

Elijah taken up to heaven

St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School
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10:45 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 14, 2021
Sermon: "Farewell Is Not Forever"
2 Kings 2:1-12



St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School

- A Family to Whom You Belong -
Our Mission is to: **Make More & Better Disciples**

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

10:45 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 14, 2021

Servants of God's House Today:

Pastor: Rev. Kenny Hsu **DCE Intern:** Grace Wolfram

Praise Team Accompanist: Doris Hill

Ushers: Tim Draube Team

Missionaries: Charles Cortwright, Rev. Tim & Lisa Beckendorf,
Rev. Shauen & Krista Trump, Rev. Paul Flo

Reader: Cheney Neff

WELCOME! We are glad that you are here worshipping God with us. We pray for God's blessings to you and invite you to come back again soon.

AS WE GATHER Although many travelers to the Holy Land focus their visits on biblical sites located in Israel, there are many noteworthy sacred locations in today's nation of Jordan, on the east side of the Jordan River. Two of these sites are the site called Tell Mar Elias, by tradition the place where the prophet Elijah was born, and Elijah's Hill, near the Jordan River location of Jesus' Baptism, where it is said that Elijah ascended to heaven in the whirlwind. Both sites were the location of notable Christian churches centuries ago. Elijah has long been remembered and honored by Christian people as a precursor to Jesus and an important historical figure of faith. Yet Elijah was a human being—just like us. His presence on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus and Moses reminds us of what is to come for us humans by God's grace for the sake of our glorious and glorified Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP O God, in the glorious transfiguration of Your beloved Son, You confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah. In the voice that came from the bright cloud, You wonderfully foreshowed our adoption by grace. Mercifully make us co-heirs with the King in His glory and bring us to the fullness of our inheritance in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Worship Service

(The congregation is invited to respond in the words written in **bold**.)

The Ringing of the Bells

The Wave of Fellowship

The Invocation

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

C: Amen.

Opening Sentences *Isaiah 30:15, 18, 29*

P: For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel,

C: “In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”

P: Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore He exalts Himself to show mercy to you.

C: For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him.

P: You shall have a song as in the night when a holy feast is kept,

C: and gladness of heart, as when one sets out to the sound of the flute to go to the mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.

Opening Song “Shout to the Lord”

My Jesus my Savior Lord there is none like You
All of my days I want to praise the wonders of Your mighty love
My comfort my shelter tower of refuge and strength
Let every breath all that I am never cease to worship You
Shout to the Lord all the earth let us sing
Power and majesty praise to the King mountains bow down
And the seas will roar at the sound of Your name
I sing for joy at the work of Your hands
Forever I'll love You forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise I have in You (repeat)

Forever I'll love You forever I'll stand
Nothing compares to the promise I have in You

Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.

(Words & music by Darlene Zschech, 1993 Darlene Zschech/Hillsongs Australia, Integrity Incorporated, used by permission CCLI #11440148 and 20162974)

Catechism *The First Article*

P: In the First Article, our confession is focused on God, our Creator, from whom our divine Savior Jesus Christ has proceeded. It is the voice of God the Father that we hear on the Mount of Transfiguration, acclaiming His Son, Jesus, and directing His disciples to listen to Him. As we declare our faith in God the Father, we affirm our trust in His plan for us as His children to grant us life and to place us into vocations through which we can serve Him and our neighbors. We speak the words of this article of the Apostles' Creed followed by the explanation.

C: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

P: What does this mean?

C: I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.

He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.

He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.

This is most certainly true.

CELEBRATION OF THE DAY

R1: On February 14, we commemorate Valentine, Martyr. The word “martyr” reminds us that Valentine died for confessing his faith in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. For eighteen hundred years, Valentine’s faithful witness has inspired Christian people to faith-filled words and loving deeds.

R2: A physician and priest in Rome during the rule of Emperor Claudius, Valentine lived in a time when Christians were harshly persecuted because of their religion. Arrested by Roman authorities, he received a death sentence.

R1: Tradition suggests that while Valentine was waiting in prison for his day of execution, he developed a friendship with the young daughter of his jailer. He told the girl about Jesus and shared his hope of heaven. On the day of his execution, he left her a note cut into a special shape. Written inside was a message of affection and encouragement. He signed the letter “your Valentine,” beginning a tradition that has changed and grown through the centuries.

R2: Love for Christ and love in Christ shaped the actions of Valentine. On Valentine’s Day, it is good to reflect on what that love is like.

P: Let us pray.

Lord of love, bless our remembering of the saints of ages past, including Your servant Valentine. Help us proclaim Your love in our day in word and deed as we look forward to the great reunion with all of the saints in Your heavenly kingdom. We pray in Jesus’ name.

C: Amen.

First Lesson 2 Kings 2:1–12

(Elijah goes up to heaven in a whirlwind.)

<p>¹Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal.</p> <p>²And Elijah said to Elisha, “Please stay here, for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel.” But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they went down to Bethel.</p> <p>³And the sons of the prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD</p>	<p>will take away your master from over you?” And he said, “Yes, I know it; keep quiet.”</p> <p>⁴Elijah said to him, “Elisha, please stay here, for the LORD has sent me to Jericho.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.” So they came to Jericho. ⁵The sons of the prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that today the LORD will take away</p>
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your master from over you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know it; keep quiet."

⁶Then Elijah said to him, "Please stay here, for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. ⁷Fifty men of the sons of the prophets also went and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan.

⁸Then Elijah took his cloak and rolled it up and struck the water, and the water was parted to the one side and to the other, till the two of them could go over on dry ground.

⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to

Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you." And Elisha said, "Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me." ¹⁰And he said, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it shall be so for you, but if you do not see me, it shall not be so." ¹¹And as they still went on and talked, behold, chariots of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²And Elisha saw it and he cried, "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" And he saw him no more. Then he took hold of his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 3:12–13; 4:1–6

(Paul writes of God's people being transformed.)

¹²Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, ¹³not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end.

¹Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart.

²But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. ³And even

if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

(Please stand, as you are able, for the Gospel)

Holy Gospel

Mark 9:2–9 (Jesus is transfigured on a high mountaintop.)

²And 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, ³and his clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus, ⁵

⁵And 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." ⁶For he did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him."

⁸And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus only. ⁹And as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

Confession and Absolution

P: O God, our Father, we admit and confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed.

C: Have mercy on us, and forgive us, O Lord.

P: We confess that we have not always brought glory to You through our words and our deeds.

C: Have mercy on us, and forgive us, O Lord.

P: We repent of all that is sinful in our lives, both that which we know and those things unknown to us that are against Your righteous laws.

C: Have mercy on us, and forgive us, O Lord.

P: Upon this your confession and by the command of our Lord, I, a called and ordained servant of Christ, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.

C: Amen.

Children's Message

The Song of Instruction "My Savior, My God"

I am not skilled to understand What God has willed, what God has planned
I only know at his right hand Stands one who is my Savior

I take him at His word and deed Christ died to save me: this I read
And in my heart I find a need Of Him to be my Savior

That He would leave His place on high And for sinful man to die
You count it strange, so once did I Before I knew my Savior

(Chorus) My Savior Loves, my Savior Lives My Savior's always there for me
My God; He was, my God; He is My God; is always gonna be
Yes, living, dying: let me bring My Strength, my solace from this spring
That He who lives to be my King Once died to be my Savior (chorus)

(Words & music by Aaron Shust and Dora Greenwell, arr. By Carol Tornquist, 2005 Bridge Building Music and White Spot Publishing, used by permission, CCLI #11440148 and 20162974)

The Word "Farewell Is Not Forever" 2 Kings 2:1–12

WE WORSHIP GOD THROUGH OUR GIVING

We honor God with the gifts He has given to us.

St. Paul's members have pledged to support our ministry in their tithes and offerings.

Please place your offerings in the box upfront.

To our guest: Thank you for joining us today and please do not feel that you are obligated to participate. We invite you to come back again.

Please put your **Welcome Card** in the box at the back of the church.

Psalm 4:5—Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the Lord.”

Offertory **“I Worship You, Almighty God”**

I worship You, Almighty God, There is none like You. I worship You, O Prince of Peace, That is what I want to do. I give You praise for You are my righteousness.

I worship You, Almighty God, There is none like You. (Repeat)

There is none like You.

(Words & music by Sondra Corbett, 1992 Integrity's Hosanna! Music, used by permission CCLI #11440148 and 20162974)

The Prayer of the Church

P: For those celebrating their baptismal anniversaries that they remain faithful to your Word including; Samantha Jager, Shelly Norton, and Paige Wagner. Lord, in Your mercy.

C: Hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Farewell to Alleluia *Ecclesiastes 3:1–4, 7*

P: This week with Ash Wednesday, we begin our observance of Lent. To highlight the penitential nature of the season, it is the Church's custom to suspend the use of the word "Alleluia," which means "Praise the Lord." A tradition has been in place since the fifth century not to use the joyful word "Alleluia" in worship from the conclusion of worship on the final Sunday before Lent, which is today, until the first service on Easter Sunday. We now repeat words from the Book of Ecclesiastes, which remind us that there are appropriate times for all things, including a time to keep silence, which we will observe regarding use of the "Alleluia" throughout Lent.

P: For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;

C: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

P: a time to break down, and a time to build up;

C: a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

P: a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

C: a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.

P: As part of our observance of a holy Lent as it begins this week, we now say farewell to Alleluia until the time of our rejoicing anew at the resurrection of our Lord on Easter Day.

C: Alleluia! Amen.

The Benediction

The Going Out Song “Forever”

Give thanks to the Lord our God and King, His love endures forever
For He is good, He is above all things, His love endures forever
Sing Praise, sing praise, sing praise, sing praise.

With a mighty hand and outstretched arm, His love endures forever
For the life that’s been reborn, His love endures forever
Sing praise, sing praise, Sing praise, sing praise.

Forever God is faithful, Forever God is strong, Forever God is with us – Forever,
Forever.

From the rising to the setting sun, His love endures forever
By the grace of God, we will carry on, His love endures forever
Sing praise, sing praise, Sing praise, sing praise

Forever God is faithful, Forever God is strong, Forever God is with us, Forever

Forever God is faithful Forever God is strong, Forever God is with us – Forever
Forever

(Words & music by Chris Tomlin, 2000 Worshiptogether.com Songs/Six Steps Music/ ASCAP, used by permission
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“Farewell Is Not Forever”

Text: 2 Kings 2:1–12c, Mark 9:2–9

Date: 02/14/21

Verse to Remember:

Jesus said, “if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.” John 14:3

Points to Ponder:

1. Is separation ever easy?
2. Separation is a painful loss even for believers.
3. What did Peter say at the Mount of Transfiguration? Why?
4. Revelations of God’s divine plan bring comfort and hope.
5. Farewell is not forever.