

BULLETIN TEMPLATE: Minnesota Valley Church
Association of Free Lutheran Congregations
Date: Sunday, February 27, 2022
Church Year Date: 8th Sunday after Epiphany

Prelude: Rebekah Olson

Hymn #509 "To God Be the Glory"

Responsive Reading from Psalm 99:

PASTOR: The Lord reigns, the nations tremble;

CONG: He sits enthroned between the cherubim, let the earth shake.

PASTOR: Great is the Lord in Zion;

CONG: He is exalted over the nations.

PASTOR: Let the praise your great and awesome Name.

CONG: He is holy.

PASTOR: Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His footstool;

CONG: He is holy.

PASTOR: Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His holy mountain;

CONG: For the Lord our God is holy.

Hymn #57 "Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"

Children's Sermon: Youth play bells.

Reader: Dave Osthus

Old Testament Lesson: *Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the LORD showed him the whole land--from Gilead to Dan, 2 all of Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, 3 the Negev and the whole region from the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar. 4 Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it." 5 And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in Moab, as the LORD had said. 6 He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is. 7 Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone. 8 The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and mourning was over. 9 Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses. 10 Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, 11 who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt--to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. 12 For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.*

Epistle Lesson: *Hebrews 3:1-6 Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. 2 He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. 3 Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. 4 For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. 5 Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future. 6 But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.*

READER: Here ends the reading of God's Word.

CONGREGATION SINGS: God be praised, for His glad Tidings!

CONFESSION OF FAITH: Apostles' Creed- *I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit; born of the virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; And is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From where He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; The holy Christian Church; the Communion of Saints; the Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. Amen*

Gloria Patri: Ambassador Hymnal p. 4 (please put on screen)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, Amen.

Special Music:

Announcements

Praise and Worship:

**“A RADIANT JESUS” (Life of Christ Series)
Luke 9:28-36; Pastor Tom Olson; February 27, 2022**

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

PARADES: Some countries such as China and North Korea love to have military parades. These parades include thousands of troops in perfect goose step. They pull load after load of missiles and guns. The purposes of the parades are undoubtedly to make an impression on the people. They want to let the people know how powerful they are as a nation. They want to remind the people that there is no point in resisting the government. They want to tell the world to fear them.

GLORY: Today Jesus lets his disciples have a demonstration of his glory and power. His glory was revealed as he was clothed with a blinding light. Two Old Testament characters were also there, Moses and Elijah. This was like a military parade. The disciples had no doubt at this point that Jesus was God in human flesh. He had all of heaven's power at his disposal and nothing could stop him from accomplishing His purposes. Let's talk about "A RADIANT JESUS" from Luke 9.

I. A VISITATION OF GLORY

Luke 9:28-32 About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. 29 As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. 30 Two men, Moses and Elijah, 31 appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. 32 Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.

SLEEPY: I like this version from the gospel of Luke because we get some interesting details that we don't find in Matthew and Mark. One of those details is in verse 32: "*Peter and his companions were VERY SLEEPY, but when they BECAME FULLY AWAKE, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.*" The disciples had taken a long walk out to this mountain. Then Jesus chose Peter, James and John to go with him privately up to the top of the mountain. It is natural that they were very tired and fell asleep. This also happened in the

garden of Gethsemane when Jesus prayed there. Jesus was transfigured and Moses and Elijah appeared with him while they were sleeping. They must have woken up and perhaps even thought they were dreaming when they saw these three men standing there with the brilliant radiance of God emanating from them. But they eventually became fully awake and realized this was real. I have no idea how they knew it was Moses or Elijah, both of whom lived centuries before. Perhaps they simply introduced themselves. This was not the first time Moses had been radiant from the presence of God. You remember when He came down from Mt. Sinai that he had to cover his face because of the radiance that was still upon him.

TRANSFORMATION: This brings up the point of the power of transformation that comes from the presence of God. It is his presence that transforms us, not self-will. I have met very moral people who have very little of the radiant life of Christ in them, if any...just harsh, cold, rules and regulations. We all are looking for the power of God to overcome sin and evil in our lives and in the world. There is only one way to get that power and that is **TO WALK IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD.** ***“In Thy presence is fullness of joy!” Psalm 16:11 I John 3:2 “...when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see him as He is.”***

SONGS: A song puts it this way: “One glimpse of His dear face, all darkness will erase. So bravely run the race, till we see Christ. There is nothing we all need more than a glimpse of the glory of God to inspire us to run our race well. Entering into the “throne room” of God in prayer, praise and thanksgiving is so important. I think thanksgiving is the key, ***Psalm 11:4 “Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.”***”

CONSULTATION: The second unique thing we see here is that Moses and Elijah are consulting with Jesus. It tells us what they were talking about as well. Verse 30: ***They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem.*** Note the two words, “departure” and “fulfill.” It could mean departure from this mountain to head to Jerusalem or it could mean his ascension into heaven after the resurrection. Both are departures. At the moment, Jesus was blessed by their support in what He was doing. He knew that suffering and death eventually awaited him in Jerusalem. He knew that His death would be the substitutionary atonement for the sins of the world. John the Baptist made it clear when he saw Jesus and exclaimed, ***“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.”*** The time for the Lamb to suffer and die was coming.

SUNRISE: On Tuesday night our renter in Wisconsin called and said that a pipe was broken and the basement had about two or three feet of water in it. The sump pump had failed. So I left everything on Wednesday and went up to face pumping out a basement full of water in sub zero temperatures. But God was merciful and a local man heard about it, an old friend, and he came over with a pump and hose and helped me. I crashed into bed exhausted but on Thursday morning the sun came up in brilliance and things started to look hopeful again. It is amazing how much a bright sun and blue sky can do to change your outlook. In dark times we need to walk in the sunshine of God’s radiant presence, while the world mopes around in gloom and doom.

LIGHTS: God’s Word tells us that if we have a thankful attitude and refuse to complain and argue we will also shine with the radiance of God. Here is what it says: ***Philippians 2:14-15 “Do everything without complaining or arguing, 15 so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which YOU WILL SHINE LIKE STARS in the universe 16 as you hold out the word of life.”*** The world gets VISITED WITH GLORY today through Christ shining in us!

II. A TEMPORARY EXPERIENCE

Luke 9:33 As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, “Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (He did not know what he was saying.)

LEAVING: I thought it was very interesting to notice for the first time this phrase ***“As the men were leaving Jesus...”*** This is the point at which Peter spoke up. It seems clear to me that they missed out on most of the meeting while they were sleeping. Moses and Elijah were about to leave and Peter offers to make them shelters

from the sun if they would stay longer. You can't blame him, he loved living on the edge. He was first to jump out of the boat and walk on the water to Jesus. Things were really exciting because Jesus had recently raised a dead girl, healed a sick woman, sent out the twelve with miraculous powers to heal and cast out demons, fed over five thousand people with a boy's lunch basket of food and now this. It certainly was a lot more exciting than fishing all night and catching nothing, like we saw a couple weeks ago.

SEASONS: But these times of excitement are not normal life. Life has seasons. In the early 1970's we saw thousands and thousands of young "Jesus People" become believers. All you needed to gather a youth group was a spot in the local park, a guitar and a Bible. People were hungry for the Word of God. Many people who are now between 60 and 75 years old came to know Christ. There were times of powerful miracles and I went to meetings where I saw demon possessed people get set free in amazing scenes of spiritual warfare. But like Moses and Elijah returning to heaven, these harvest times pass and we can't hang on to them, only the memory. Life has other seasons, winter-rest, spring-planting, summer-cultivating and then another season of harvest. As soon as Moses came down from Mt. Sinai, the supernatural glory of God faded from him. That is normal. Revivals are separated by years and decades of just normal life.

CAMP: If you learn to embrace the season of life you are in, you will be happy and content. You can't live in the past or the future. There is only one moment in time that ever exists and that is the present. I remember going to Bible camp and not wanting to return to the spiritual deadness of normal church. I just wanted to stay at Lake Koronis and live in the presence of spiritual life. But that is not where I was needed. I was needed to bring the light back to my home. The spiritual high was a temporary experience to prepare them for the coming crucifixion of Jesus.

EMBRACE: Are you content to live in your season of life? I like this saying, "These are the good old days." Let's embrace the moment and not be lost in the past or crippled by our exciting anticipation or fears of the future. Studies have shown that 95% of what we worry about never happens. That is because Jesus is Lord, even if heavenly visitations are A TEMPORARY EXPERIENCE.

III. THE RETURN TO NORMALACY

Luke 9:34-36 While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him." 36 When the voice had spoken, they found that Jesus was alone. The disciples kept this to themselves, and told no one at that time what they had seen.

God stopped Peter's silly conversation with a cloud. Then it was God's turn to speak and let them know what His plan was. God gives them a two-step plan that would be a solid foundation for the rest of their lives. I might call it a "meat and potatoes plan" vs a "cake and candy plan." We all want supernatural events to happen like we want to eat cake and candy. But Jesus, time after time, admonished people not to seek miracles. The plan is good food that nourishes the Christian life through all times, revival and normalcy. Here is the plan:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS CHRIST GOD'S SON
2. LISTEN TO HIM

If we do this, we will have a growing, mature and fruitful walk with God.

1. ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS CHRIST GOD'S SON

MESSIAH: I personally believe that at this point the disciples were still looking to Jesus to be the kind of Messiah they wanted. They were hoping that the crowds and miracles would lead to a massive overthrow of the Roman occupiers. They embraced the prophecies of the second coming to restore the kingdom of David, but

they were blind to the prophecies of the first coming to deal with sin. The whole focus of the kingdom of God at this point in history is getting in through the forgiveness of sins and adoption as children of God by faith.

SAVIOR: John the Baptist said it so well but it seems no one got it. John said, ***“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” (John 1:29)*** He didn’t say, “Behold the general who will conquer Rome and make Israel a powerful nation.” We are living in the age of grace when eternal salvation is available for the whole world through faith in Christ. That is to be the primary focus of the church. ***Romans 10:9&10 “That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”*** Have you confessed Christ as your Savior yet? ...in a personal way to someone?
ACKNOWLEDGE JESUS.

2. LISTEN TO HIM

SIMPLE: The cloud came over them and got Peter to STOP TALKING. God announced that Jesus is the Son He loves and then gives us three words that make the best mission statement a church or individual could have: “Listen to Him.” This is all we have to do to have a mature, content and fruitful Christian life. This is a receptive listening, not just the “I hear you mom” of a teen or the “yes dear” of a husband absorbed in a news broadcast. It is the listening of Mary, sitting at the feet of Jesus, and hungering for his words more than for food.

FIXATE: Hebrews 3:1 also puts it well from a different angle: ***Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, FIX YOUR THOUGHTS ON JESUS, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.*** There are a lot of voices today that are trying to distract us...we all fight with the noise. Nothing is more important right now than fixing our thoughts on Jesus and listening to Him.

HEADPHONES: My son gave me a wonderful gift for Christmas...a pair of unique hearing protectors. They protect you from loud noise like a lawn mower but they allow you to listen to music or hear soft conversation of people talking to you. I can put them on in the shop and not hear the power saw but when someone talks to me in a normal voice, I can hear them.

PERSPECTIVE: We need to let the Word of God drown out the loud noise of the news media and still allow us to hear God’s voice and the good words of our family and godly friends. When we are on our death beds, we won’t be proud of the loud stuff we focused on but we will be happy for every time we listened to the “still small voice of God” or the loving pleas of a child wanting to play a game with us. When I think about my grandfathers, I don’t think about the homes and barns Grandpa Tom built as a carpenter but I think about the times we sat by his dining room table and worked on a jig saw puzzle together or when he held us on his lap, sitting on the back steps as he smoked his sweet-smelling pipe or Grandpa Chester telling me stories like how he met grandma while he was squirrel hunting...and that she captured his heart as she peaked at him from behind the summer kitchen on the farm.

MOSES: Moses listened to the radiant manifestation of God in the burning bush. It resulted in the salvation of a nation and an assignment on the mountain of transfiguration some 1,500 years after his death! Listening to God has long term benefits!

REGRETS: We have a RADIANT JESUS, who is God’s Son. He fully paid for our sins on the cross and He wants to help us have the best possible life as His beloved child. He is worthy of our full attention, faith and love. I have never regretted inviting Jesus into my heart 47 years ago. We all have many regrets but no one has ever regretted listening to God’s Son.

TESTIMONY: Edith Cherry died in 1897 at the young age of 25. She sums up what I have been saying beautifully in a poem: “I have heard Thy voice, Lord Jesus, Saying in Thy grace divine: “Fear thou not, I have

redeemed thee; I have called thee, thou art mine.” Lord, I bring Thee full allegiance! Therefore, now to Thee I sing; Answering “Yea, Thou has redeemed me; I am Thine, my Lord, my King!” Amen

“Now may the peace of God that surpasses all human comprehension guard your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus. Amen”

Hymn #483 “I Have Heard Thy Voice, Lord Jesus”

Lord’s Prayer

Benediction

Doxology (AH #390) *Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise Him all creatures here below, Praise Him above, ye heavenly host, Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. A-men. A-men. A---men.*

Postlude: Rebekah Olson

Reader:

Old Testament Lesson: *Deuteronomy 34:1-12 Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the LORD showed him the whole land--from Gilead to Dan, 2 all of Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, 3 the Negev and the whole region from the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar. 4 Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it." 5 And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in Moab, as the LORD had said. 6 He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is. 7 Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone. 8 The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and mourning was over. 9 Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses. 10 Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, 11 who did all those miraculous signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt--to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. 12 For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.*

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