

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

February 14, 2021 Transfiguration Sunday
“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship

God is our light, our salvation, and our hope.

God’s light beckons us to worship in Spirit and in truth.

Lift up your head and see the bright light of love.

We look up, seeking the face of God our Creator.

Stand firm and trust this promise:

God is with us, now and forevermore.

Opening Prayer Holy and awesome God, we come to worship you in anticipation and hope for the way your presence brings us joy. Even as you demonstrated your power at the transfiguration, we pray that you would surprise us in your power today. Move us, as we worship you, toward a larger vision of your work in the world. Bless us in this time of worship and evermore. Amen.

Scripture Reading “*As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you.*” Read 2 Kings 2.1-12

Prayer of Confession For the times we choose the veil of darkness over your gospel light, for the times we choose to proclaim our selves instead of proclaiming Jesus Christ, for the times we choose mindless action over heartfelt devotion, and for the times we choose the bonds of fear over the freedom of your grace, forgive us, we pray, O God. Amen.

Time of Silent Confession *Our loving God invites us to share the confessions of our hearts.*

Words of Assurance God said, “Let light shine out of darkness.” This same God shines in our hearts to give us the light we

see in the face of Jesus Christ. We leave the darkness behind, and accept God’s invitation to live in the light. Thanks be to God.

Scripture Reading “*For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord...*” Read 2 Corinthians 4.3-6

Remembering our Joys and Concerns in Prayer *We come to worship with many concerns upon our hearts but also joys in our lives. You are invited to share them with God in this time of silence.*

Prayers of the People (insert) **and The Lord’s Prayer**

Scripture Reading “*And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white...*” Read Mark 9.2-9

Meditation Having both been born in the mid and late Fifties, Verne (1957) and I (1959) enjoy reminiscing with one another about our childhood days in the Sixties. We recognize first and foremost how blessed were our middle class lives in two-parent homes in Winthrop and South Portland, respectively. As we share our experiences, we rejoice in those days with their countless hours spent outside, riding bikes and playing with friends or, if inside, enjoying the television shows of our childhoods: *Andy Griffith, Gilligan’s Island, and The Dick Van Dyke Show* in addition to the great books we read – Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys among them. Of course, these were stressful days nationally with the ongoing war in Vietnam but, in our quiet Maine lives, we were sheltered from most of that. Do we wish we could go back and re-live that innocence? Oh, yes! Physically, of course, we cannot but those conversations of childhood days bring much enjoyment to the present lives with which we are now blessed. Recognizing those blessings is vital to being the grateful people of God for all of us.

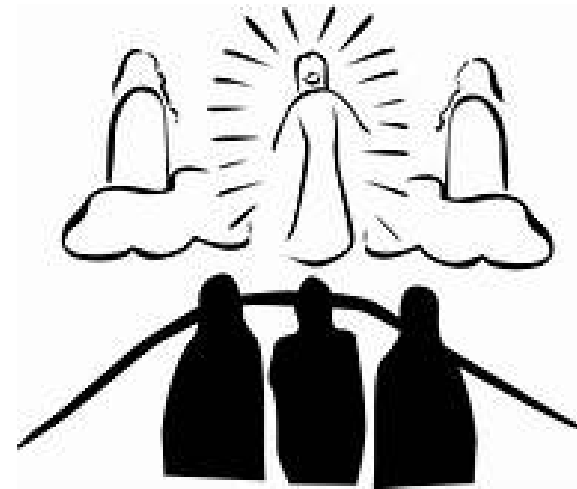
In our story of Elijah and Elisha in the Second Book of Kings for this week, we read of Elisha’s reluctance to let go of former

days. The prophets keep reminding him that God was about to take Elijah, the greatest prophet who appears on the mountaintop experience of today's gospel reading, away from him. "Keep silent," Elisha implores them, at the same time telling Elijah that he will stay with him. Of course, Elisha didn't want this time to come to an end; he wanted to remain with Elijah forever. But as we all know, life is not meant to be stagnant but, rather, to continually be moving on to new experiences that help us grow into mature disciples of Christ.

Knowing that Elisha was having a hard time letting go, Elijah graciously asks what he can do for him before he is taken away. "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit," was Elisha's desire. Elijah wasn't sure if that could happen but I hope he recognized it for the compliment that it was. Elisha's life was changed, it was different because of Elijah's presence on his journey. Like the good influences that Verne and I recall, Elisha knew that he owed much to Elijah's spirit. No wonder he didn't want the prophet to be taken away.

In a similar vein, think here to Peter who so badly wanted the mountaintop experience with Jesus, Elijah, and Moses to continue that he offered to build tents in order for them to remain there! That is such a human response – on the part of Elisha, and Peter, and even us, too. But it's not a realistic one, is it? Time moves on and, even though they were wonderful, our childhood "Mayberry days," as Verne and I refer to them, won't be back. Instead, God continues to do new things, big things, great things! We limit God when we think that those great days are no longer here. Of course they are – just in a new form, transfigured, we might say – and we are called to live them fully and faithfully, giving thanks to God for God's constant and abiding presence which offers us love, mercy, and grace. Thanks be to our God!

Words of Benediction For the Word of God that transfigures and empowers, for the Word of God that now lives in our hearts, for the mountaintop experiences that change us, we give God thanks and praise as we go forth into a new week.



Lisbon United Methodist Church
welcomes, nurtures, and serves
all people
with the love of Christ.