

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

August, 2023

Saint Paul's Church

www.SaintPaulsBrookfield.com

(203) 775-9587

“This is my Son,
my Chosen;
listen to him!”

Transforming

Lives

Through

Jesus



Vol. LXIX - No. 8
The Sword of the Spirit was started
 in 1954 by The Rev.
 A. Pierce Middleton

“Listen to Him”

“This is my Son, my Chosen” - LUKE 9 22:7

It’s only been six days since Jesus rebuked Peter, “Get behind me, Satan!” for not understanding picking up the cross as the purpose of Jesus’ life and the only way for disciples to follow. Now blinded by the light Peter wants to stay put and dwell permanently on the mountaintop. It’s the voice, “LISTEN TO HIM” that shuts Peter up and overcome by fear he and his companions faint dead away. It takes the touch and voice of Jesus, “get up and do not

be afraid” to wake them and then sworn to secrecy they descend to the less frightening and more familiar places on the plain. It’s a strange story but then that’s the nature of a theophany. The recognizable transfigured into the mysterious as the Jesus who ate and drank with disciples in the valley glows like a nuclear reactor on the mountain top while talking to the long gone law giver and end time prophet about God knows what. So we who are comfortable with “What a friend we have in Jesus” also sing “Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise” and hold the two in tension. The familiar and friendly Jesus is the One who in the beginning was the Word and in the end will be judge and jury of all. It may be that in our end, when



we come face to face with that terrifying reality, we will faint dead away, but then trusting that the Lord Jesus will touch us and “Get up and do not be afraid” will be the only Word we hear.

St. Paul’s Parish

174 Whisconier Road

Brookfield, Connecticut 06804

(203) 775-9587

† People Are Supposed to Notice

Exodus 34:29-35

This is a strange story, but then the Bible is no stranger to strange stories. A burning bush, a plague or ten, fire and smoke on a mountain, a glowing face; the Holy shows up and things happen that can't be explained and people change. That's the whole point of a theophany or a close encounter of the Holy kind. You are supposed to be changed and people are supposed to notice. But we tend to take the unknowable, undefinable, indescribable and contain the Holy in a nice, neat doctrinal box.



Like the veil that hid the effect of the Holy, all our musings on the mystical are ways we come to God on our own terms. With the effect of Holy hidden behind the veil we can keep our religion hidden less we practice it and people notice. But when in an encounter of the Holy kind we catch a glimpse such that we see as we are seen, and know as we are known, if only for a moment, then like Moses we are changed and people are supposed to notice.

† This Week at St. Paul's

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|--|
| Thu, Aug 3 | - 8:00 am | - PraiseBarre (Zoom) |
| | - 9:30 am | - Men's Study / Discussion Group, Guild Room |
| Sat, Aug 5 | - 7:30 am | - John 21:12 Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford |
| | - 8:00 am | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall |
| | - 10:00 am | - PraiseMoves (Zoom) |
| Sun, Aug 6 | | The Transfiguration |
| | - 8:00 am | - Traditional Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 9:30 am | - Adult Class, Guild Room |
| | - 10:30 am | - Contemporary Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 7:00 pm | - Recovery & Self-Reflection, Guild Room (Zoom) |
| Mon, Aug 7 | - 7:00 pm | - Men's Bible Study, Crocker Hall (YouTube Live) |
| Tues, Aug 8 | - 8:00 am | - PraiseKicks (Zoom) |
| | - 9:30 am | - Ladies Tuesday AM Bible Study, Guild Room |
| Wed, Aug 9 | - 10:00 am | - Holy Communion & Healing (YouTube Live) |
| | - 11 to Noon | - Drive-Thru Food Collection |
| | - 7:00 pm | - Ladies Evening Zoom Bible Study (Zoom) |
| | - 7:30 pm | - Vestry Meeting, Guild Room |
| Thu, Aug 10 | - 8:00 am | - PraiseBarre (Zoom) |
| | - 9:30 am | - Men's Study / Discussion Group, Guild Room |
| Fri, Aug 11 | - 6-9:00 pm | - Friday Family Fun Night in the Meadow |
| Sat, Aug 12 | - 7:30 am | - John 21:12 Group, Theo's Downtown Diner, New Milford |
| | - 8:00 am | - Men's Prayer Breakfast, Crocker Hall |
| | - 10:00 am | - PraiseMoves (Zoom) |
| Sun, Aug 13 | | The 11th Sunday after Pentecost |
| | - 8:00 am | - Traditional Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 9:30 am | - Adult Class, Guild Room |
| | - 10:30 am | - Contemporary Holy Communion (YouTube Live) |
| | - 7:00 pm | - Recovery & Self-Reflection, Guild Room (Zoom) |

Check our website daily for schedule updates.

† Transfigured and Ascending

Exodus 34:29-35 - Psalms 99 - 2 Peter 1:13-21 - Luke 9:28-36

St. Peter, distinguishing himself from those who “follow cleverly devised myths,” turns to an event whose credibility is confirmed by eyewitnesses: “For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, ‘This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased. We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain’” (2 Pet. 1:16-18).

The gospel tells the same story, adding details about who is present - Peter, James, and John as witnesses, and three persons emblazoned in glory on the mountain: Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Moses and Elijah represent, respectively, the Law and the Prophets, and their eventual disappearance no doubt suggests that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament dispensation. “Jesus was found alone” (Luke 9:36).

Both Peter’s personal account and the gospel account place special emphasis on the “Majestic Glory.” “[W]hile [Jesus] was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white” (Luke 9:29). The prologue of St. John’s gospel tells us, “The true light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world” (John 1:9). The 14th verse of the prologue says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten son from the Father” (John 1:14). While there is something almost charming and homely about Jesus “dwelling among

us,” or, as it may also be translated, “pitching his tent among us,” we should not lose sight of the glory that is revealed. The countenance and clothing of Jesus glow and flash with a divine radiance not of this world. In this scene, divine transcendence becomes an immanent presence in the world.

Peter, James, and John are eyewitnesses. We are not. Are we, therefore, cut off from this event or related to it only in a distant way, an event from which we may perhaps derive instruction? No! In all the mysteries of the life of Christ, we stand, as if *in persona Christi*, in the person of Christ; not only that, but we stand in the person of every character in the story. With Moses and Elijah, we affirm all past

revelation, and, standing in Christ, we affirm the singular and supreme revelation in Christ, a revelation at work in our lives because we are mystical members of Christ’s body. Therefore, in a real and important sense, his transfiguration is ours.

We are drawn up to the holy mountain. In the words of the Psalter, “I lift up my soul to you” (142:8). Another line, whose meaning is somewhat contested, may connote an inward and upward journey. “Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion” (*ascensiones in corde suo disposuit*) (Ps. 84:5). We set our minds on things that are above, where Christ is. We lift up our hearts, and in doing so, we receive a measure of the glory of Christ and shine as lights in the world. “We all,” says St. Paul, “with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Cor. 3:18).

Daily life is largely mundane. Tasks, obligations, work, and frustration define our days. And yet we have always within us a blazing light of divine glory; we possess as treasure “Thou that art perfect in beauty” (Thomas Traherne).

Look It Up

Read: Psalm 99

Think About It

Worship him upon his holy hill.

- from *The Living Church*, 2023



The Transfiguration is depicted in mosaics over the principal Altar at the church on Mt. Tabor.

† Prayer as We Search for a New Rector

Almighty God, you know the needs of your church in every place: look graciously upon us, the people of St. Paul's Parish, and grant us the guidance of your Holy Spirit as we seek a new Rector for this parish.

Jesus, you have blessed and sustained us through the past 238 years. We ask that you continue to lead us, stretch us, and direct us, in our search. Raise for us a priest and pastor who will boldly proclaim your Gospel, faithfully administer your sacraments, and serve your people with love and compassion, that we may continue to grow in the likeness of Christ and be a beacon of love and hope to our community and the world.

Give us discernment, wisdom, and confidence in your timing. Guide the members of our Search Committee, as they labor to be faithful in seeking your will.

We pray for the life of our parish, that we may continue to be strengthened in our mission to transform lives, being Jesus' heart, hands and feet to our neighbors no matter where they are on their journey of faith.

Bless us with mutual trust and respect, courage, and foresight as you shepherd our community through its journey.

Grace us with continuous direction and inspire us toward genuine self-reflection.

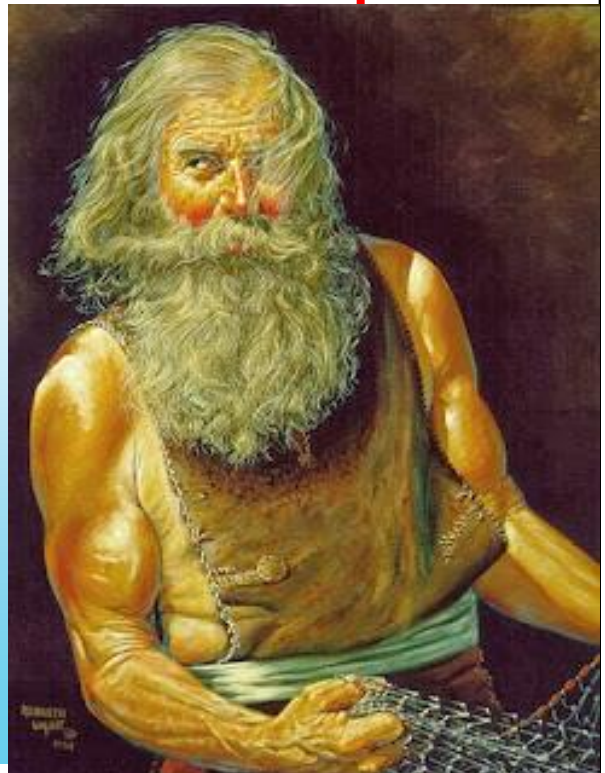
All this we ask as we walk in your ways to the glory of your name. **Amen.**



† The Eyewitness Testimony

2 Peter 1:13-21

It is a testimony to the conviction of the first disciples that anyone believed what surely must have seemed less of a cleverly devised myth and more just outright nonsense. But people did believe the eyewitness testimony of these Galilean fishermen and then with equal passion proclaimed the crucified and resurrected Jewish peasant preacher Jesus, who they had never seen, to be the Beloved of God and Savior of the world. Whenever we are tempted to despair of the statistical decline of the church we would do well to pay attention to the lamp of their prophetic message which still shines in the darkness of our time; not because we fear some future final judgment but because we are convinced that the same word that captured the imagination of first century people is equally relevant in our own. Perhaps the church grew complacent for a time, satisfied with the status quo, but the prophetic word is always present and just waiting for those who believe to give it voice. So let us pray that the day will dawn and the morning star will rise in our hearts as it did in the disciples and moved by the Holy Spirit we will make known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus.





Here is an update about St. Paul's ongoing food-related ministries serving our community:

Drive Thru Food Collection - occurs every other Wednesday from 11 am - noon. We have now held over 86 food drives since April 22, 2020! Last time our trucks delivered to the Jericho Food Pantry, Danbury and the F.A.I.T.H. Food Pantry, Newtown.

Our next food collection will be next Wednesday, August 9th and will support the Victory Christian Center in Danbury and the Jericho Food Pantry in Danbury.

Thank you all for your ongoing generosity and to the many volunteers who have helped to load the trucks and deliver food to the pantries.

Next Drive-Thru Food Collection

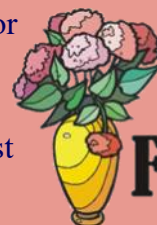
**Wednesday
August 9th**

*Help us,
Help others*

11 am to Noon



If you would like to request Altar flowers for a particular Sunday in Memory of a friend or loved one, please fill out an envelope located in the back of the church or send an email request to dszen@yahoo.com or contact David Szen.



**Altar
Flowers**

† *Art in the Christian Tradition*

Freedom and Transfiguration on the Frontier

by Dennis Raverty

When George Caleb Bingham's painting, *The Jolly Flatboatmen*, was chosen to be engraved and distributed to subscribers in 1846, some members of the American Art-Union objected to the uncouth subject matter, which they felt was not worthy of the high cultural aspirations of the organization. Although one reviewer admitted that the work was interesting in its documentary realism, by choosing "everyday and unpoetical subjects," such as these low-paid, late adolescent boat hands, he wrote, the organization had fallen short of its lofty "high art" goals, that is "to elevate and purify public taste."

Yet it was arguably among the foremost aims of the artist to show exactly the opposite: how the ordinary contained a latent, mystical poeticism that transfigured an otherwise banal subject and placed it on or near the level of the classical work of the past at the very pinnacle of the Renaissance, as represented by the art of Raphael.

The painting depicts a flatboat laden with merchandise heading downstream on a hazy afternoon while the riverboat workers enjoy a moment of recreation. The figures all seem natural and relaxed, yet if examined carefully, the posture of the young man ecstatically dancing on top of the crate in the center of the composition is almost identical to the posture of Christ in Raphael's masterpiece, *The Transfiguration*.

The main figures in both compositions are contained within a nearly equilateral triangle. Christ's hands are in the orans posture of a priest celebrating Mass while the jolly boatman similarly gestures. His companions are not adoring prophets and disciples but a fiddler whose face is hidden behind his straw hat and a pudgy, smiling boy marking the beat of the music with a tin pan while the others watch. The long-legged youth sitting on the right looking directly at the viewer is derived from a river god in another Raphael composition (the same figure would later be quoted by Manet in his *Luncheon on the Grass*).



"The Jolly Flatboatmen," by George Caleb Bingham. Image/Wikimedia Commons



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"The Transfiguration" by Raphael

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Art in the Christian Tradition



George Caleb Bingham

The older boat pilot and his companion with a broad brimmed hat just visible between the dancer and the fiddler, steering the boat, have their counterparts in the figures at the left of the *Transfiguration*, who are just visible climbing the hill, and may represent the artist and the patron (and perhaps in the Bingham as well). The ship pilot's red hat provocatively resembles the Phrygian cap, notorious symbol of the revolutions in France and throughout Europe, and Bingham was both fiercely democratic, and a political activist.

Bingham's family had moved to Missouri when he was a boy and so the artist was familiar with life along the river, often depicting it in his genre scenes. The references to the *Transfiguration* are not merely formal or compositional however but imply that life on the Western frontier transforms a person and helps them realize their innate Christlike potential. The boatmen demonstrate their human nature in this everyday scene just as Jesus revealed his divine nature on Mount Tabor. The gift of discernment demanded by the painting is the ability to see the latent Christ even in the most humble and coarse of subjects. Recognizing the High Renaissance references in this lowly genre piece of daily life on the river required a similar act of recognition. This transfiguring, "incarnational" process, it is implied, is made possible by the boatmen's close communion with nature and in their shared repudiation of an overly refined society back east. Values such as democracy, freedom, equality and independence are all fulfilled in this idealized representation of the carefree life of these young men, their journey of life unrestricted by the fetters of conventional domesticity in a new, unspoiled Garden of Eden out west. Passionately involved with local politics, Bingham often celebrated frontier democracy in his work. *The Jolly Flatboatmen* is a populist, lowbrow realization of a highbrow Renaissance masterpiece whose artistic standing is above reproach, even by the snobs among the collectors who were subscribers to the engravings.

The painting was commissioned by the American Art-Union, an organization that reproduced the work as a large black and white engraving and sold the reproductions to paying subscribers. By purchasing one of these prints, the collector's name was put into a lottery, and the prize to be awarded to the winner by the Union was the original painting. *The Jolly Flatboatmen* was originally awarded to a grocer in upstate New York.

To fully appreciate the painting within its historical context, however, it must be understood that the frontier West was not merely a geographical region in the nineteenth century imagination, it was at least as much a myth: a cluster of ideas, hopes, fears and fantasies about the far West, conceived of as an ever-expanding frontier of almost boundless proportions, a sublime and romantic horizon waiting to be explored, cultivated and populated.

This construct is sometimes referred to as "Manifest Destiny." Bingham's work, as has been pointed out by several authors, embodies and exemplifies this myth almost uncritically. The concept of the frontier was gendered during the nineteenth century as a robust, masculine domain, while civilization, domesticity, family life and conventional Protestant religiosity were all gendered as feminine and relegated to the margins.

Although from our vantage point the negative impact this myth has caused is obvious: the displacement and sometimes the extermination of the original inhabitants of the West with all the racist assumptions that go along with it; the damage caused by our reckless disregard for the consequences of our actions on the natural environment; and our sense of entitlement to the riches of creation in the name of commerce yet without the responsibility to conserve it and be its stewards.

But we shouldn't let these contemporary biases cloud our appreciation for Bingham's achievement in this painting. Essentially a realist, he aspires to place mere genre painting (that is, paintings of everyday life), on the same level as the very highest category of painting in the nineteenth century, what was called "History Painting," which generally had as its subjects biblical, mythological or historical narratives, often on a grand scale. By elevating the ordinary as Bingham has done in this painting, the artist transfigures it and at the same time challenges the viewer to similarly discern the hidden image of the glorified Christ in their otherwise mundane, everyday reality.

Dennis Raverty is an associate professor of art history at New Jersey City University, specializing in art of the 19th and 20th centuries.

✠ More on the Transfiguration

At just the time of the year when the harvest is abundant, we celebrate a feast of God's glory. The marvelous events of this day are told in the gospels of Matthew (17), Mark (9) and Luke (9).

Peter, James and John were led up to a high mountain by Jesus. Suddenly his face shone as bright as the sun. Moses the Lawgiver and the great prophet Elijah appeared. They talked about Jesus' coming death and resurrection. In awe, Peter blurted out a strange suggestion. He wanted to set up booths for Jesus, Moses and Elijah.

A cloud surrounded them. Then the voice of God proclaimed the Jesus is God's son, the Beloved. The three apostles were terrified. They fell down in fear. Then they looked up, but the amazing scene was gone. Jesus was there alone.

What did Peter mean when he asked if he should set up booths? The answer is found in a custom of the Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot. During Sukkot, booths are set up. They're constructed out of green branches and decorated with fruits and flowers. They symbolize creation. Moses and Elijah and all the ancestors are invited to enter in spirit. If Peter wanted to set up harvest booths, perhaps he wanted all of creation to share in the Transfiguration of Jesus.

In the time of Moses, when the Israelites traveled through the desert on their way to the Promised Land, God traveled with them. God appeared as a cloud within a tent. In the gospel story of the Transfiguration, God again appears as a shining cloud. But instead of filling a tent or a harvest booth, the cloud surrounds Jesus and his disciples. Perhaps the human body is like the tent of God's presence.

The feast of the Transfiguration is a day of rejoicing. In Rome, the grape harvest is blessed. New wine from these grapes is used in Communion services.

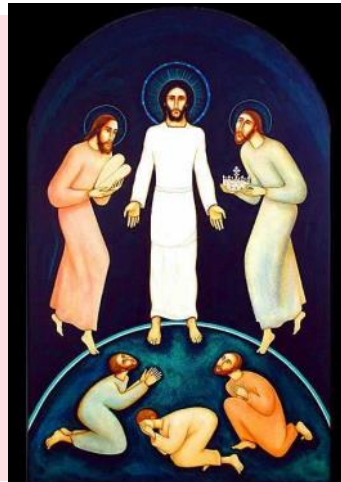
Eastern Christians hold a harvest procession in celebration of the springtime flowers and seeds that have been "transformed" into summertime fruit and sheaves of wheat.



✠ Transforming Stewardship

"...the from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well please; listen to him.'"
- Matthew 17:5

When Peter, James and John heard this they immediately fell prostrate to the ground and they "were very much afraid." We, too, may respond the same way when we hear God's voice. How many times do you become fearful when invited to participate more fully in the life of the church? Or, when someone says something negative about the church, are you afraid to respond? Remember, we too, are beloved sons and daughters of God; Jesus is there to help us, but we need to listen.





by Kirsten Peterson, Organist & Choirmaster

Greetings!

This Sunday we're celebrating the Transfiguration where Jesus is transfigured and becomes radiant in glory upon a mountain. The Feast of the Transfiguration is assigned to August 6, although many denominations, including ours, also celebrates a "Transfiguration Sunday" on the last Sunday of Epiphany. So twice for us this year!

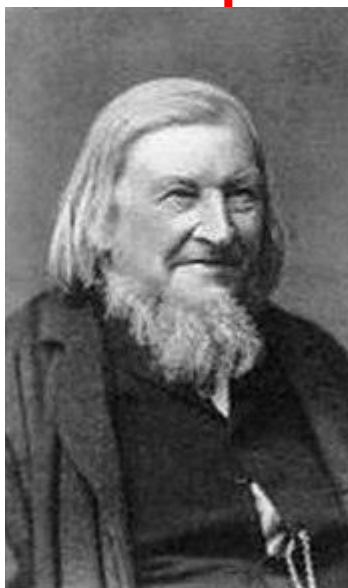
Naturally, I've chosen some specific hymns for this occasion. "O Wondrous Type! O Vision Fair" is our processional this week and to frame our Gospel reading from Luke, where the story of Christ's transfiguration is recounted, we'll sing "O Light of Light, Love Given Birth." While all of the other hymns we'll be singing take up the general theme of Christ representing "light," I wanted to single out "Fairest Lord Jesus" in particular, chosen mostly for the following line from the third verse: "Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer."



*Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature,
O thou of God and man the Son;
Thee will I cherish, thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown.*

*Fair are the meadows, fairer still the woodlands,
Robed in the blooming garb of spring:
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.*

*Fair is the sunshine, fairer still the moonlight,
And all the twinkling starry host:
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer,
Than all the angels heaven can boast.*



I was looking back through my previous *Take Note!* articles, as I sometimes like to re-visit and tweak research I've done before, but to my surprise, I've never really written about "Fairest Lord Jesus!" And now I know why. It's kind of got this complicated history and it isn't as easy to sum up as some of the other hymns.

For instance, who wrote it? Our hymnal lists the words as "German composite." Hmmm. Well, the earliest version of the hymn was German and published in the 17th century. But no authorship is given. It appears it may have been copied from another source. And likewise, no one really knows who composed the tune. Heinrich Hoffman von Fallersleben (1798-1874) gets the credit for pairing the text with a modified version of a folk song that he claims having heard being sung by haymakers. He gave it the name ASCALON,

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Heinrich Hoffman von Fallersleben

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Choir Notes

because, remember, all tunes need some sort of name to distinguish them from others.

This is where it gets even more interesting. Because the tune name has at various times been called ASCALON, CRUSADER'S HYMN, ST. ELIZABETH (that's how it appears in our 1982 Hymnal), and BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR. And they're all the same tune. What?? To make a long story short, but not necessarily less confusing, ASCALON refers to the ancient city in the Near East (in what is now Israel) where the last battle of the First Crusade was fought. Don't ask me why von Fallersleben chose that name, but it lead to the American composer Richard Storrs Willis (1819-1900) erroneously believing that the tune was sung by the crusading soldiers on the way to Jerusalem so he re-named it CRUSADER'S HYMN around 1850. Then, the Hungarian composer Franz Liszt (1811-1886) used the melody in his oratorio "The Legend of St. Elizabeth" to depict a scene in which soldier's are marching off to the Crusades. Elizabeth of Thuringia was married to the German king Louis IV who died in the sixth Crusade. The editors of our 1982 Hymnal changed the name of the tune to ST. ELIZABETH perhaps to reflect the connection to Liszt's composition as opposed to the incorrect assumption that the melody was actually used during the Crusades. And what about BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR? This tune name comes from the fourth stanza (not included in our hymnal) that reads:

*Beautiful Savior! Lord of all the nations
Son of God and Son of Man
Glory and honor, praise, adoration
Now and forevermore be thine*

So there you have it. Aren't you glad you asked? As a reward for making it through all of that, here is a lovely arrangement of BEAUTIFUL SAVIOR by F. Melius Christiansen (1871-1955), a Norwegian musician who was head of the St. Olaf College (Minneapolis, MN) as well as founder of the world-renowned St. Olaf Choir. This performance is by the Pacific Lutheran University Choir of the West under the direction of Richard Vance.

Peace and blessings, Kirsten





✠ Making Sense of God's Guidance The Trust Factor

As we grow in understanding God's love for us, hopefully our trust in him will also grow. But where does trust come from and what builds trust? Trust comes from someone's proven character as well as their behavior. From the standpoint of generational attitudes towards authority figures in our culture today, trust may be hard to come by. Some of us might say, "I trust others until they prove untrustworthy." Where others might argue, "I trust others after they prove themselves trustworthy." Sadly, an increasing number of disillusioned young people today would declare, "I will not trust others fully, no matter what." The reality is that it is character not merely words or actions alone that build trust. In fact, those who lack character but still attempt to get others to trust them are sooner or later found out, and their influence or leadership is ignored.

When is it most difficult for us to trust others? Usually this happens when we sense a lack of control of the situation, or we lack knowledge of what's happening or the consequences. Likewise, when we feel vulnerable and exposed, that degree of discomfort will make us very uncertain about trusting the advice of someone else.

So, when it comes to the question of seeking God's will or asking for his guidance, underneath there must be a sense that he is trustworthy and utterly reliable. If we are to follow what God describes

as "his best" for us, we must be convinced that he truly does know what is best for us, to embrace that "good and perfect will of God" gladly ([Rom. 12:2](#)).

When we know that God is truly the "Good Shepherd" who desires to lead us in the right path, then obedience becomes a delight rather than something to dread. David could say of God his Shepherd in Psalm 23:3 that "He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." The idea here is that God's very reputation is at stake in his ability to guide me in the right path. We can trust him because he is utterly trustworthy. He will never lead us down a false path.

Probably like you, over the years, my wife and I have faced numerous cross-roads where the next step was unclear. We faced critical choices with considerable consequences and struggled to know what was best. What ultimately enabled us to seek God's direction and guidance and then to follow it as we best understood, was the simple but profound conviction that God as our Good Shepherd would not abandon us nor fail in leading us to his best if we humbly sought his will. It is precisely because of God's absolute trustworthiness and loving character that motivates us to seek his guidance.

There is an amazing story in [Genesis 24](#) about a servant who is sent on a "mission impossible" from a human standpoint. He was tasked by his master Abraham to go back to his home country and there find a suitable wife for Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham was not content to just find any old wife locally of which there were likely many potential candidates. Abraham was a wealthy man and had the means to make whatever arrangements were necessary. However, Abraham wanted God's best for his son and was willing therefore to trust in God's guidance and provision.

Online dating is the means many people use today to find a life partner, but for Abraham's servant, he had to do it the old-fashioned way and undertake a difficult and dangerous journey to Abraham's home town in NW Mesopotamia some 450 miles away.

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Ordinary or Extraordinary?

However, to his servant, Abraham made the following promise, "The LORD, the God of heaven, who brought me out of my father's household and my native land and who spoke to me and promised me on oath, saying, 'To your offspring I will give this land'--he will send his angel before you so that you can get a wife for my son from there." ([Gen 24:7](#)).

Abraham's willingness to trust God was based on God's original promise when God called him out of the Ur of Chaldeans to the Promised Land with the words: "The LORD had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.'" ([Gen 12:1-3](#)).

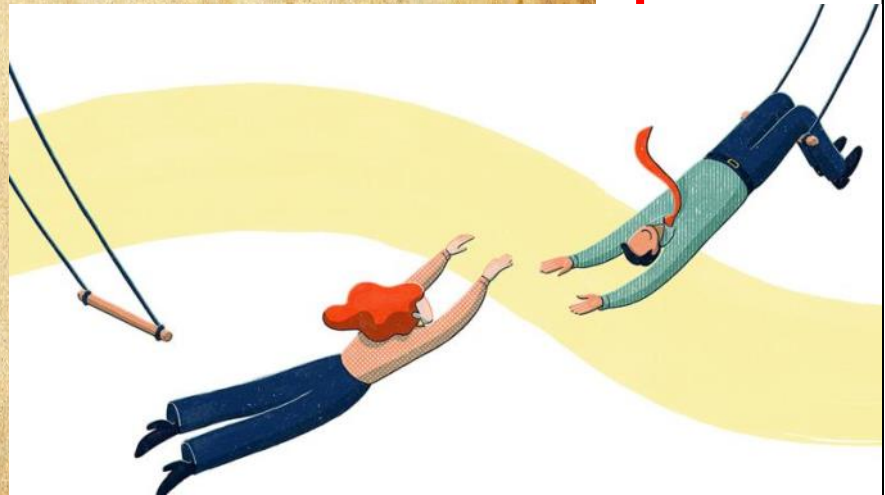
And now, Abraham's servant was sent on this arduous journey with only the promise that God would send his angel before him so that he would be able to find a wife for Isaac. What enabled the servant to take this step and for Abraham as well to risk the enterprise for the sake of his son? Through a growing understanding of God's loving purpose and his proven promises over the years, Abraham was now able to trust God for the outcome. He sought God's best for his family because he knew that God was utterly trustworthy to follow.

As the story unfolds, we see the servant arriving at his destination and then as he began the search operation, fervently praying, "O LORD, God of my master Abraham, give me success today, and show kindness to my master Abraham." ([Gen 24:12](#)). Incredibly, God does guide him to Rebekah in a no-uncertain manner. As the servant's story is about to finish, we hear him give thanks that his trust in God's guidance was not misplaced with the words, "'Praise be to the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who has not abandoned his kindness and faithfulness to my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the journey to the house of my master's relatives.'" ([Gen 24:27](#)). God does give the very best to those who leave the choice with him.

The desire for God's guidance can only come when we recognize our limitations and weakness and turn to God to provide what only he can, direction to his best for our lives and his work in this world. If I can truly trust God, then seeking his best is the only wise and right course, and one that will not lead to disappointment.

The words in [Proverbs 3:5-6](#) are as true today as when first penned. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."

- Dan Bacon



† Transforming Stewardship

"And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light."

- MATTHEW 17:2

Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, we should reflect Christ's light to the world. When we receive the Eucharist, the body and blood of Jesus, we are called to be supernatural to reflect His love, mercy and forgiveness to others. When we are grateful for all that God has given us, generosity flows through us because we are made in God's image.





EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT
PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S MISSION

† Rector Search Process Update

Please mark your calendars. Our Diocesan Transition Minister Amber Page Gehr will be visiting us on **Sunday, August 27th**. We will have **one service at 9 am**, followed by a presentation in the sanctuary outlining the transition process and rector search. Coffee will follow.

† Saints of God

Thursday, August 3rd

Joanna, Mary , and Salome

Myrrh-Bearing Women

Joanna, Mary, and Salome, are traditionally counted as the three women who came to Jesus' tomb early in the morning on the day of the resurrection in order to anoint the Jesus' body with myrrh and other spices. They were followers of Jesus during his earthly ministry and remained with him throughout his arrest, crucifixion, and burial, and discovered the empty tomb.

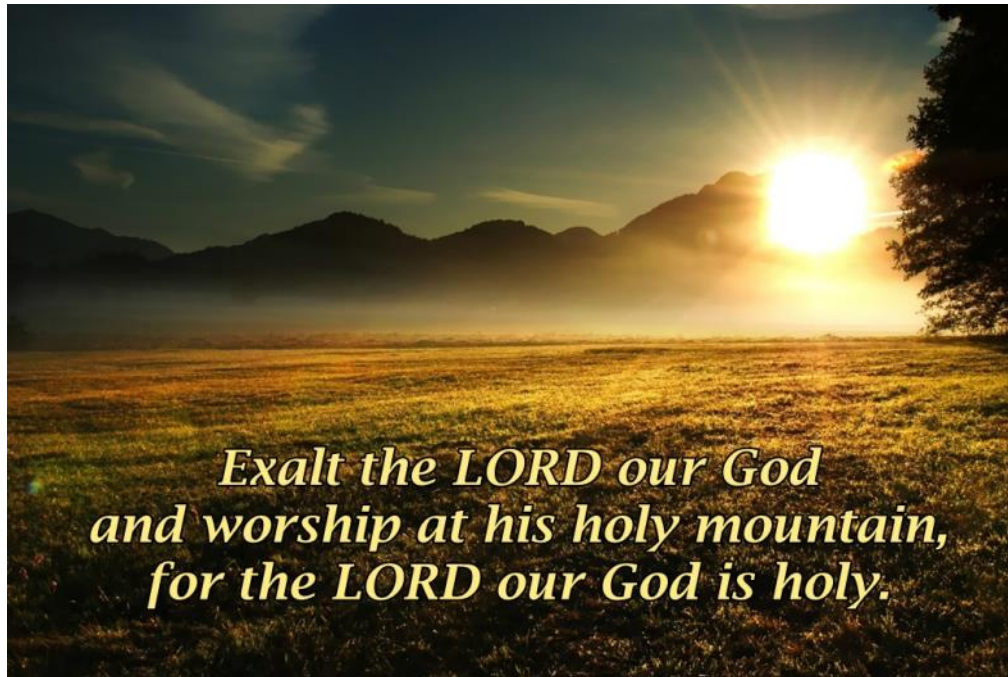
Little is known about the lives of Joanna, Mary, and Salome beyond their faithful and unwavering devotion and service to Christ. Joanna is identified in the Gospel of Luke as the wife of Chuza, a steward of Herod and in [Luke 8:2-3](#) is counted among the women who followed and provided for Jesus after having been healed by him.

The Gospel of Mark includes Salome in a list of women present at the crucifixion without any further information; there is a tradition that Salome was the sister of Mary the Mother of Jesus.

In addition to Joanna, Salome, and Mary Magdalene, [Matthew 28:1](#) lists a woman it refers to as "the other Mary." [Mark 16:1](#) refers to her as Mary the mother of James. [John 19:25](#) recounts that Mary the wife of Cleopas was present at the crucifixion, and historically the Christian tradition has tended to assume that all three of these Marys are actually the same person.

The little information that we do have about these women shows them to be faithful disciples and worthy of our commemoration and, more importantly, emulation. There is a particular devotion to these "Holy Myrrhbearers" in the Orthodox Church, and the second Sunday after Easter is celebrated as "Myrrhbearers Sunday."





*Exalt the LORD our God
and worship at his holy mountain,
for the LORD our God is holy.*



25 Stories for 25 Years

**The Honorable
Dean Esposito**

MAYOR, CITY OF DANBURY



“Jericho is a huge contributor to the community. Everything they do, every day in their wonderful facilities, is for kids in need. And the children in Danbury are in need. That they work with the Lord Jesus Christ means a lot to me, too. This is a great organization doing a lot of good work in our city.”

Holy Land Revisited

✠ Mount Tabor ✠

Mount Tabor, rising dome-like from the Plain of Jezreel, is the mountain where Christian tradition places the Transfiguration of Jesus.

Scholars disagree on whether Mount Tabor was the scene of that event (described in Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9: 2-8 and Luke 9:28-36). However, it has throughout history been a place of mystique and atmosphere, where humanity has sought contact with the divine.

Its unique contours - variously described as "breast-shaped," "hump-backed" and "resembling an upside down tea cup" - captured the imagination of ancient peoples who attached to it supernatural qualities.

Mount Tabor stands some 1,400 feet above the plain in lower Galilee, 4.5 miles east of Nazareth. It held a strategic position at the junction of trade routes. Many battles have been fought at its foot.

In the Old Testament, Mount Tabor is described as a sacred mountain and a place for worship. It is not mentioned by name in the New Testament.

Location of Transfiguration is Questioned

The Gospel accounts of the Transfiguration - a momentous event in which Peter, James and John were introduced to the divine incarnation of Christ, the God-Man - do not specify the place. They

simply say it was a "high mountain" in Galilee.

On our trips to Israel, we have always bypassed Mt. Tabor and visited the Caesarea Philippi site at Mount Hermon.

Christian tradition in the early centuries named the mountain as Tabor. This location is cited in early apocryphal writings and was accepted by the Syriac and Byzantine churches.

Many biblical scholars now question this tradition. Mount Tabor's location does not fit well into events before and after the Transfiguration. At the time, a Hasmonean fortress stood on the summit.

And would Tabor be considered a "high mountain", especially compared to other mountains in the vicinity? (It's actually more than 650 feet lower than Jerusalem.)

These scholars see the much higher Mount Hermon as a more likely location.

Nevertheless, a succession of churches and a monastery were built on Mount Tabor from the fourth century.

Hairpin Bends Take Taxies to the Top

After the Crusaders were defeated in the 12th century and the area was taken over by the Turks, the Mamluk sultan Baybars destroyed all the religious buildings on Mount Tabor in 1263. Tabor remained deserted for nearly 400 years until the Franciscans negotiated permission to settle there. Early pilgrims used to climb 4,300 steps cut into the rocky slope to reach the summit. These days taxis negotiate a succession of hairpin bends before

(Continued on page 17)



(Continued from page 16)

Magdala

they suddenly reach the summit.

The present Catholic and Greek Orthodox buildings (separated by a wall) were constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The prominent Catholic Church of the Transfiguration, designed by the Italian architect Antonio Barluzzi, stands among ruins of a Benedictine monastery. A bas-relief of the architect, who designed many of the Holy Land's churches, is set into a wall on the right of the entrance.

Its entrance is flanked by chapels dedicated to Moses and Elijah, who were seen with Jesus during his Transfiguration. The event itself is depicted above the main altar in the central apse.

In the crypt under the church are the altar and fragments of walls of a Byzantine church. There is a tradition that the rock floor of the crypt is where Jesus stood during the Transfiguration.

The Greek Orthodox church, often not open to visitors, honors Elijah. It too is built on the ruins of Byzantine and Crusader churches.

'Breadbasket' Scene of Battles

Mount Tabor's height affords uninterrupted panoramas. From the balcony of the Franciscan hospice, the view is of the plain of Jezreel, bounded by the Carmel range and the mountains of Samaria.

The fertile plain is called "the breadbasket of Israel," a reminder that one of the meanings of Jezreel is "God sows."

But this plain has often resounded to the clash of battle.

On the slopes of Mount Tabor, in the time of the Judges, the prophetess Deborah and her general Barak marshalled their warriors before sweeping down to rout the 900 chariots of Sisera and his Canaanites (Judges 4:4-16).

Armies of all the great generals who campaigned in the Middle East have tramped across the plain, from the pharaoh Thutmose III to General Edmund Allenby, and including Alexander the Great and Napoleon.

And in the Book of Revelation, it is named as the scene of the battle of Armageddon (also called Harmagedon or Har-Megiddo), in which good will triumph over evil.

On our past trips to the Holy Land we have visited both the Caesarea Philippi and Mt. Tabor sites at different times.



Church of the Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor.

Our next trip to the Holy Land is in May of 2024! We leave on April 30th for a two-week journey into our faith. Watch future *Sword Points* for more info.

✠ Start Spreading the News!

EVANGELISM:

Sharing Christ With Others

“If the apostles reminded even Paul himself to remember the poor (Galatians 2:10), then surely the rest of us need such a reminder.”

- Russell Moore, *Adopted for Life: The Priority of Adoption for Christian Families and Churches*



✠ This Date on the Church Calendar

Sunday, August 6th

The Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ

Sunday we celebrate the occasion (recorded in [Matthew 17:1-9](#); [Mark 9:2-9](#); [Luke 9:28-36](#)) on which Christ, as He was beginning to teach His disciples that He must die and rise again, revealed Himself in shining splendor to Peter, James, and John. Moses and Elijah were present, and are taken to signify that the Law and the Prophets testify that Jesus is the promised Messiah. God the Father also proclaimed him as such, saying, "This is my Beloved Son. Listen to him." For a moment the veil is drawn aside, and men still on earth are permitted a glimpse of the heavenly reality, the glory of the Eternal Triune God.



In the East, the Festival of the Transfiguration has been celebrated since the late fourth century, and is one of the twelve great festivals of the East Orthodox calendar. In the West it was observed after the ninth century by some monastic orders, and in 1457 Pope Callistus III ordered its general observance. At the time of the Reformation, it was still felt in some countries to be a "recent innovation," and so was not immediately taken over into most Reformation calendars, but is now found on most calendars that have been revised in the twentieth century. A recent tendency in the West is to commemorate the Transfiguration on the Sunday just before Lent, in accordance with the pattern found in the Synoptics, where Jesus is represented as beginning to speak of his forthcoming death just about the time of the Transfiguration, so that it forms a fitting transition between the Epiphany season, in which Christ makes himself known, and the Lenten season, in which he prepares the disciples for what lies ahead. Whether observing the Transfiguration then will affect the observation of it on 6 August remains to be seen.

||| A THIRD OF US

✠ Praying for the 1/3 of our world that are still unreached with the Gospel.

Bania

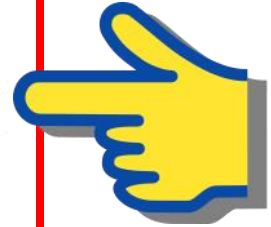
Country: India | Population: 29 million | Language: Hindi | Main Religion: Hinduism | Evangelical: Unknown

The Bania are traditionally a large trading community, and are third in hierarchy within the Hindu caste system. They are highly literate, and both boys and girls are encouraged to attain university degrees. Overall, the Bania are a wealthy and influential community who exercise control over much of the economy. Pray that God would send Christian witnesses to the Bania people. Pray that they would come to faith in Christ and serve as a blessing to their country.





Bonnie Wanzer cheerfully reports the final results of the Hopeline Baby Bottle Campaign. Thanks to the generosity of the St Paul's family we were able to send a check for \$3,250.00 to Hopeline. Thank you all for your generosity.



† Unholy Ones will Become Holy

Psalm 99

The Lord is enthroned above angelic beings, terrifying in their own right, and the mere thought of the Holy One causes people to tremble as the earth quakes. Before the Lord, who is exalted over everyone and everything, praise is not an option. You will be still and know that I am God. Kings of the human variety, with far less power and majesty, tend to magnify themselves at the expense of their subjects. Not so with the Holy God, the lover of justice, who hears the cries of those pleading for mercy and grants forgiveness. That doesn't mean forgiving wrongdoing is the end of the matter. The equity of justice is that the scales are balanced and righteousness is established when the forgiven responds to the debt forgotten with hearts of thankfulness and "go and sin no more" acts of repentance. The Holy One becomes unholy so that the unholy ones will become Holy. So while the cross is forgiveness once and for all it is also God's hope that in the shadow of the cross we will love justice as much as God does.



Phishing Scams - Don't fall for them! Please do not respond to any message from clergy or St. Paul's by email or any other method of communication that asks you to purchase something (often a gift card) or asks for a "favor." **Delete** reply, do not click links in the messages, mark them as any doubt about the veracity of a text or email, (dszen@yahoo.com) or warden George Stowell

these messages, do not Spam or Junk. If there is contact the office (mail@ihramllc.com).



† Ladies Evening Bible Study

During the summer the Wednesday evening women's Bible study is doing a new thing, which is open to everyone!
We are doing a 15-minutes-a-day Bible study on the Psalms! The challenge is to read and meditate on ONE psalm a day (15 mins.). A good routine for our spiritual health, right?
Here is a list of the psalms and the weekday reading dates:

Aug 2- 8 - Psalms 141-145
Aug 9-15 - Psalms 146-150

Set aside 15 minutes during each week day to read one psalm.

Have pen and paper ready to write your

answers to two questions

Pray: Ask God to teach you about who He is and how to apply His Word to your life.

Read the psalm for the day (You might read a short psalm several times or you might not finish a longer psalm in 15 minutes.)

Write your answers to two questions:

What does this psalm tell me about who God is (His character, His actions)?

How can I apply this psalm to my life?

Thank God for what He is doing in your life.

When the group meets on the following Wednesday at 7:00 on Zoom, we will read parts of the five psalms and share our answers to the two questions.

Those who are not doing the challenge are still welcome to join the group on Zoom.

As always, feel free to invite a friend!

Contact Carol at cmeadwheeler@hotmail.com or 203-525-0011 for the Zoom link or check the calendar on the church website.

We are considering what we should study in Sept, beginning Sept 13th.



When Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus on the mountaintop, what did they discuss?

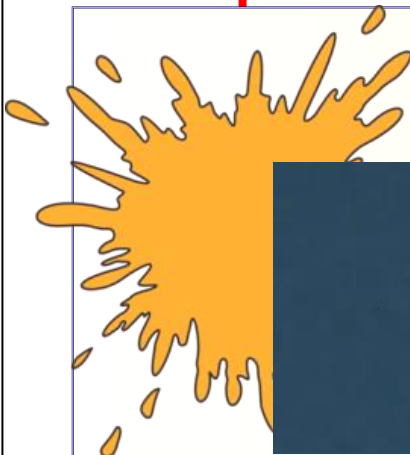
Luke 9:28-31 NIV



† Recovery & Self-Reflection Group

Every Sunday evening at 7 pm in the Guild Room, Gordy Hiltz is convening a new Recovery & Self-Reflection group. It will be a

"fellowship meeting for those who are looking to make amends with past decisions by reflecting on where we've been, are now, and would like to be. This will be accomplished using topic guided discussions, increasing self awareness for our day to day actions, with the goal of being a slightly better version of ourselves from who we were the day before each and every day."



"This is my son, my chosen, listen to him!" Jesus' teachings provide us with all the lessons we need to live faithful, honest, and productive lives - also as God's "chosen." At Baptism, the cross is sealed on our foreheads, and we are "marked as Christ's own forever." Stewardship is about how we respond to that freely given gift of grace, and how we offer thanks with grateful hearts and lives to the God who gives us all.



Name Tags - Remember how awkward you felt when you first came to St. Paul's because you didn't know anyone or when you visit a different church? Name tags help. So, please be courteous to your fellow parishioners, to newcomers, visiting clergy and guests by extending a warm welcome to them and by wearing your name tag. And remember to wear them to coffee hour as well.



† Ladies Tuesday Morning Bible Study

The Tuesday morning Ladies Bible Study is in "Summer Session" gathering to discuss the appropriate daily devotion from *My Utmost for His Highest* by Oswald Chambers. .

Zoom is available and all ladies are invited. They meet every Tuesday at 9:30 in Crocker Hall or by Zoom. Contact Mary Beth Durkin durkin.mb@gmail.com for the Zoom link and further information.



† Wednesday Service Growing in Popularity

Our mid-week Wednesday morning 10 am Holy Eucharist with healing prayer has been growing consistently. With live music and a brief homily, this service is just what you need to sustain you through the week. Come join us and check it out or watch on YouTube Live.

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Aug 6th 8 am	- Bennett's	10:30 am - Monique Gordon
Aug 13th 8 am	- Thomas's	10:30 am - Jack Collins
Aug 20th 8 am	- Roginski's	10:30 am - Heidi Duckett



**COFFEE HOUR
HOSTS NEEDED**

Contact Mary Allen at
203-775-6633 or
chamla@charter.net



✠ Mission Minute World Vision

World Vision

One of the many missions St. Paul's Parish sponsors is World Vision, a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to "helping children, families, and their communities overcome poverty and injustice." Established in 1950, World Vision currently serves more than 3.5 million children in almost 100 countries. By following Jesus's example of unconditional love for the poor and the oppressed, World Vision seeks to transform communities living in poverty by planning and working alongside local leaders in culturally sensitive ways.



Some of World Vision's commitments are: ensuring child and maternal health; improving access to quality education; protecting children against trafficking, war, violence and child labor; addressing gender inequality; providing access to clean water and nutrition and empowering farmers to grow food sustainably; and assisting those displaced by conflict, disasters and social upheaval.

If you are interested in learning more about World Vision or sponsoring a child, please go to <https://www.worldvision.org/>.
Cigdem Usekes



WHO: You! Families, friends, anyone.

WHAT: Food: Hot dogs / Burgers / Chips. If you want, bring a potluck to give us some variety.

Games: Cornhole, ladder ball, bocce, basketball, soccer, board games, etc. Bring your own games.

FRIDAY FAMILY FUN NIGHT!

WHEN: Friday night, August 11th from 6 pm til 9.

WHERE: At St. Paul's in our meadow.

WHY: Why not! It's the middle of summer. Let's get together and enjoy some food, fun and fellowship!



† Change Is Possible

by Mari-Anna Stålnacke @flowingfaith

Sometimes we are so stuck in the mud that we can't even believe any more that life could be any different. Beware! That's one of the favorite messages of our enemy. The devil wants us to believe that change is not possible, that God would not take us as we are, that everything is lost. But everything is not lost! God welcomes us just as we are! And change is possible! Not on our own. But in Christ Jesus! So let's keep on going back to God. Let's keep on dwelling in God's presence! Let's keep on being changed!

If you feel you have too many things to pray about that there is no point to even start praying because it's all too overwhelming. Think again. God hears even your groans. It's more about the attitude. Who is in charge? You or God? When we pray we refocus our attention to God we get our prayer. When we pray we are reminded of God's grace. Prayer will intensify our salvation life.

Prayer is the key for Christian living. It keeps us on the right track. We don't either go wandering off on our own or working our heads off to please God. Instead we enter into what God is doing and rest in his grace. Prayer simplifies our lives. Prayer keeps us connected to God. And in God we have everything we need. Prayer.

Whenever, though, they turn to face God as Moses did, God removes the veil and there they are - face-to-face! They suddenly recognize that God is a living, personal presence, not a piece of chiseled stone. And when God is personally present, a living Spirit, that old, constricting legislation is recognized as obsolete. We're free of it! All of us! Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him (2 Cor. 3:16-18, MSG).

It is important to note that change is powered by the Holy Spirit. Self-help does not work. But the work of Christ is everything we need! It frees us to dwell in the presence of God Almighty. When we are in Christ our lives are slowly but surely being changed into his likeness. Change, however, is not automatic.



If we wander away from Christ our change diminishes. Just like our tan fades away if we are not exposed to the sun. The same way we need to stay exposed to the light of God. Because we can't be changed without being connected to God. And we don't even stay alive without God. We only get stuck in the mud on our own. But thank God! Everything is not lost. We can always turn back to God!

The process of transfiguration in us happens by the Holy Spirit but it requires our consent. God does not force change on us. God does not force his love on us. Receiving grace is our choice. Even change is our choice. It does not happen by us but we need to want it. We need to want Christ. Even that is a gift from God.

But don't worry! God adores giving you gifts! He loves you so! Just open your heart and mind to God. Every day. Dwell in God's presence. Slowly but surely you will be becoming brighter and more beautiful as you become like him. By the grace of God you will be changed from one degree of glory to another.

Gracious God,
Thank you for welcoming us as we are.
Thank you that change is possible in you.
We open ourselves to you.
Keep changing us into your likeness.
In Jesus' name, **Amen**

Q4U: How has God changed you?

Be blessed, my fellow pilgrim, as you dwell in God and are changed into his likeness!

THE
Episcopal
CHURCH



August 6, 2023 – Transfiguration Sunday
The Feast of the Transfiguration

August 6 is the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which commemorates Jesus' unveiling as the Son of God, and his radical change of appearance while in the presence of Peter, James and John on a mountaintop.

The Gospel of Matthew records that Jesus "was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his garments became white as light." At this moment Moses and Elijah appeared, and they were talking with Jesus. Peter, misunderstanding the meaning of this manifestation, offered to make three "booths" (or "dwellings") for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. A bright cloud overshadowed them and a voice from the cloud stated, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." The disciples fell on their faces in awe, but Jesus encouraged them to arise and "have no fear." When the disciples looked up, they saw only Jesus (Matthew 17:1-8).



The Transfiguration is also mentioned in two other gospel accounts (Mark 9:2-8 and Luke 9:28-36) and is referred to in the Second Letter of Peter, which records that "we were eyewitnesses of his majesty" and "we were with him on the holy mountain" (2 Peter 1:16-18).

The Transfiguration is a pivotal moment because it revealed Christ's glory prior to the crucifixion, and it anticipated his resurrection and ascension. It also prefigures the glorification of human nature in Christ. Some think that the setting on the mountain is significant because it becomes the point where human nature meets God, with Jesus acting as a point of connection between heaven and earth.

Celebration of the Transfiguration began in the eastern church in the late fourth century. The feast is celebrated on August 6, which is the date of the dedication of the first church built on Mount Tabor, which is traditionally considered to be the "high mountain" of the Transfiguration. There are scholars, however, who believe the Transfiguration occurred either on Mount Hermon, which borders Syria and Lebanon, or on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

Collect for the Transfiguration

O God, who on the holy mount revealed to chosen witnesses your well-beloved Son, wonderfully transfigured, in raiment white and glistening: Mercifully grant that we, being delivered from the disquietude of this world, may by faith behold the King in his beauty; who with you, O Father, and you, O Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen (Book of Common Prayer, p. 243).



SUNDAY SCHOOL classes will resume in September.

"GOOD NEWS: Thanks to a volunteer, there will be nursery care for children age 4 and under for Sundays August 13, 20, and 27. The caregiver will bring children to their parent or guardian before the start of Communion. Questions: Ask



BROTHERS MCCLURG w/ GUEST PATRICK O'CONNORS

September 15, 2023 | 7:30 P.M.

\$15 tickets adv. | \$20 at door

www.communitycoffeehouse.org



Community Coffeehouse | 7 Madison Ave. | Danbury, CT 06810 | (203) 748-4972



Griffin Barbieri celebrates tomorrow.
 Perry Simone opens presents on
 Saturday. Bake a cake for **Kate**
Yurcisin on Sunday. **Bishop Laura**
Ahrens blows out candles on Wednesday.
 Have a blessed day everyone!

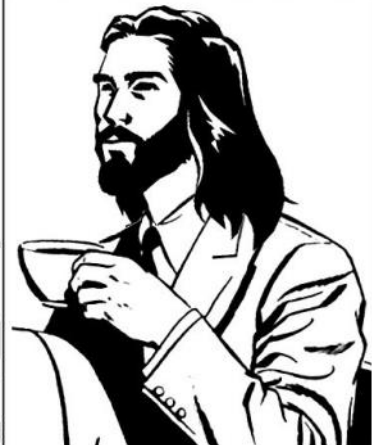
RFB 

Presents

COFFEE WITH JESUS



I'm being punished, aren't I, Jesus? These recent setbacks are your way of saying I haven't been living right.

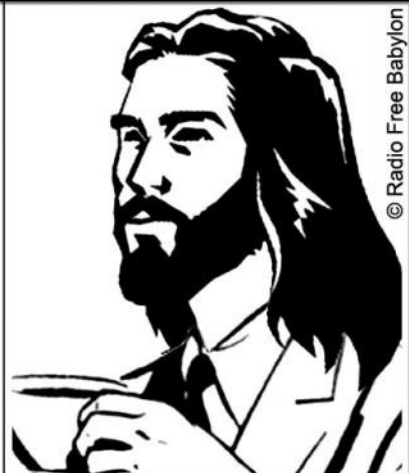


If you think I'm punishing you for sin, Carl, you're not real clear on what I did on that cross, are you?

Punishing



Then why are things like they are for me right now, Jesus?



We go through things; we grow through things, Carl.

Now quit punishing yourself.

© Radio Free Babylon

† This Sunday's Readings

(Click on the red links for the readings)

Appearance in Glory

Exodus 34:29-35

In our first reading we hear how Moses' face shone after he had spoken with the Lord. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai after again receiving the ten commandments, the people were afraid to approach him because of the radiance of his face. Whenever he talked with the people, he had to wear a veil.

Psalms 99

The holy and mighty Lord reigns on high. God spoke to Israel's leaders from a pillar of cloud and has forgiven them their misdeeds.

2 Peter 1:13-21

This lesson presents the apostle Peter as he recalls his vision of Jesus in majesty on the holy mountain and the heavenly voice that announced this was God's beloved Son. Peter was among those who were eyewitnesses to this revelation. It makes more sure the prophetic message that is like a lamp for us. But no one should make this prophecy a matter solely of their own interpretation, for it has come through the Holy Spirit.

Luke 9:28-36

Our gospel is the story of Jesus' transfiguration. The narrative is richly woven with themes and symbols drawn from Israel's past and its hopes for the future. Moses and Elijah represent the law and the prophets whose promises Jesus fulfills. While Jesus is praying, divine glory is reflected in his human person. The chosen disciples hear a voice from the cloud declaring that this is God's beloved Son.

Luke 9:28-36

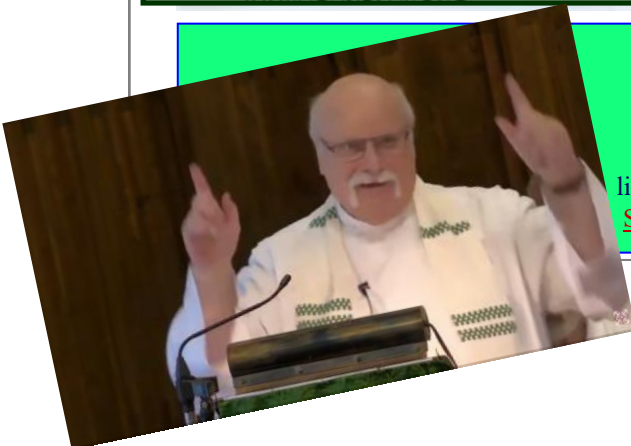
There are times in our lives when we are witnesses to the glory of God, when we see the brilliant light of Christ in our presence. When we offer stories of those times, or indeed when we are that light for each other, then we are 'as to a lamp shining in a dark place' lighting the way for each other until 'the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts.'

May we be blessed by these moments, held in faith and encouraged by each other and the presence of Christ in our midst.



† Sermon Shorts

Getting More that We Can Handle. To replay all our sermons, audio and videos follow this link for the [Sunday Sermons](#). Check out our [Sermon Archives](#) as well.



† Your Prayers Are Requested For...

It is such an intimate time when praying for the health and well being of others and such a privilege. With our eyes fixed on Christ, the beloved Son who intercedes for us, with confident faith before the throne of God we pray for:

.....**Joe Hock, Harlan Jessup, Jan Brochu, Ed Licence** and other parishioners convalescing in extended care facilities.

.....St. Paul's, Shelton; St. Alban's, Simsbury; St. Peter's, South Windsor.

.....Revival at St. Paul's and the greater Danbury area.

.....Liturgical assistants serving in parishes: lectors, lay readers, Eucharistic ministers, Eucharistic visitors, lay evangelists, and vergers.

.....**Clayton Ferry, Barbara Hock, Jim Megura, Peter Scalzo, Jr., Gail, Doris, Karen, Beverly Hall, Robert, Eve, Roger, Barbara, Fred, Cynthia, Arlene, David Williams, Heidi Pinheiro, Donna, Denny, Dale Mitchell, Larry Wanzer, Joe, Ruth, Jayne, Ken, Mark Baird, and Presiding Bishop Michael Curry** continued healing.

.....the people of [Ukraine](#); the people of the [Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal](#); the people of the [Kingdom of Cambodia](#); the bishop, clergy and laity of the Diocese of Washington - The Episcopal Church (III (3) Province); and our sister and brother members of the [Abkhazian Orthodox Church](#).

.....That those whose lives are overshadowed by poverty, homelessness, physical pain or anguish of spirit may know the healing touch of Christ and the transfiguring power of his resurrection.

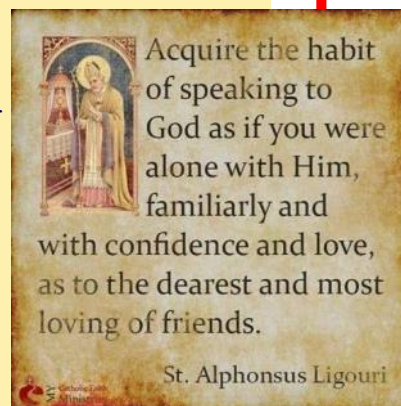
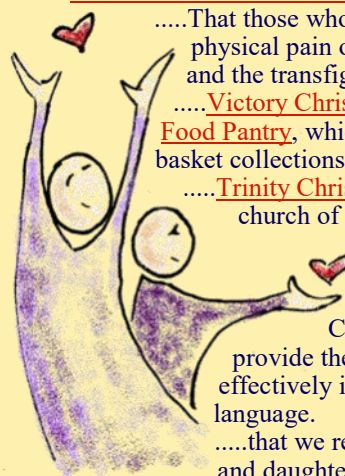
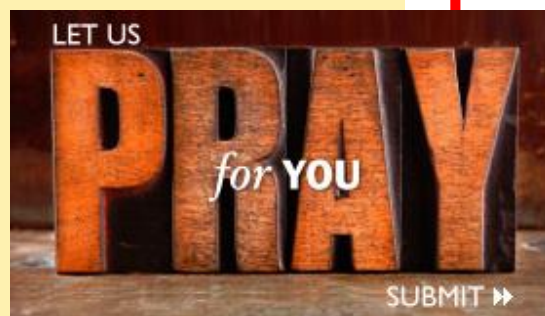
.....[Victory Christian Center](#), Danbury and their [Food Pantry](#), which is the recipient of our food basket collections for the month of August.

.....[Trinity Christian Tabernacle](#), Danbury, a partner church of the Jericho Partnership.

.....Our missionaries, Will & Becky McLaughlin and their family, and their ministry in Cambodia; the the Holy Spirit will provide them with words that communicate effectively in the Cambodian culture and language.

.....that we recognize that we are beloved sons and daughters of God and to listen for his voice every day.

.....The one third of humanity that does not have access to the gospel, for zealous preachers of the word, that by the Holy Spirit, they open the ears of their hearers to the good news of salvation and their eyes to the loveliness of God's wisdom.



The Hospital Window

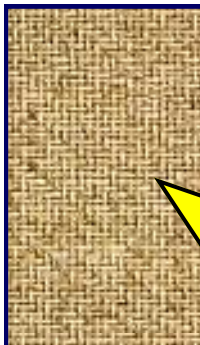


What do you see outside the window?



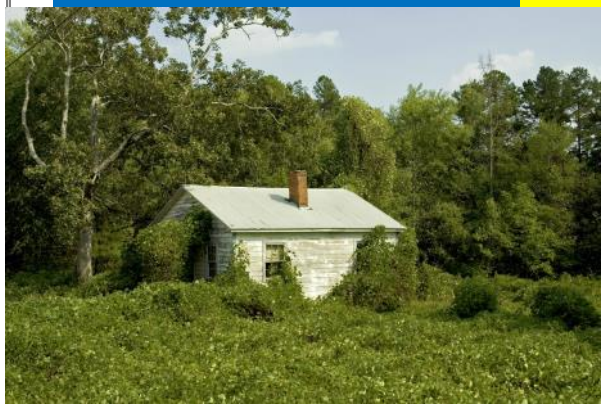
Just For the Joy of It!

(And Christian Fellowship)



Random Fact of the Week!

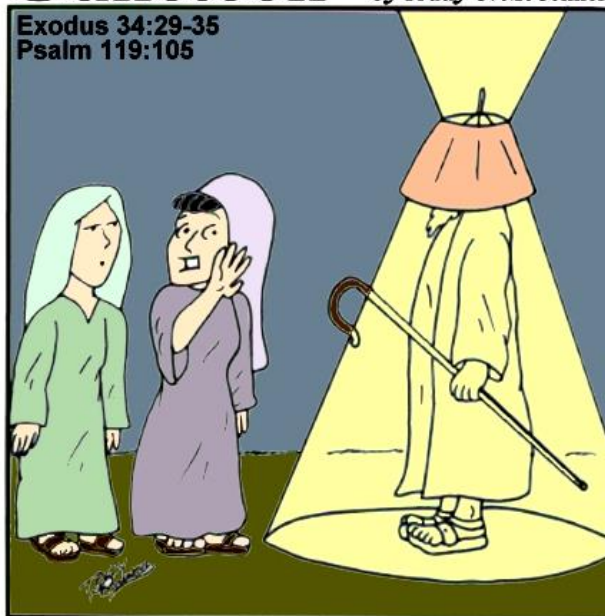
Did you know ... that Kudzu has been called the Vine that Ate the South; it's name is actually a typo; and smells like Kool-Aid?



Bulletoon

by Trudy O. McConnell

Exodus 34:29-35
Psalm 119:105



"We finally found a useful way to handle Moses' 'shining face' situation..."

Ecclesiasticus 43:27 - We could say more but could never say enough; let the final word be: 'He is the all.' - 30 -

† **It Takes An Editorial Board**
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