

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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February 10 & 11, 2024

Transfiguration of Our Lord

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
Congregational Chair			Donna Maas
St. Paul Christian Learning Academy Director			Briana Bedford
Secretary			Elena Holub
Custodian			Tomas Rosales
Lighthouse Coordinator	lighthouse.splc@gmail.com		Elizabeth Smith
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon
Organist			Joan Hunsicker

MISSION STATEMENT: Love God, Love Neighbor (Luke 10:27)

VISION STATEMENT: We will work to strengthen and grow closer in relationship to God and to one another.

- *As we enter into a sacred time and space, a friendly reminder to please set your cell phone to vibrate.*
- ***We want to welcome all of our guests today and thank you for worshiping with us. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our services, programs, day care, or preschool programs at St. Paul, please visit our Welcome Center in the narthex immediately following our service, and an attendant will be more than happy to assist you. If this is your first time at St. Paul, we hope you will take a gift along with you. We also have a gift bag for children.***
- *Hearing Assist devices are available for those who need assistance in hearing worship service better. Please see a person in the Sound Room (Usher Room) to request the use of a device during worship.*

* This symbol indicates that the congregation is invited to stand physically or in spirit.

INTRODUCTION

The Sundays after Epiphany began with Jesus' baptism and end with three disciples' vision of his transfiguration. In Mark's story of Jesus' baptism, apparently only Jesus sees the Spirit descending and hears the words from heaven. But now Jesus' three closest friends hear the same words naming him God's Beloved. As believers, Paul writes, we are enabled to see the

God-light in Jesus' face, because the same God who created light in the first place has shone in our hearts to give us that vision. The light of God's glory in Jesus has enlightened us through baptism and shines in us also for others to see.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SIGNING OF ATTENDANCE PADS

(Ushers will be handing out Attendance Pads during the announcements. Please be sure to sign your name and contact information.)

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P We begin our worship in the name of the Triune God in which we are baptized, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another, first privately then together publicly.

Silence for reflection and private confession of personal sins, then join in with combined voices this printed confession.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P God has spoken: The time of grace is now. In Jesus, the reign of God has come near. By the authority of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. You are God's beloved.

C **Amen.**

* HYMN ELW - #838 "Beautiful Savior"

1. **Beautiful Savior, King of creation, Son of God and Son of Man!**

Truly I'd love thee, truly I'd serve thee, light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

2. **Fair are the meadows, fair are the woodlands, robed in flow'rs of blooming spring; Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer, he makes our sorrowing spirit sing.**

3. **Fair is the sunshine, fair is the moonlight, bright the sparkling stars on high; Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer than all the angels in the sky.**

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

CCLI Song #607718 Text: *Gesangbuch*, Munster, 1677; tr. Joseph August Seiss Music: Silesian Folk Tune, 19th cent.
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* **GREETING**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

* **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Almighty God, the resplendent light of your truth shines from the mountaintop into our hearts. Transfigure us by your beloved Son, and illumine the world with your image, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

FIRST READING: 2 Kings 2:1-12

A Our first reading is from 2 Kings, chapter 2, verses 1-12.

Today's reading centers on the transfer of power and authority from the prophet Elijah to Elisha. Their travels, which retrace the path of Joshua back to Moab (the place where Moses died) and the parting of the waters, demonstrate that Elisha and Elijah are legitimate successors of the great prophet Moses.

The reading begins:

¹Now when the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ²Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. ³The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent." ⁴Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. ⁵The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the LORD will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent." ⁶Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. ⁷Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. ⁸Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground. ⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." ¹⁰He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." ¹¹As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and

Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 50:1-6

A The Psalm today is from Psalm 50, verses 1-6. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

¹The mighty one, God the LORD, has spoken; calling the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

²Out of Zion, perfect in its beauty, God shines forth in glory.

³Our God will come and will not keep silence; with a consuming flame before, and round about a raging storm.

⁴God calls the heavens and the earth from above to witness the judgment of the people.

⁵"Gather before me my loyal followers, those who have made a covenant with me and sealed it with sacrifice."

⁶The heavens declare the rightness of God's cause, for it is God who is judge.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

A Our second reading is from 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, verses 3-6.

The spotlight of Christian ministry is not on the people who carry out ministry but on the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as God made light shine at creation, God makes the light of Jesus Christ shine in our lives through Christian ministry.

The reading begins:


³Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. ⁶For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

A The word of the Lord.


C Thanks be to God.

A Please stand as you are comfortable for the gospel.

* **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** *(Sung)*



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

* **GOSPEL:** Mark 9:2-9

Mark’s gospel presents the transfiguration as a preview of what would become apparent to Jesus’ followers after he rose from the dead. Confused disciples are given a vision of God’s glory manifest in the beloved Son.

P The holy gospel according to St. Mark, chapter 9, verses 2-9.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

²Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” ⁶He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” ⁸Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

* **HYMN ELW - #316 “Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair”**
{sing to tune ELW - #676 “Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak”}

1. Oh, wondrous image, vision fair of glory that the church may share,
 which Christ upon the mountain shows, where brighter than the sun he glows!

2. With Moses and Elijah nigh the incarnate Lord holds converse high,
 and from the cloud, the Holy One says, “This is my beloved Son.”
3. With shining face and bright array, Christ deigns to manifest today
 what glory shall be theirs above who joy in God with perfect love.
4. And faithful hearts are raised on high by this great vision's mystery;
 for which in joyful song we raise the voice of prayer, the hymn of praise.
5. O Father, with the eternal Son, and Holy Spirit ever one,
 we pray you, bring us by your grace to see your glory face to face.

“Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair” – Text: Sarum, 15th Cent.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.
“Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak” - Music: Robert Schumann

* **APOSTLES' CREED**

- A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
- C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
 he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
 he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
 and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

- A As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God’s blessing on the church,
 the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

- A We pray for the church, that the transformational power of God enters the hearts of all
 people. May its leaders serve as examples of your grace and healing across time and space.
 God of grace,
C receive our prayer.

- A We pray for peace in all the world, especially in war-torn areas of Ukraine, Sudan, Niger
 Israel and the Middle East. Bring an end to wars and the destruction of lives and your
 creation. God of grace,
C receive our prayer.

- A We pray for all those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Joey Denby; Grey Gabriel; Ollie; Ruby Alvarez; Tiara Flores; Carl Geisler; those on our Prayer Team's list; and those we name in our hearts before you (*Pause*). God of grace,
C receive our prayer.
- A We pray for all those battling cancer and especially for:
Debra Sandell; Noe Vela; Shirley Trahan; Kristen Downing; Ashley Roberts; Traci Edman; Michael Yancey; Amanda Aramijo; Zachary Schulke; Herbie Kollatschny; Tom Russell, Jr.; Melda Coleman; Al Gene Canik; Larry Bookout; Mike Wostarek; Elizabeth Frisby; Kristina Acevedo; George Krenek; Anne Dimas; Laura Walla; Paul Casinger; Dr. Tom Hancher; Leonard Kahlden; and Bob Loy that they may know comfort and strength. God of grace,
C receive our prayer.
- A We pray for all expectant mothers and especially for:
Jamee Albert; Kristen O'Leary Bridges; Abegail Gatzke; Chelsea Gilstrap; Calli Guthmann; Dhara Comans; Nelma Grace Weathers; Rosalinda Rosales; and Kelsey Page Bakken that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace. God of grace,
C receive our prayer.
- A We pray for all those who reside in care facilities and the homebound and especially for:
Clemons Venghaus; Paul Minar, Sr.; Adrian Fritsch; Coy Dell Schindler; Madeline Menke; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Jane Booker; Pat Brasher; Walter Glaeser, Jr.; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Donna Dehmer; Cherie Moore; Lauren Lamb; and Lydia Rojas that they receive your caring and compassion. God of grace,
C receive our prayer.
- A We pray for all law enforcement officers and especially for Charles Jobb; Joseph Smith; Todd Jacobs; Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Nancy Gorman; Johnny Kovar; Abbigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Zane Weido; Josh Jones; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron Luedke; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Travis Neuendorff; Nathan Bookout; Brenda Henkes; Jan Willette; and Terri Neunendorff, as well as those active duty military members including Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Dalton Kapel; Kevin Gonzalez; Evelyn Rojas; Nelson Beettner; and Hugh & Katie Hajdik that they are protected and kept safe. God of grace,
C receive our prayer.

- A We pray for the church throughout the world. May we all proclaim the good news of your love effectively. We ask, especially, that you would bless the ministry of our sister congregations Cristo Rey and their Pastor Armando Capcha and Iglesia Cristiana Camino de Santidad and their leaders Pastors Gumer and Naomi Anton in Peru, all Missionaries, especially St. Paul's supported missionary, Dina Anton de Espinoza, and our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic. God of grace,
C receive our prayer.

- P Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.
C Amen.

*** PEACE**

P The peace of the risen Lord be with you always.

C And also with you. (*Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.*)

(We will be collecting offerings before and after worship each week. This includes Power of One dollars.)

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

"Power of One" is a ministry sponsored by your Stewardship Team. We are asking each and every one of our members to give \$1.00 above what your normal giving would be. We are asking each member to place this \$1.00 bill or change in the offering plate each week. The team is also inviting all children to participate to develop the habit of giving as part of their worship experience. Parents, a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar bill, any of these will do to help your children develop a habit of giving. These "Power of One" dollars will be used to support local ministries and ministries abroad. The purpose of this ministry is to demonstrate that something as small as one dollar can be used to make a difference in the lives of others.

* OFFERTORY (Sung)

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

* OFFERING PRAYER

P Blessed are you, Holy One, for all good things come from you, and we return a portion back to you for your work in the world. In bread and cup you open heaven to us. Meet us at this table, that we receive what we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray.
C Amen.

* GREAT THANKSGIVING (Responses Sung)

P The Lord be with you.

And al - so with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

* EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

* LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

* INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P At Jesus' table, come and continue to be transformed.

C Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Continuous with Individual Cups)

{Distribution will be continuous. All are welcome for communion. Please come down the center aisle starting from the front. Follow directions of the ushers, coming up one side at a time. Pastor will hand you the bread. If you wish to have a gluten-free wafer, please tell Pastor "Gluten-free, please." Afterward, you will choose either wine or white grape juice from the individual cups in the tray – white grape juice in the center with wine surrounding. Place the empty cups in the baskets located off to the side. Although communion is continuous, you are welcome to kneel at the rail in prayer after receiving communion. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}

* BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

P Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Giver of every gift, Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body. Raise us to life by your power for the benefit of all and to your glory, now and forever.

C Amen.

* BLESSING

P God who names you, Christ who claims you, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you, ☩ bless you and remain with you always.

C Amen.

* HYMN ELW - #671 "Shine, Jesus, Shine"

REFRAIN:

*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!*

1. 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: **REFRAIN**

2. 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: **REFRAIN**

CCLI Song #30426 Text: Graham Kendrick Music: Graham Kendrick
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* DISMISSAL

P Go in peace changed by and for Christ.

C Thanks be to God, and we will.

POSTLUDE

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USHERS: SAT: Harvey Poenitzsch; Bob Poenitzsch; Audrey Rester

SUN: Danny Kautz; David Stancik

LAY READERS: SAT: Pastor John Hunsicker

SUN: Debbie Yancey

ACOLYTES: SAT: Henry Jones

SUN: Paisely Stancik

STREAMING:

SUN: Tiffany Lauzon

SOUND:

SUN: Sydney Eaton

ALTAR GUILD: Carol Ripper and DyAnn Lauzon

WELCOME: Welcome to worship on this Transfiguration weekend. May we always follow God's call to listen to his beloved Son.

ALTAR FLOWERS are placed by Ken & Kay Wesson in loving memory of Ken's brother David Wesson whose birthday is February 10.

COLLECTION OF OFFERING: Offering for the worship services is collected before and after worship. Offering bowls are placed in the back entrance and inside the side sanctuary door for you to place your offering in. This includes “Power of One” dollars.


Amount needed for average weekly budgeted expenses: \$8,405.00

<u>Attendance:</u> February 3 & 4, 2024 – 213	<u>Contributions:</u> Feb. 3 & 4 – \$8,527.80
<u>Power of One:</u> February 3 & 4, 2024 – \$37.00	<u>Building Fund:</u> Feb. 3 & 4 – \$753.23

Thank you to those who contributed to last week's offerings. Loving God/Loving Neighbor.

ATTENTION: *Names on the prayer list in the bulletin will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep them.*

► **Children's Activity Bags** are available for use by our young members and guests! You can find them on the coat hooks in the coat area of the narthex. After worship, **please place the used activity bags and their contents in the receptacle in the narthex.** Thank you! ☺

 **SOUPER BOWL OF CARING:** Each year our youth participate in the Souper Bowl of Caring during the month of February in conjunction with the Super Bowl. The Souper Bowl of Caring empowers youth and unites communities to tackle hunger using the energy of the Big Game. Its vision is to transform the Big Game into a nationwide movement inspiring people to give locally and make a collective impact on hunger. This past year our Columbus Food Pantry served an average of 270 households, and St. Paul Youth raised just over \$800 for the Food Pantry on Souper Bowl of Caring weekend. **This year our 5th-6th grade BLAST students will be collecting before each worship service this weekend and at BLAST on Wednesday, February 14, 2024.** So bring your change or bills and fill their pots! All donations will go to the Columbus Food Pantry.

It's movie time for Senior Explorers!! Join us on **Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 10:00 AM** for a movie and lunch in the St. Paul Lighthouse. Our movie will be “The Boys in the Boat”, an inspiring, uplifting true story with biblical, moral and patriotic themes. The movie tells the story of how nine boys from the American West showed the world at the 1936 Olympics what true grit really meant. There will be a catered lunch immediately following the movie. Please sign up in the narthex by Sunday, February 11, 2024. If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Page at 979-732-0845.

+ **Lenten Devotional:** For Lent this year, we encourage you to pick up a Lenten Devotional written by one of our own members, Elizabeth Smith. You can buy it in the church office. If we run out, there will be a sign-up sheet in the office as well. The cost is \$5 or you can go directly to Amazon and buy one for \$6.99 under the title “Greatest Love: A Lenten Bible Study Journal” by Elizabeth Smith.



The season of Lent begins with **Ash Wednesday** which, this year, is **Wednesday, February 14, 2024**. The Ash Wednesday service is a service with Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes. **Ash Wednesday** worship will be at **4:00 PM and 6:30 PM**. The remainder of the Wednesdays during Lent we will have worship services at 4:30 PM only. Following the Wednesday evening services and in between the Ash Wednesday services, the youth will provide a meal of soup, sandwiches, and desserts in the Lighthouse. Ash Wednesday the meal will be 5:00-6:30 PM. The remainder of the meals during Lent will be served from 5:00-6:00 PM. The meal is a youth service project for our church, so, a goodwill offering is greatly appreciated. We look forward to having you join us for worship during this special time, and enjoy food and fellowship after the services.


ASH WEDNESDAY – ASHES AT LIGHTHOUSE: Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024, we will have two services, one at 4:00 PM and one at 6:30 PM. If you are not able to make the services that evening and would like to receive the imposition of ashes, we are providing this opportunity for you to drive through from **7:00-8:00 AM** under the Lighthouse porte cochere.

** **OYSTER/FISH FRY TICKETS!!** If you are in need of tickets for the annual Columbus Volunteer Fire Department's Oyster & Fish Fry, please **see Pastor Alan** – or a fireman of your choice. The event will be **Sunday February 25, 2024 at Columbus Hall** (formerly K. of C. Hall) 11:00AM – 1:00 PM. The meal will be dine in or drive-thru. *Advance tickets are \$30 for the oyster/fish combo ticket; at the door are \$35.* (If you want only oysters, you need to purchase the combo ticket.) Advance tickets for fish only are \$20.00; at the door are \$25.00. **


Save the Date!! The ***Landscape Team*** will have a **work day on Saturday, March 9, 2024 at 9:00 AM**. We hope to plant trees, Pink Muhly Grass, trim trees, remove dead and unwanted shrubs and plant new shrubs in the flower beds, clean the gutters and more. Please bring your shovels! Also, a designated fund has been set up for anyone wishing to contribute money to help cover the cost of purchasing plants, tress, fertilizer, etc.. Just make sure you designate your donation for “Landscaping”. If you have any questions, please contact John Brasher at 979-253-1448. Thank you!

• **Elementary Explore Retreat at Lutherhill:** Calling all hapy campers! **Students in grades 1-6** are invited to come out to the Hill to explore all that camp has to offer – from the giant swing to slingshot, arts & crafts to campfire worship. This retreat will be **March 22-24, 2024** at Lutherhill in La Grange, Texas. This is a great opportunity for anyone that is anxious to get to


Lutherhill, wants to do a trial run before summer, or to simply have an adventure outside of their regular weekend routine. Seasoned and new campers alike will explore all that camp has to offer. It's always a fun weekend! Stephanie Polasek will transport our group to Lutherhill on Friday, March 22 and stay the weekend with the students. Please register your child at Lutherhill.org/explore. **Cost is \$95 per camper.** Let Stephanie know once your student is registered. For more info, visit Lutherhill.org/explore or contact Stephanie.

 **Bus Drivers Needed!!** Our St. Paul Bus Driver Team needs some volunteer reinforcement. We can use a handful of additional drivers to occasionally chip in and transport some of our church family to and fro. No CDL required, but a CDL doesn't hurt the possibilities! No big strength requirements or much of anything else other than being a caring person, a responsible driver and a little free time occasionally. We can also always work in pairs. *We will train and support you all the way and only use your time and love when it fits in for you.* **Contact Kevin Page at 979-732-0845 (call or text) if interested or if you have any questions.** Thank you for considering this!

♥ **Help Us Meet Our Neighbors!** We need a Team Leader for our annual National Night Out in October, coordinating the participants and carrying on this very worthy National effort to bring communities together. We have experience to share and lists of previous event participants. Lots of help and support. Please let Kevin Page (979-732-0845) or Pastor Alan know if you are interested or have questions. Thanks for considering this very worthwhile endeavor. – Kevin

 **God's Work, Our Hands: Team Leader Needed** – Our once-a-year work day has a huge impact on our community as it is a part of the yearly nation-wide effort. The nation-wide date for this event is in September. However, due to the heat, the last few years we moved our date to late October-early November for cooler weather. We need a coordinator for our service projects that day. If you feel inspired to step up and help in this role, please contact Kevin Page at 979-732-0845 or Pastor Alan. There will be much support and help available! Thank you so much for your consideration. – Kevin

► **Offering Envelopes:** 2024 Offering Envelopes are ready to be picked up in the narthex (foyer). They are in alphabetical order. If you want a box of offering envelopes and do not see your name, please notify the church office, and we will have a box for you next week. ◀

 **The 2024 Flower Calendar is up in the narthex!** It is hanging by the glass entrance doors. If you would like to have flowers in church on a certain weekend, please sign your name next to the date for that special weekend and write your phone number. Elena will call you the beginning of that week to remind you that you signed up for flowers and will ask for the occasion (such as birthday, wedding anniversary, in memory of someone, etc.) to put in the bulletin. The monthly newsletter will also have who signed up for flowers for the month. Thank you for adding beauty to our sanctuary and worship services!

► **The Mowing Team is looking for more people to help mow the interior church lawn.** Typically it takes an hour and a half, or less, to mow and edge. Please call John Brasher at 979-253-1448 if you are interested or if you have any questions.

♪♪♪ **Musicians Wanted for Praise Band!!** The St. Paul Praise Band is in need of a keyboard player. They would also like to add at least one guitarist, a bass guitarist and singers. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Tracy Baker at 713-516-8017. ♪♪♪

• **Women of JOY Bible Study:** The Women of JOY Bible Study group meets on Mondays to cook and have interesting Bible study and discussions. The **first Monday** of the month we **meet in the Lighthouse to cook** for BLAST. The **2nd and 4th Mondays** of the month we meet in the **high school room (old choir room) for Bible Study.** If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Gerri Hackfeld at 979-732-4711.

♥ **Grief Support Group:** The Grief Support Group is for anyone who has lost a loved one, either recently or a few years ago. We share and support each other. Come join us and get support from others walking this journey. We meet at **5:30 PM** in the youth room (formerly the choir room) the **third Thursday of the month.** **NOTE:** You do not have to share or talk until you are ready! If you have questions, please contact Peggy Geisler at 979-732-0350.

♦ **LIGHTHOUSE COORDINATOR:** The coordinator for the Lighthouse is **Elizabeth Smith.** If you wish to rent the Lighthouse for an event, you will need to contact her. You can email her at lighthouse.splc@gmail.com or call or text her at (713)-799-3484. Also, ***if you are interested in opening and closing the Lighthouse whenever the Lighthouse is rented out for various events, please contact Liz.***

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:	
Mon., Feb. 12 –	9:30 AM – Staff Meeting 6:00 PM – Women of JOY Bible Study (old choir room)
Tue., Feb. 13 –	9:00 AM-12:00 PM – Quilters (Lighthouse) 10:30 AM – Pastor to TLC 12:00 PM – Noon Bible Study (library) 5:30 PM – Stewardship Team (library)
Wed., Feb. 14 –	7:00-8:00 AM – Imposition of Ashes (Lighthouse porte cochere) 9:00 AM – CLA Chapel 9:30 AM-2:00 PM – Columbus Garden Club (Lighthouse) 10:00 AM – Nursing Home Team & Pastor to Columbus Oaks 2:00 PM – Nursing Home Team & Pastor to The Oaks 4:00 PM – Ash Wednesday Worship Service 5:00-6:30 PM – Soup & Sandwiches (Lighthouse) 5:30 PM – BLAST, Confirmation & HS Youth 6:30 PM – Ash Wednesday Worship Service

Thurs., Feb. 15 – 10:00 AM-2:00 PM – Senior Explorers Movie Day (Lighthouse)
5:30 PM – Grief Support Group (old choir room)

Sat., Feb. 17 – 9:00 AM-2:00 PM – Church Council Retreat
7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship

Next Sun., Feb. 18 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School and Confirmation
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Wednesday, February 14, 2024 Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885; missionaries to the Slavs

These two brothers from Thessalonika, Greece, were monks and were sent to bring Christianity to the Slavic people. In the course of their work they created a written language, inventing the Cyrillic alphabet for it, and translated the Bible and the liturgy.

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SERVICE OVERVIEW: TRANSFIGURATION: AMAZING THEN AND NOW

The transfiguration is one of those ancient events that still puzzle us. What really happened to Jesus that day? Since we cannot go back to that time, we are left to speculate. We take stabs in the dark and make educated guesses, but at the end of the day we are left with a holy mystery to ponder.

Whatever happened that day, there is a timeless spiritual reality behind the physical details Mark gives us. God sometimes uses extreme and amazing methods to transform us when we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit. God’s spirit transfigured Jesus then. That same Spirit is still transforming people today. We don’t have to explain first-century miracles to trust that God’s transforming Spirit is timeless and at work within each of us today. We do not have to understand everything to see the beauty of God at work in the world, continually transfiguring us into the people we were created to be.

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION:

In our worship after Epiphany, we have seen Jesus show himself to be Christ - The One anointed by God to be our Savior. The Transfiguration concludes the time after Epiphany. Today, Jesus appears on a mountain in divine glory. Welcome to worship! Celebrate the mystery of Christ. In three days, on Ash Wednesday, we begin the climb to the mountain of Jesus’ crucifixion. As the church, we hold side by side the glory of God *and* the cross of Jesus. This time after Epiphany began with a star illuminating the way to discover the Messiah, and now ends with the light shining from Jesus himself into our lives.

Imagine what would happen if someone from the days of Jesus were suddenly transported to our present. How would someone accustomed to walking everywhere respond to driving in a car at top speed or flying in a jet? How would someone who spends their life depending on oil lamps for light respond to electric lights? It is fun to muse at how people might respond, as we reflect on how sophisticated we are.

Now imagine if the scene were reversed. How would someone accustomed to understanding much in the world around them respond to an event as otherworldly as the transfiguration? We understand volcanoes and the northern lights. We can explain lightning and thunder. We know about germs and disease transmission. So what would we do when confronted with something so amazing, awesome, and unexplainable? The disciples find themselves standing in the presence of their great prophets, Elijah and Moses, while watching Jesus be transfigured. It must have been so overwhelming! Peter awkwardly suggests they build tents or dwellings. They want to bask in this majestic moment. Have you ever experienced a faith moment that put you in such awe that you didn’t know what to do?

The word translated in English as “transform” or “transfigure” in the gospels is the Greek verb *metamorphoó*. It’s the root of the English word *metamorphosis*. The first metamorphosis we often learn about is often a caterpillar changing into a butterfly. Now, we follow the metamorphosis life cycle of Jesus through the gospels and see him changed in dazzling light as God reveals God’s own divinity within Jesus. This is a turning point for Jesus as he turns toward Jerusalem, toward his death and resurrection. This is his ultimate transfiguration that paves the way for *us* to be metamorphosed by God, to be made new in Christ.

KID STUDY:

Jesus went up on a mountain, and He took a few of his closest friends: Peter, James, and John. When they were up there, Jesus suddenly transformed in front of them and began shining like the sun, all full of light! It made the disciples pretty scared. Then they saw Moses and Elijah, prophets who had died. They didn’t know what to do! Then, as if they were not surprised or scared enough, they heard God’s voice announce “*this is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased - listen to Him!*”

Jesus comforted and encouraged them to overcome their fear. The disciples had caught a peek of who Christ was. Like us, it was hard to understand that Jesus was a human, but also God at the same time. When Jesus came to Earth, it was sort of like he was God in disguise. Many people had been waiting for a Messiah and wondered what that person would be like. The disciples had wondered if Jesus was the one they had long awaited. They thought he was, but they weren’t totally sure. This experience on the mountain took away any possible doubt! Seeing Jesus transformed, in a way, and hearing God’s voice made them absolutely certain of who they were following. This was really and truly God.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION:

Christ brings before the disciples the one who had died and the one who had not yet died. Both had lost their life, and had found it. Both had courageously withstood a tyrant: one the Egyptian, the other Arab. Both were simple, unlearned men. One was slow of speech and weak of voice, the other a rough countryman. And both were men who had despised the riches of this world. For Moses possessed nothing, and Elijah had nothing but his sheepskin. Christ brought these men before the disciples, for he wished them to imitate their courage of soul and their steadfastness in leading their people, so that they might be as gentle as Moses, possessed of the zeal of Elijah, and as devoted as both were. He brought these men before them in glory, that

the disciples might surpass them. That Christ might uplift their courage against all such dangers, he here brings before them these two men who were such shining lights of the Old Testament.
- John Chrysostom [John Chrysostom, in Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers, II, 54-55]

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Next Week's Theme (Feb. 14): Ash Wednesday

Next Week's Scriptures (Feb. 14):

First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

“Return to the LORD, your God.”

Psalm: Psalm 51:1-17

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.” (Ps. 51:1)

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:10

“Now is the day of salvation.”

Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

"The practice of faith."

Next Week's Theme (Feb. 17 & 18: Jesus in the Wilderness 40 days, 40 nights

Next Week's Scriptures (Feb. 17 & 18):

First Reading: Genesis 9:8-17

"The rainbow, sign of God's covenant."

Psalm: Psalm 251-10

“Your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness.” (Ps. 25:10)

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

"Saved through water."

Gospel: Mark 1:9-15

"The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days."