

Dazzling Reign

Transfiguration Sunday

The setting sun cast a warm glow against the wooden beams of the Vermont barn where my wedding reception was being held. As candles flickered on the tables, the music for the father daughter dance began playing. My father's eyes glistened when he realized the song chosen for our twirl on the dance floor was from "The Sound of Music." The movie had always been a favorite in our family as Julia Andrews traipsing through the Alps always tugged at my father's Swiss heart.

Climb every mountain, ford every stream, follow every rainbow until you find your dream.

In the movie, Mother Superior sings this to young Maria — played by Julia Andrews — who is struggling with God's call in her life. The older nun reminds Maria that following God will always mean going in surprising directions. There will be struggles, doubts and tears. But search the high and low, Mother Superior says. Follow the dream that will indeed require "all the love you can give, every day of your life for as long as you live."

The season of Lent is upon us, but before we trudge along with Jesus on the way to the cross, we find ourselves having a mountaintop experience. It is here we join Jesus who takes two of his followers to witness divine glory. Jesus is transfigured in dazzling light and the pillars of the faith, Moses and Elijah, stand with him. Jesus' friends are in awe.

It is an amazing moment meant to renew us for the journey ahead, bolstering our waning faith. But we are not meant to stay on the mountain forever. There is life to be experienced. There are mountains to climb, streams to ford, and rainbows to follow.

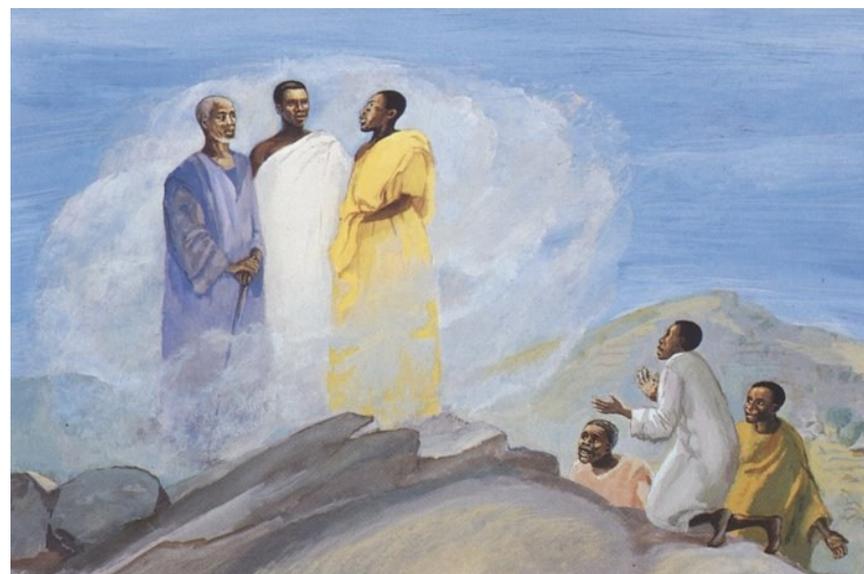
I chose this song for my dance with my father because I got married later in life. I was at the point where I thought saying "I do" would never come from my lips. Yet through my setbacks my father would always encourage me to hang on to faith. Follow your dream. Don't give up.

Lent is beginning. Take one last look at the dazzling glory from your mountaintop view. Now grab hold of God's hand and make your way back down into the world. Give your hopes, dreams and desires to God. As you do, make sure to give them all the love they will need for as long as you live.

God of mountain highs and valley lows, give us the strength and courage to follow You no matter how difficult or disruptive the path might seem. Help us to trust that where You lead us is to the place where the deepest desires of our hearts are found. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's *Sunday Bulletin*.)

Transfiguration Sunday



Title: Transfiguration
JESUS MAFA is a response to the New Testament readings from the Lectionary by a Christian community in Cameroon, Africa. Each of the readings was selected and adapted to dramatic interpretation by the community members. Photographs of their interpretations were made, and these were then transcribed to paintings.

Notes: In this theatrical representation of Jesus' transfiguration, Jesus is robed in a dazzling white garment, as the story in the gospels describes. He appears to be greeting Moses and Elijah like old friends as they are surrounded by a cloud that makes the whole scene feel ethereal. Peter, James, and John look on with flabbergasted and fearful expressions, bewildered at what they should do. This painting invites the viewer to imagine what it would be like to have seen such amazing things. Undoubtedly, it would inspire one to follow and obey Jesus, just as God commands in the story: "This is my son, the beloved. Listen to him!"

Date: 1973

Artist: JESUS MAFA

St. John's United Church of Christ

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WELCOME VISITORS! Thank you for coming! Please sign a pew card to place in the offering plate.

WORSHIP: When reading this bulletin Leader Speaks Plain Font, Everyone Speak Bold Font

Nursery: Children are welcome in all aspects of worship. The nursery provides an alternative space so kids and parents can both get what they need from worship. Children are encouraged to check in with their adult before going downstairs with the nursery attendant.



Delicious Fundraiser



Amazon List



T-Shirts

Announcements

- ✚ **Ash Wednesday Service** This Wednesday at 7pm come begin the journey of lent with us.
- ✚ **Community Meal** is a free meal open to all this Wednesday at 5pm. Pastor Muriel will be available to give ashes during the meal.
- ✚ **The Belvidere Group (AA)** meets at everyday at 7pm.
- ✚ **Chair and Mat Yoga** with Katherine Ray is going weekly! Chair yoga at 10 AM and mat yoga at 11:30 AM. No RSVP required and classes are \$5.
- ✚ **Sunday School for Adults and Kids** Sundays at 9am. Check out the upcoming curriculum options for more studies.

Save the dates for our **rummage sale – April 24-25**

Storage in the garage is allowing us to take your donations now (except critter-friendly fabric or paper). Drop it off and we'll get it to the garage.

I am currently posting large and "specialty" items on Facebook Marketplace and a few on eBay. Let us know what you have that would like a new home.

We can pick up.

Betsy Mollway (815-222-9323) or Nancy Lyford (815-978-3319)

Benediction

Wait: Service Prayers for the sixth Sunday after Epiphany was written by Rev. Teña T. Nock, who serves as The Associate Pastor of Digital Ministry, First United Church of Tampa, United Church of Christ. Mystic in the making.



General Giving

Prelude

Announcements

Welcome Pack 418 and thank you for helping with the worship service!

Choral Introit "Shine Jesus Shine"

**Lord, the light of Your love is shining
In the midst of the darkness shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us;
Set us free by the truth You now bring us
Shine on me, shine on me.**

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

Responsive Welcome Statement

At St. John's United Church of Christ, we are Living Outwardly & Valuing Everyone!

We live and work amid God's love!

In that spirit, we extend love to all who come into our midst, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, nationality, skin color, culture, differing abilities, age or political affiliations, to participate fully in all aspects of church.

Our ministry is to bring the Good News of Christ's love to all.

We work in God's name to tear down walls and build community,

to walk with each other through all of life's circumstances,

to provide for those in need,

to offer comfort to the hurting and the sick,
and to uplift the brokenhearted.

Where we fail, we ask for God's forgiveness.

May the Holy Spirit and our siblings continue to chal-

lunge us to do better.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

Call to Worship

Come to me and wait. I will give you instructions and commandments in written form.

We come to you and we wait, to see and hear what you will say.

In days past, I wrote on stone tablets, but now I write my words upon you heart that you may teach them.

We offer our hearts to receive your words and what we learn, we'll teach others.

Heaven is open above you and the kin-dom is within you.

Wherever we go, the kin-dom comes.

Invocation

God who invited Moses to come up the mountain to receive from you, we invite you to come among us and receive from us. May we become more whole as we wait in confident expectation of the deepening of the love that is shared between us. Amen.

Hymn #1 "Immortal, Invisible"

UCC Statement of Faith #885

Children's Time "Counting Rules"

Pastoral Prayer~ The Lord's Prayer

Hymn #183 "Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain"

(Verses 1, 4 & 5) (Tune: Once in Royal David's City)

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Waiting is not always easy for us, especially while living in a realm where instant gratification is perceived as proof of being blessed. You wait

for us and on us often. Help us to remember that we are to be of good courage as we wait on you and for you.

Words of Grace

Moses went up the mountain and waited forty days and forty nights while The Holy One gave him the words that bring his people life. Let us give thanks that God waits with us no matter how long and transforms us in the waiting.

Gloria Patri

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.

Scripture Exodus 24:12-18
Matthew 17:1-9

Sermon "Wait"

Moment for Mission~ Overnight Cafe

Invitation to Generosity

Doxology

**Praise God, through whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below,
Praise God, above ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Prayer of Dedication

Patient One, receive these gifts that we could hardly wait to give you. May they be used to meet the needs of those who have been waiting for relief.

Hymn #76 "Sent Forth by God's Blessing"