



THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF WANGARATTA

Wangaratta West and The Warbys

THE LAST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

**TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY**

11.00am Ante Communion

2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

*The Acclamation*

By the appearance on earth of our Saviour Jesus Christ  
**God has broken the power of death  
and brought life and immortality to light.**

Arise, shine, for your light has come  
**and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.**

For though darkness shall cover the earth  
**and thick darkness the nations,**

the Lord will rise upon you  
**and his glory will be seen upon you.**

By the appearance on earth of our Saviour Jesus Christ  
**God has broken the power of death  
and brought life and immortality to light.**

Hymn: tune, St. George's Windsor [AHB 290]

1. **Sing of God made manifest  
in a child robust and blest,  
to whose home in Bethlehem  
where a star had guided them,  
magi came and gifts unbound,  
signs mysterious and profound:  
myrrh and frankincense and gold  
grave and God and King foretold.**
2. **Sing of God made manifest  
when at Jordan John confessed,  
"I should be baptized by you,  
but your bidding I will do."**

**Then from heaven a double sign--  
dove-like Spirit, voice divine--  
hailed the true Anointed One:  
"This is my beloved Son."**

- 3. Sing of God made manifest  
when Christ came as wedding guest  
and at Cana gave a sign,  
turning water into wine;  
further still was love revealed  
as he taught, forgave, and healed,  
bringing light and life to all  
who would listen to God's call.**
- 4. Sing of God made manifest  
on the cloud-capped mountain's crest,  
where both voice and vision waned  
until Christ alone remained:  
glimpse of glory, pledge of grace,  
given as Jesus set his face  
towards the waiting cross and grave,  
sign of hope that God would save.**

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Let us pray.

**Father of glory, holy and eternal,  
look upon us now in power and mercy.  
May your strength overcome our weakness,  
your radiance transform our blindness,  
and your Spirit draw us to that love  
shown and offered to us by your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

When Christ appears we shall be like him,  
because we shall see him as he is.  
As he is pure,  
all who have grasped this hope make themselves pure.

So let us confess our sins that mar his image in us.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
we have sinned against you  
in thought, and word, and deed,  
and in what we have failed to do.  
Have mercy on us,  
forgive us all that is past,  
and grant that we may serve you  
and live a new life to your glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*The minister reads this sentence of Scripture*

If anyone sins,  
we have an advocate with the Father,  
Jesus Christ the righteous.  
He is the perfect offering for our sins,  
and not for ours only,  
but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 2.1–2

*All stand. The minister says*

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.  
**His steadfast love endures for ever!**

*The minister greets the people, who may greet one another.*

Grace and peace be with you  
**and also with you.**

*The Hymn of Praise, Gloria in excelsis is said or sung*

**Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to God's people on earth.  
Lord God, heav'nly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

*The Collect is said or sung by the priest*

O God, glorious and faithful,  
you reveal the beauty of your face  
to those who seek you with a sincere heart:  
strengthen us in faith to embrace the mystery of the cross,  
and open our hearts to its transforming power,  
so that, clinging in love to your will for us,  
we may walk as followers of your Son,  
Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

### **A Reading from the Book 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.

Hear the word of the Lord.,  
**thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm 99**

**The Lord is king: let the nations tremble;  
he is enthroned above the cherubim;  
let the earth quake.**

**The Lord is great in Zion:  
he is high above all peoples.**

**Let them praise your great and terrible name:  
for holy is the Lord.**

**The Mighty One is king and loves justice:  
you have established equity,  
you have dealt righteousness and justice in Jacob.**

**O Exalt the Lord our God;  
and bow down before his footstool, for he is holy.**

**Moses and Aaron among his priests  
and Samuel among those who call upon his name;  
they called to the Lord and he answered.**

**He spoke to them from the pillar of cloud;  
they kept to his teachings  
and the law that he gave them.**

**You answered them, O Lord our God;  
you were a forgiving God to them  
and pardoned their wrong doing.**

**O Exalt the Lord our God:  
and bow down towards his holy hill  
for the Lord our God is holy.**

## **A Reading from Second Corinthians [3. 12—4. 2]**

Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside. But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.

Therefore, since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practise cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God.

Hear the word of the Lord,  
**thanks be to God.**

Gradual Hymn: TiS 234. Tune, Carlisle.

1. **How good, Lord, to be here!  
your glory fills the night;  
your face and garments, like the sun,  
shine with unborrowed light.**
2. **How good, Lord, to be here,  
your beauty to behold,  
where Moses and Elijah stand,  
your messengers of old.**
3. **Fulfiller of the past,  
promise of things to be:  
we hail your body glorified,  
and our redemption see.**
4. **Before we taste of death,  
we see your Kingdom come;  
we still would hold the vision bright,  
and make this hill our home.**
5. **How good, Lord, to be here!  
yet we may not remain;  
but since you bid us leave the mount,  
come with us to the plain.**

Joseph Armitage Robinson 1858–1933 alt.

Words: Joseph Robinson

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The Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke [9. 28-36]

## **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ**

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah'—not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!' When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

For the Gospel of the Lord.

## **PRAISE TO YOU LORD JESUS CHRIST**

Let us together affirm the faith of the Church:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

*A time for reflection*

**Offertory Hymn: TiS 143. Tune, St Denio.**

- 1. Immortal, invisible, God only wise,  
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,  
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.**
- 2. Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,  
nor wanting, nor wasting, but ruling in might;  
your justice like mountains high soaring above,  
your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**
- 3. You give life to all, Lord, to both great and small,  
in all life now living, the true life of all;  
we blossom and flourish as leaves on a tree,  
then wither: but ever unchanged you will be.**
- 4. Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,  
your angels adore you, all veiling their sight;  
of all your rich graces this grace, Lord, impart —  
take the veil from our faces, the veil from our heart.**
- 5. All praise we would render: reveal to our sight  
what hides you is only the splendour of light;  
and so let your glory, Almighty, impart,  
through Christ in the story, your Christ to the heart.**

Walter Chalmers Smith 1824–1908 alt.



Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.  
Through your goodness we have these gifts to share.  
Accept and use our offerings for your glory  
and for the service of your kingdom.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

## THE MINISTRY OF PRAYER

Let us pray for the world and for the Church.

Lord, we pray that the glory of your presence may fill our lives  
and be reflected in all that we do.

We ask that our churches may be radiant with your glory,  
that the gospel is not veiled from sight  
but revealed in our actions and witness.

We pray for all ministers of the word and the sacraments,  
that they will reveal to us the face of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
We remember especially all who are suffering for their faith.

Lord, let your glory be about us  
**and fill our hearts and minds.**

We give thanks for all who add beauty and glory to our world.  
We pray for artists, writers, musicians and craftspeople;  
for gardeners, architects, planners  
and for all who influence our daily life.

We pray for all who live in desolate areas and places of  
deprivation.

Lord, let your glory be about us  
**and fill our hearts and minds.**

We give thanks for all who have enriched our lives and improved  
our environment.

We pray for those who work to meet our daily needs.  
We ask your blessing upon our homes and places of work,  
upon our friends and our loved ones.

Lord, let your glory be about us  
**and fill our hearts and minds.**

We pray for all who are finding life dull or drab,  
for all who are getting no joy or satisfaction out of their life.  
We remember the stressed and the distressed,  
the over-worked and the over-anxious.

We pray also for all who suffer from defective hearing or vision, especially any who are losing the use of their faculties. We ask for comfort and strength for all who are ill, especially . . . .

Lord, let your glory be about us  
**and fill our hearts and minds.**

Lord, we pray that we may be changed from glory to glory. We pray for all who now see you face to face, all who rejoice in the glory of your nearer presence.

We pray especially for . . . .

Lord, let your glory be about us  
**and fill our hearts and minds.**

Accept our prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray.

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## THE SENDING OUT OF GOD'S PEOPLE

*Notices may be given at this point.*

Hymn: TiS 243 [tune, St Albinus—AHB 294]

- 1. Christ upon the mountain peak  
stands alone in glory blazing;  
let us, if we dare to speak,  
with the saints and angels praise him —  
Alleluia!**

2. Trembling at his feet we saw  
Moses and Elijah speaking:  
all the Prophets and the Law  
shout through them their joyful greeting —  
Alleluia!
3. Swift the cloud of glory came,  
God proclaiming in its thunder  
Jesus as his Son by name!  
Nations, cry aloud in wonder —  
Alleluia!
4. This is God's beloved Son;  
Law and Prophets sing before him,  
First and Last, and only One:  
let creation now adore him —  
Alleluia!

Brian Arthur Wren 1936–  
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*Concluding prayer*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
**send us out with confidence in your word  
to tell the world of your saving acts,  
and bring glory to your name. Amen.**

*The minister says*

May the Lord bless us and keep us;  
May the Lord make his face to shine upon us,  
and be gracious to us.  
May the Lord lift up his countenance upon us,  
and give us peace. **Amen.**

*Dismissal*

Let us go in peace.

**We go into the world to walk in God's light,  
to rejoice in God's love  
and to reflect God's glory. Amen.**

## The Sunday Next Before Lent

*Exodus 34:29–end. 2 Corinthians 3:12–4:2*

*Luke 9:28–43*

The intriguing thing about Moses coming down the mountain with his face shining was that *he didn't know*. He had simply been talking with God; it was only when Aaron and the others met him that he realized, from their reaction, that he had been transformed. He was shining unwittingly with God's glory, and the terrified Israelites requested that he wear a veil.

The story became popular in later Jewish legend, and, with a bizarre misunderstanding, in medieval art: the Hebrew word for 'shining' was mistranslated as 'horned', and several artists painted small horns on Moses' forehead, giving him, to our later eyes, a decidedly sinister appearance. The story in Exodus is itself already somewhat comic, with Moses putting on and taking off his veil by rotation.

In 2 Corinthians 3, Paul seems to assume that Moses wore the veil when speaking the law to the people; he also suggests that the real veil lay, not on Moses' face, but on his hearers' hearts (not 'minds' as in NRSV). His talk about reflecting God's glory is exciting, but the argument is dense and difficult. The key is to realize that Paul is drawing a contrast, not between himself and Moses, but between Moses' hearers and his own. Moses failed to 'get through' because the Israelites' hearts remained hardened against the glorious revelation; but the Spirit of Christ has written God's new covenant on the hearts of believers (3:3–6), giving them 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ' (4:6). As a result, when Paul addresses a group of Christians, he does so with boldness and freedom, because the glory of the gospel, which he is revealing to them, is also shining back at him from his hearers. When they look at one another, they are all gazing, as in a mirror, at the glory of the Lord.

Like Moses, the Corinthians are unaware that they are glory-bearers. They are therefore puzzled, maybe even offended, at Paul's direct and challenging style. Why doesn't he dress up his message with more flowery rhetoric? Answer: when you face a congregation of new covenant

people, you can tell it like it is. 'By the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God.' Christians must learn to see, by faith, the glory of God shining in one another.

Here, then, is part at least of the meaning of the Transfiguration. This time, the God whom Moses met on the mountain was the incarnate one, on his way to accomplish the new Exodus (Luke 9:31). This time, the glory was to be put into action in challenging the forces of sickness and darkness. This time, the word goes out to all people: 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him.' The hearts, lives and perhaps even the faces of those who hear and obey will be transformed, whether they realize it or not.

Wright, N. T. (2000). *Twelve Months of Sundays: Reflections on Bible Readings, Year C* (pp. 36–37). Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

### **Why does the celebration of the Transfiguration take place just before Lent in churches that follow The Revised Common Lectionary?**

The collect for the Transfiguration in the 1928 Book of Common Prayer gives us the clue.

O God, who before the passion of thine only-begotten Son didst reveal his glory upon the holy mountain: Grant unto us thy servants, that in faith beholding the light of his countenance, we may be strengthened to bear the cross, and be changed into his likeness from glory to glory; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We celebrate the revelation of Christ's glory "before the passion" so that we may "be strengthened to bear our cross and be changed into his likeness." The focus of the Lenten season is renewed discipline in walking in the way of the cross and rediscovery of the baptismal renunciation of evil and sin and our daily adherence to Christ.

At Easter, which reveals the fullness of Christ's glory (foreshadowed in the Transfiguration), Christians give themselves anew to the gospel in the Easter Ceremonies where they share the dying and rising of Christ.

In the biblical context, the synoptic gospels narrate the Transfiguration as a bridge between Jesus' public ministry and his passion. From the time of the Transfiguration, Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem and the cross.

*This "Question and Answer" was prepared by Daniel Benedict (dbenedict@gbod.org),  
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## The Sunday Next Before Lent

Exodus 34:29–35

2 Corinthians 3:12–4:2

Luke 9:28–36

Today's lectionary readings give us the rare chance to see one biblical author doing a thorough exegesis of another. In the passage from 2 Corinthians, Paul is referring directly to today's reading from Exodus. But his take on the story is eccentric in the extreme. In Exodus, there is no suggestion that the people of Israel are to be blamed for the veiling of Moses' face. It is natural that the after-effect of an encounter with God should be so dazzling. But Paul implies that the veil is a sign of the Israelites' determination not to see what is offered to them. He suggests that they deliberately choose to put a barrier between God and themselves, and that that barrier remains until Jesus removes it.

Paul does not choose to dwell on the figure of Moses, which has a certain poignancy in the Exodus account. As a result of his meeting with God, Moses is able to give his people the law, which shows them the nature of God, and how to be his people. But Moses also pays a price. He can now be himself only in God's presence. With everyone else, he must be veiled. Gift and cost go together.

Instead, Paul wants to home in on other images of 'veiling'. In particular, he is exhorting his readers not to copy the Israelites by choosing to 'veil' things. Christians, he urges, have had the veil removed by the Lord, the Spirit, and must now learn to live and speak openly. Subterfuge and deceit are 'veiled' things. Christians live with the open truth. Is it too much to believe that Paul also has in mind the veil of the temple, torn in two at the crucifixion? If he has, then he is interpreting the Exodus story in a way that has at least some things in common with today's reading from Luke.

Luke is reflecting on the same passage from Exodus, but he is not interested in the concept of veiling, except insofar as the meaning of the event is veiled to the disciples until later. Instead, Luke concentrates on the 'transfiguration'—the dazzling sign of an encounter with God. But his account is also a dense and evocative study of the connection between Jesus' transfiguration and his death.

Like a number of other vital occurrences in Luke's account, the transfiguration happens after prayer. You might like to compare this section with the choosing of the disciples in Luke 6:12ff., and notice that they both happen on the mountain.

Luke's use of the Exodus passage is less direct than Paul's, though the allusion is unmistakable. But although we are meant to recognize the parallel in the transfigured faces of Moses and Jesus, Moses is actually here with Elijah as representative figures—the great lawgiver and the great prophet, symbols of God's covenant relationship with his people.

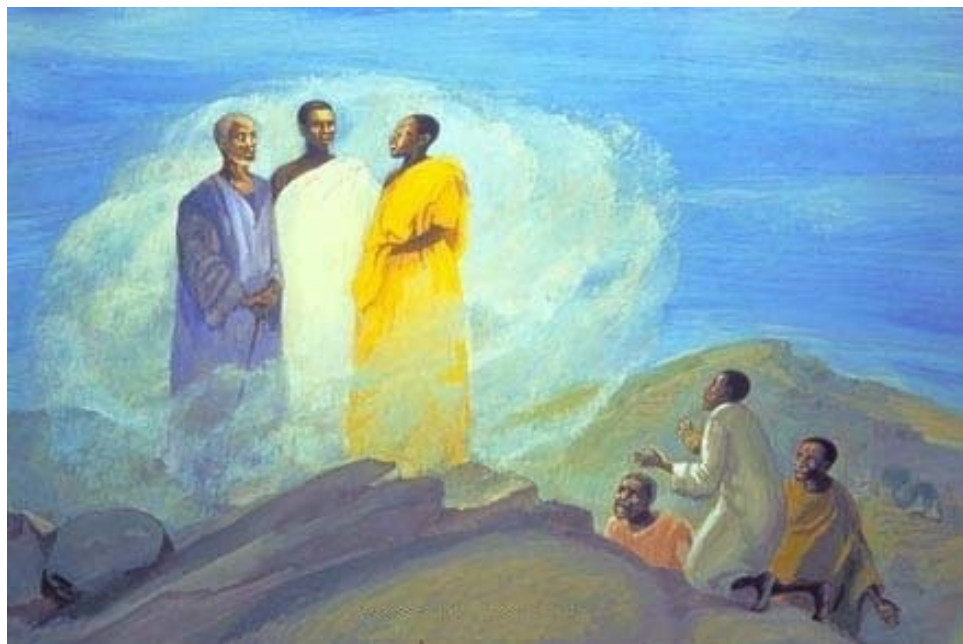
The transfiguration comes at a pivotal moment in Jesus' mission. Moses and Elijah talk to Jesus about his 'departure' (the word is exodus, of course). This might mean nothing more than that he is soon to leave for Jerusalem, but if you put the word together with the fact that the disciples are wrestling with sleep, just as they will in Gethsemane, you see where Luke is pointing us.

Peter, James and John have no idea how to interpret what they have seen but again, Luke gives us, the readers, the clues. The voice from the terrifying cloud echoes the words that were heard at Jesus' baptism. Just as his baptism is a confirmation of his ministry, so his transfiguration is a confirmation of the next, terrible stage of the journey. After this, Jesus begins to try to prepare himself and his followers for what will happen in Jerusalem. But the words spoken by God—words of acceptance, reassurance and commissioning—are also echoed in the jeering words of the crowd at the cross. 'Let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one', Luke writes in 23:35, for it is exactly this certainty of who Jesus is in God's eyes that seems called into question by his death on the cross.

Luke tells us that Peter, James and John did not understand, 'in those days' (9:36), what had happened on the mountain of transfiguration, but he implies that they had been given a key that they would learn to use after Jesus' death and resurrection. They will have the guide to help them see that to be the chosen One of God, the One who fulfils the law and the prophets, is not incompatible with death on the cross.

Williams, J. (2003). *Lectinary Reflections: Year C* (pp. 40–41). SPCK.





JESUS MAFA.

**Transfiguration, from Art in the Christian Tradition,**

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