Come unto Me, all you who are wearied and burdened,
and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me,
for I Am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
For My yoke is easy and my burden is light.**

The Holy Gospel *St. Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 6th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord.

Jesus says: "Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 'So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 'And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 'And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.'" This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the + life everlasting. Amen.

**1 Saviour, when in dust to you
low we bow in homage due;
when, repentant, to the skies
scarce we lift our weeping eyes;
oh, by all your pains and woe
suffered once for us below,
listen, listen to our plea:
Hear our solemn litany.**

**2 By your helpless infant years,
by your life of want and tears,
by your days of deep distress
in the savage wilderness,
by the dread, mysterious hour
of the insulting tempter's pow'r,
listen, listen to our plea:
Hear our solemn litany.**

**3 By your hour of dire despair,
by your agony of prayer,
by the cross, the nail, the thorn,
piercing spear, and torturing scorn,
by the gloom that veiled the skies
o'er the dreadful sacrifice,
listen, listen to our plea:
Hear our solemn litany.**

**4 By your deep expiring groan,
by the sad sepulchral stone,
by the vault whose dark abode
held in vain the rising God,
oh, from earth to heav'n restored,
mighty, reascended Lord,
listen, listen to our plea:
Hear our solemn litany.**

THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Remembering what our Lord Jesus Christ has done for us, we pray to God our Father. You gave your Son to take away the sin of the world. Lead us to turn away from our sin to live anew in our baptismal faith. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Your Son was obedient all the way to his death on a cross. Teach us patience and self-denial, that we see may see and meet the needs of others. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Your Son cared for the sick and the troubled. Make us compassionate and understanding towards others. Inspire our prayers to include all who struggle, in our families, communities, government and all nations; Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Your Son was tempted, suffered, and died. Be with all who face temptation, suffering, or death. Hold them in Your loving embrace. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Lord Jesus Christ, most merciful redeemer, friend, and brother, make us to know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, forever and ever.

Amen.

THE 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. 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

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favour, + and give you peace.

Amen.

LAST HYMN

"Abide With Me"

LSB # 878 VS 1, 4 & 6

**Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.**

**I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.**

**Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.**

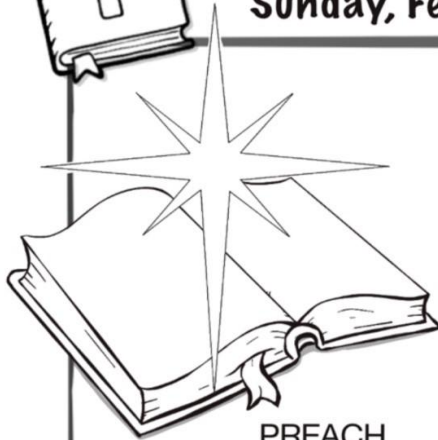
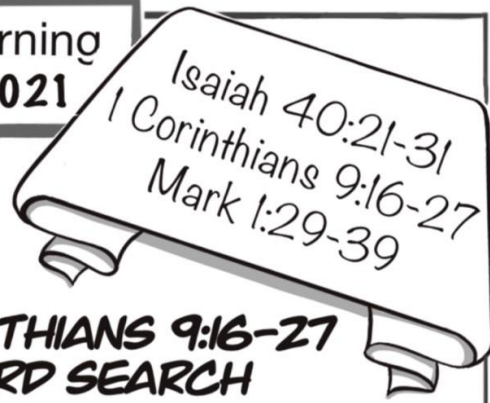
Welcome & Announcements

Let us go forth in hope & joy, serving our Lord: **Thanks be to God.**

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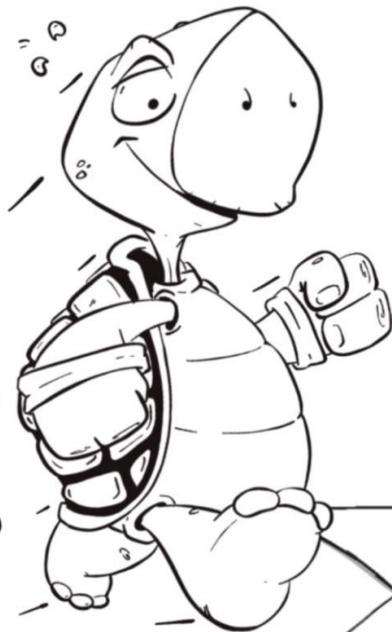
Kids Lectionary Learning
 Sunday, Feb. 7th, 2021



**1 CORINTHIANS 9:16-27
 WORD SEARCH**

PREACH
 FREE
 PEOPLE
 BLESSINGS
 GOSPEL
 LAW
 SAVE
 RUN
 REWARD
 CHRIST
 SHARE
 CONTROL

| | | | | | | | | | |
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Listen or read the Bible verses for today and try and find the words from our 2nd reading in the Word Search. Then, can you colour Tommy the Turtle?

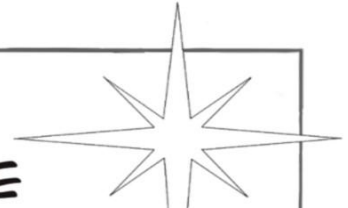
"I do it all for the sake of the gospel"

- 1 Cor. 9:23 (ESV)





Kids Lectionary Learning
5th Sunday after the Epiphany

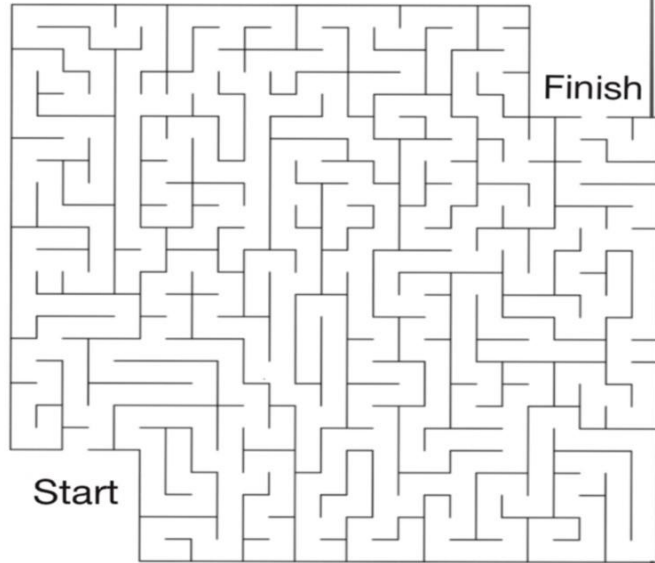
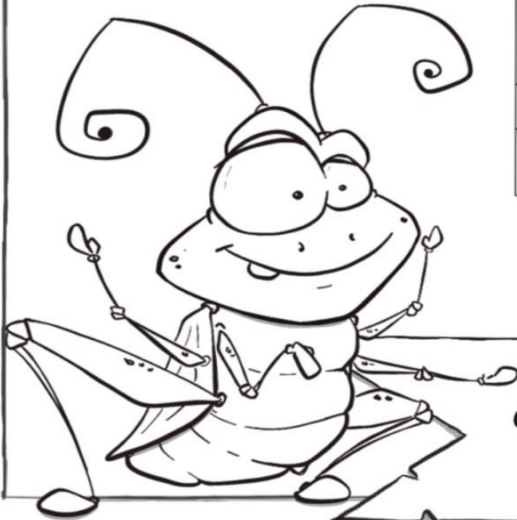


"AND HE HEALED MANY WHO WERE SICK WITH VARIOUS DISEASES,"
 - Mark 1:34 (ESV)

To fill in the blanks, follow the tangled lines, or read Mark 1:29-39 where Jesus heals many.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| 1. _____ house | a. And he came and took her by the _____ and lifted her up |
| _____ mother-in- | b. And immediately he left the synagogue and entered the _____ |
| 2. _____ law | |
| 3. _____ hand | c. and the fever left her, and she began to _____ them. |
| 4. _____ serve | d. Now Simon's _____ lay ill with a fever |
| 5. _____ sundown | e. And he _____ many who were sick with various diseases, |
| 6. _____ healed | f. That evening at _____ they brought to him all who were sick |

Garry the Grasshopper is amazed at how big creation is. Help him get through the maze and then colour Garry as we thank God for all His amazing Creation.



"The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth."

- Isaiah 40:28 (ESV)