



Opening Sentences: The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Opening hymn 59 STF Lord, the light of your love is shining (*Graham Kendrick*)

<https://youtu.be/op17raOTXbk>

Lord, the light of your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us;
Set us free by the truth you now bring us,
Shine on me, shine on me.

*Shine, Jesus, shine,
Fill this land with the Father's glory;
Blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth your word,
Lord, and let there be light!*

Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
From the shadows into your radiance;
By your blood I may enter your brightness,
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me. ...

As we gaze on your kingly brightness
So our faces display your likeness.
Ever changing from glory to glory,
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me, shine on me. ...

Prayer: God of Moses and Elijah, Father of Jesus Christ our Lord, we recall that awesome moment on the mount when Peter, James, and John heard your voice and saw the touch of glory on your Son. May we by faith behold his majesty and give him the obedience and reverence which are his due; and to him name be dominion and power, now and for evermore. **Amen.**

Prayer of Confession: When Christ appears we shall be like him because we shall see him as he is, so, let us confess our sins that mar his image in us: Your unfailing kindness, O Lord, is in the heavens, and your faithfulness reaches to the clouds: Lord, have mercy, **Lord, have mercy.** Your righteousness is like the strong mountains, and your justice as the great deep: Christ, have mercy, **Christ, have mercy.** For with you is the well of life, and in your light, we shall see true light: Lord, have mercy, **Lord, have mercy.** May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Collect for today: Lord God, whose glory shines upon us in the face of Jesus Christ, and whose nature is made known to us in the mystery of the cross: number us we pray among his faithful followers for whom nothing matters but the doing of your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn 372 STF Come Down, O love divine *Bianco da Siena (d. 1434) adapted by Richard F Littledale (1833 - 1890)*

<https://youtu.be/edK3Vv7Qwo4>

Come down, O Love divine!
seek out this soul of mine
and visit it with your own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
within my heart appear,
and kindle it, your holy flame bestowing.

There let it freely burn
till earthly passions turn
to dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
and let your glorious light
shine ever on my sight,
and make my pathway clear, by your illuming.

Let holy charity
my outward vesture be,
and lowliness become my inner clothing;
true lowliness of heart
which takes the humbler part,
and for its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

And so the yearning strong
with which the soul will long
shall far surpass the power of human telling;
for none can guess its grace
till we become the place
in which the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

Scripture: Exodus 34:29- 35 and Luke 9:26- 38

The Sermon *Transfiguration Sunday*

There is nothing quite like the majesty of hills, mountains, and mountains. They fill us with awe and delight. It's no wonder that hills and mountains feature so significantly in the pages of scripture. In Psalm 121 the Hebrew poet declares, *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth.*

It was to the mountain top that Moses was summoned by God. Moses, the great liberator of the Hebrew people from their slavery in Egypt. There on the mountain to inscribe the laws by which the people would be governed. And the writer of Exodus tells us that when he returned from God's presence his face was radiant!

And after the prophet Elijah's great victory over the priests of the idol Baal in which he restores their faith in God, he finds himself on the Mountain side and in the presence of God through the still small voice of calm that comes to him.

Matthew describes Jesus' great teaching as the sermon on the mount for he is the new law giver though his law of love, grace and redemption is altogether different from the laws of old.

Our reading today, as we stand on the cusp of the season of Lent, takes us to that awesome mountain moment of the Lord's radiance shining and eclipsing even the presence of both Moses and Elijah. Indeed, in the life of the church, today is known as Transfiguration Sunday. Not only does it come before Lent in the liturgical calendar but in the narrative of the Gospel it comes just before Jesus sets "his face to go to Jerusalem" for that terrible final confrontation with the Roman and Jewish leaderships.

One of the things which so many of us have been deprived of during these days of pandemic is the tender touch of another. Either physically or in speech. When life becomes tough and hard and we are hurting, maybe even feeling lost, what a difference it can make to have those uplifting expressions of affirmation. And here in the transfiguration that affirmation is there in abundance. And so, it needs to be. For Jesus is facing his greatest challenge,

Moses delivered God's people and Elijah restored their faith in Yahweh. Here they are with Jesus. His destiny is to liberate and restore. And it's a moment of divine historic support as he faces the greatest terrifying test and conquering all that has ever defeated humankind.

But there's more. Peter and James and John had gone up to the mountain to accompany Jesus. And just as the Patriarch and the Prophet were taking their leave they heard a voice, God's declaration, "This is my Son, my Chosen; Listen to him." Once again, God's affirming voice speaks forth, and this time enjoins the disciple to listen!

For assuredly, just as Jesus came down from that mountain to face the challenges, so, you and I too face challenges in our lives. In all the challenges that come our way, may we seek to be receptive to the sustaining voice of God.

And may you know the constant embracing presence of the transfigured, crucified and risen Jesus, the enfolding affirming love of God and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you for being with me today and God bless you.

Hymn 776 STF In the Lord I'll be ever thankful (repeated) *Taizé Community*

<https://youtu.be/uAx8gjQrsOY>

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful,
in the Lord I'll rejoice.
Look to God, do not be afraid;

lift up your voices, the Lord is near;
lift up your voices the Lord is near.

Prayers of Intercession: We remember creation, breathed into life by God's Holy Spirit: places of beauty and brilliance, places of grandeur and spectacle, places of extravagant diversity. We pray, creating God, for places damaged and degraded, for people scraping a living from land made fruitless by human greed. *Silence.* Help us to live sparingly and to care for creation. Gracious God: **Hear our prayer.**

We remember humanity, breathed into life by God's Holy Spirit: people of beauty and brilliance, people of gifts and grace, people of extravagant diversity. We pray, healing God, for people whose lives are diminished because they

live with their own or another's mental illness; for people facing the stigma caused by misunderstanding about mental illness; for people struggling to find help when they need it. *Silence*. Help us to be welcoming, helpful and more aware of those things that make for mental well being for others and ourselves. Gracious God: **Hear our prayer.**

We remember the Church, breathed into life by God's Holy Spirit: a community of beauty and brilliance, a community of love and compassion, a community of extravagant diversity. We pray, inspiring God, for denominations working out how to be one family, offering an effective witness to your love in the world; for churches with projects that offer help to people struggling with mental illness; for ourselves and people in our own families and community who need to be understood, accepted and loved. *Silence*.

Help us to be willing to change ourselves and inspired to change the world. Gracious God: **Hear our prayer.**

In the name of Christ. **Amen. Our Father ...**

Hymn 15 STF The Splendour of the King

Chris Tomlin

<https://youtu.be/KBD18rsVJHk>

The splendor of the King,
clothed in majesty;
let all the earth rejoice,
let all the earth rejoice.
He wraps himself in light
and darkness tries to hide,
and trembles at his voice,
and trembles at his voice.

*How great is our God, sing with me,
how great is our God, and all will see
how great, how great is our God.*

And age to age he stands,
and time is in his hands;

beginning and the end,
beginning and the end.
The Godhead, Three in One,
Father, Spirit, Son,
the Lion and the Lamb,
the Lion and the Lamb.

Name above all names,
worthy of all praise;
my heart will sing:
how great is our God.
Name above all names,
worthy of all praise;
my heart will sing:
how great is our God.

The Blessing: Christ, whose glory fills the skies, fill you with radiance and scatter the darkness from your path. Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, gladden your eyes and warm your heart. Christ, the Dayspring from on high, draw near to guide your feet into the way of peace. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**