

February 11, 2024 + 10:30 A.M.

Transfiguration of the Lord

We Join in Worship

*If you need extra space for a wheelchair or walker, or if you have young children with you, please feel free to make use of our
Prayground, the extra space across the aisle from the sound booth.*

PRELUDE O Wondrous Type! O Vision Fair

Knapp/Sinzheimer

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

CALL TO WORSHIP

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

**The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and being in awe of the LORD.**

***OPENING HYMN:** "Shine, Jesus Shine" (Glory to God 192)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION:

Leader: Jesus said nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed, nor is anything secret that will not come
to light. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

God of compassion, in Jesus Christ you reveal the light of your glory, but we turn away, distracted by
our own plans. We confess that we speak when we should listen, and act when we should wait. Forgive
our aimless enthusiasms. Grant us wisdom to live in your light and to follow in the way of your beloved
Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

KYRIE: No. 572 (unison)

**Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: The one who calls light out of darkness now shines in our hearts to reveal the glory of
God in the face of Jesus Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

ALL: We are forgiven indeed! Amen!

GLORIA PATRI No. 579 (unison)

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.

STATEMENT OF FAITH: (from *1 Timothy* 3:16, CEV)

Here is the great mystery of our religion: Christ came as a human. The Spirit proved that he pleased God, and he was seen by angels. Christ was preached to the nations. People in this world put their faith in him, and he was taken up to glory.

We Hear God's Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Glorious God, we pray that your Spirit will come over us and fill us with your truth, so we may live as faithful disciples, through your son Jesus Christ. Amen.

HEBREW BIBLE LESSON *2 Kings* 2:1-12

EPISTLE LESSON *2 Corinthians* 4:3-6

GOSPEL LESSON *Mark* 9:2-9

SERMON: Reflections

MUSICAL MEDITATION: *The Snow Lay on the Ground*

We Respond in Faith

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERING INVITATION:

Leader: At the Transfiguration Jesus shone with the pure light of the glory of God. As the body of Christ in the world today, we are called to share that light. Let us give our tithes and offerings so that we might shine with a light that is contagious! If you did not do so as you entered, please place your offering in the plate in the narthex as you leave. If you are worshiping online, you can mail in checks or take advantage of our online giving options through the website. Now let us take a moment to reflect on stewardship as we hear the offertory.

OFFERTORY O Wondrous Type! O Vision Fair

J.M. Neale

*** DOXOLOGY:**

**Praise God, from 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: (Unison)

Through your goodness, O God, you have blessed us with these gifts. Use us and what we have to give to serve the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

We Go Into the World

* **CLOSING HYMN:** “Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain” (Glory to God 193)

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken

Hayden

Permission to reprint/podcast/stream music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #A-739456. All rights reserved.

Permission to reprint/podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from CCLI with print license #11390760 and streaming plus license #21397339. All rights reserved.

* So that we can properly greet people who come to the building during Sunday morning worship, Door A will be the only unlocked external door during the worship service.

Life of the Church

PEEK AT THE WEEK:

SUNDAY 2/11:	Adult Study – 9:00 AM Worship In Person & Online – 10:30 AM SOUPer Bowl Collection Fellowship Hosts: Deacons
MONDAY 2/12:	GA – 6:30 PM Al-Anon – 7:00 PM
TUESDAY 2/13:	Mission – 6:00 PM Stewardship/Finance – 6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY 2/14:	ASH WEDNESDAY Trustees – 10:00 AM Ash Wednesday Service – 7:00 PM GA – 7:00 PM
THURSDAY 2/15:	Choir – 7:00 PM
SATURDAY 2/17:	Gladys’ Table Prep

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **THE SOUPER BOWL OF CARING IS TODAY!** You can participate by donating cans of soup or other non-perishable food items, or by making a monetary donation that will be used to help one of our many food ministries. Youth and young adults from our Youth Connections group will collect donations before and after worship on Feb. 11 in the narthex. Donations can also be dropped off at the church office the week before, or you can contact Heather Casiano to arrange to pick up your donation from you if you are unable to bring it to church yourself.
- **SOUP SALE** - There will be a soup sale on February 18th after worship. Support the church and enjoy a delicious soup for lunch! If you are interested in making soup, contact Cheryl Steen.
- **ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE ON FEBRUARY 14TH AT 7:00 PM** Be sure to put this meaningful service in your calendars so that together we can start Lent with somber repentance and joyful hope!

- **PLANNING MEETING FOR WEDDING CELEBRATION OF REV. TYLER AND VIMA**
On February 25th after worship there will be a planning meeting in the fellowship hall for anyone interested in helping out with the reception on April 14th to celebrate Pastor Tyler and Vima's marriage. If you are unable to attend the planning meeting, but would like to help, please contact Jean Smith. (219-730-7749)
- **CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: SANCTUARY AIR CONDITIONING AND HEATING** We will be able to meet our goal if we all contribute according to our resources and capabilities. For capital campaign contributions, please indicate the purpose on checks or envelopes so that they go to the correct account. You can also donate online by selecting "Capital Campaign" on the dropdown menu for donations on our website.
- **THE BIBLE IN TODAY'S WORLD CLASS** meets on Sunday mornings at 9 am in the upstairs meeting room. We are using "The Difficult Words of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to His Most Perplexing Teachings" by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine. Come explore and learn with us! Contact John Toren or Heather Casiano with any questions.
- **BYOB (BRING YOUR OWN BIBLE)** meets on Wednesday evenings from 7-8 pm. Each week's discussion is independent of each other, so come as often as you are able. Zoom meeting links will be emailed out the morning of the study. Contact Heather Casiano or Pastor Tyler with any questions.
- **FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!** If you don't already follow First Presbyterian Church of Highland on Facebook and Instagram, please start doing so and sharing our posts with your friends! Find us @firstpchighland on both Facebook and Instagram.
- **JOIN US FOR FELLOWSHIP AFTER WORSHIP** Every Sunday after worship we have delicious snacks, coffee, lemonade, and conversation. Join us for this vital part of our life together!
- **INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF FPCH?** You are always welcome here, whether a member or not! If you are interested in joining as a member, though, we would love to have you! Please talk to Pastor Tyler if you would like to learn more.

Opportunities to serve as the HEART, HANDS, and FEET of Jesus Christ:

- **BLESSING BOX** OUR BLESSING BOX IS LOW ON FUNDS AND SUPPLIES. DONATIONS ARE WELCOME! Please continue to place items in the Blessing Box and take items if you are a person in need! Items most commonly donated: Canned goods with pull tabs, socks, toilet paper, non-perishable foods, small snacks, toiletries, baby wipes and diapers. Please check expiration dates!
- **HELP STOCK OUR PANTRY!** Please pick up a beautifully decorated grocery bag in the narthex to help the church's food pantry. We'd love to have you take a bag home, place some non-perishable food items in the bag, and bring it back to the church to help keep our pantry stocked!

Prayer List

Anthony
George Nelson
Brady Vanes
George Griner
Guy Hendricks
Bill and Anettia Holmes
Daniel Litwicki
David Markley
Pat and David Kingen
Diana and Ray Mendoza
Janet Orem
Jeanne Nestor
Cindy Waltz and Sister
Andrew Bobalik
Gale Snyder
Yvonne Suroviak
Wendy
Georgette Sknerski
Jakob Holden
Denise Matthys
Steve & Melinda
Gary Studer
Jan Oprea
Janet Vargo
Delta Rose
Lena
Caroline Studer
Laura Buono Domsic
The Windstrups
Ruth Dekker
Rick Parker
Barbara Morton
Cary and Jennifer Pearson
Carol Finley
Winnie Owen
Holly Letnich
Jaden Mendez

Doug and Sue Matthews
Janet Terpstra
Robert Urich
Richard Simmons
Glen Nahler
Virginia Marshall
Tammy
Tom
Jana Tolley
Larry Perryman
Ric Jaeggi
Florance Cody
Josephine Kim
Mark
Paulina Martinez
Charity Lynn
Sharon LaFlech
Shannon
Kathy and Chuck Pumnea
Carol Figley
Chestine
David Hamblin
Robin C.
Nick
Judy
Breeanne
Charlotte Abernethy
Joe Petersen
Susan Agbor
Mom Bechtler
A Close Friend
Jason Lavalley
Gloria
John Shields
John Miramontes
Beth Ham
Suzanne Cyr

2 Kings 2:1-12

2 Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. 2 Elijah 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. 3 The 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."

4 Elijah 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. 5 The 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."

6 Then 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. 7 Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. 8 Then 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.

9 When 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." 10 He 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." 11 As 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. 12 Elisha 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.

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing clearly the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus's sake. ⁶ For it is the God who said, "Light will 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 Christ.

Mark 9:2-9

2 Six 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, 3 and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. 4 And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. 5 Then 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." 6 He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. 7 Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" 8 Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

9 As 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.

Uninhibited and Unveiled

2 Kings 2:1-12; Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; Mark 9:2-9

Jesus and the disciples continued to go around Galilee for most of their public ministry. As we have been hearing about over the past several weeks, they performed healings, cast out demons, and preached the good news of new creation and new life. There were breathtaking miracles that defied the natural order of things, like multiplying food to feed thousands, calming a storm, and walking on water. There were challenging but important interactions with people of different contexts and different belief systems, inspiring growth in their understanding of what it truly meant to love all and serve all. And of course, everywhere they went so went the large crowds of people—pressing in and all around, thirsty for the water of life that was being offered by this Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus loved them and took compassion upon them, offering the fullness of his good news with word and action—offering wholeness by sharing Wisdom, sharing meals, sharing fellowship, and sharing health. As we learned last week, in the midst of all of this Jesus sometimes needed to get away. He needed to go out into the wild spaces in order to care for himself and experience the renewal necessary to keep going. Perhaps we can think of the Transfiguration as the ultimate experience of seeking healing and finding renewal out in the wild spaces!

According to the narrative leading up to today's gospel passage, Jesus had had a particularly heavy conversation with his followers. It was THE conversation about how he would undergo great suffering, be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed. It was THE conversation in which Simon Peter, desperate in his anticipatory grief, tried to talk Jesus out of taking the path that would lead to all that terrible pain...and in which Jesus, heartbroken at his beloved disciple's grief, snapped on him with those infamous words: "Get behind me, Satan!" He had then stood before the large crowd and let them know that following him would mean that they themselves would also have to take up crosses, would also have to risk losing their lives for his sake and for the sake of the gospel. So high were the stakes of creating a new Kingdom that would stand in opposition to the oppressive violence of the Roman empire and the other powers and principalities of the planet! For, the new Kingdom was near, and so the forces that would seek to prevent that Kingdom were going to be active like never before—those demons and legions and rulers with hearts of stone. Indeed, Jesus had closed that heavy, urgent conversation by saying, "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here [today] who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power!"

That heavy, heavy conversation weighed on him for six whole days, during which it must have replayed over and over again. He must have ruminated on it and its implications for all of these beloved human beings who were now committed to him. And so, after six days, he decided that it was time to go back out into the wild spaces, this time up a mountain. Perhaps recognizing that some of his disciples might need some healing as well, he took James, John, and, significantly, Simon Peter, with him. And this time something truly astonishing happened. "He was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus."

I am always fascinated beyond measure by the Transfiguration. It is one of those moments when the spaces between the planes of existence become thin—when time and space and the spiritual and the physical lose their definition and boundaries, blurring into a single reality. Really, I think of it as a glimpse into heaven—where generations of ancestors from a variety of contexts can come together and commune seamlessly, as though epochs and geography were not barriers. I wonder how Jesus himself would have comprehended this event, let alone the disciples who were with him! What did it mean that in the midst of his sacred spiritual practice of self-care to recover from that heaviest of conversations, he was met by the two greatest heroes the Israelites had ever known—Moses the great liberator and Elijah the great prophet? Why were they there? *How* were they there? Well, to answer both of those questions, I am convinced that this was one of those moments when the great God of all the cosmos, the one whom Jesus called "Father," reached out and touched the physical world, directly intervening in the course of history. After all, we hear a voice coming out of the clouds at the end of this encounter speaking the same words that were spoken at his baptism: "This is my Son, the Beloved"...but I get ahead of myself! Let me not jump to the end!

I think that God directly intervened because God understood that this was one of those moments when that beloved son was most in need of uninhibited, unveiled expression of love and encouragement. You see, not only had he just come face to face with the anticipatory grief of his beloved disciples, but I think doing so had unleashed his own anticipatory grief. I think that having that heavy conversation had brought everything into focus for him, had made concrete just exactly what was going to happen in the very near future. I think that although he was putting a brave face on for his followers, he was probably scared and sad—scared of the suffering he would have to endure, scared of the suffering that this might unleash upon his beloved followers, sad that the world was in such a state that such horrific suffering was even a reality, and sad that very soon he would be leaving the people in the world whom he loved so deeply. And God knew just what to do.

God sent Moses, who had stood up to an empire and liberated his people in the face of horrible suffering so long ago. And God sent Elijah, who had stood up to the leaders of his own people who would cause horrible suffering in defiance of God's will. For, Jesus himself was about to stand up to an empire and to the leaders of his own people—to Caesar and Herod, to the legionnaires and the Sadducees. God sent Moses and Elijah, who had both had to go through the process of preparing their followers to live without them, to carry on the mission without them. God sent Moses and Elijah, who had both had their own moments of brokenness and desperation, fearing for themselves and their loved ones and grieving in anticipation of what might happen. God sent Moses and Elijah, who had both had their own moments upon mountaintops with God directly intervening to show them uninhibited, unveiled love and encouragement—upon Sinai and Horeb with a presence that would cause faces to shine with pure light and a voice that would whisper in the stillness after the storm. These two heroes of old would understand more than anyone else in all of time and space what Jesus was already going through and what Jesus was about to go through. They would know what to say to encourage him and inspire him. They would know how to listen to him so that he knew he was being heard.

What I wouldn't give to know the contents of that conversation between Jesus, Moses, and Elijah! What a conversation it must have been—the liberator of Israel, the troubler of Israel, and the savior of the world all talking with honesty and vulnerability about fear and grief, giving each other genuine words of love and encouragement, and listening to each other! It was mystical. It was powerful. It was effective. Afterwards, Jesus had the strength to keep going, to begin his steady march to yet another mountaintop, a mountaintop called Calvary in Jerusalem.

But that's not all, because they were not all who were up there! Let's not forget that James, John, and Simon Peter were also there witnessing the whole thing. That was no accident or coincidence! As the ones closest to Jesus, they were also afraid and grieving. They also needed to be inspired. They also needed to experience God's direct action. They also needed to feel God's uninhibited, unveiled love and encouragement. AND, they needed to observe and learn how to give Jesus the support he needed moving forward. They needed to observe and learn from the way Moses and Elijah and Jesus were honest and vulnerable with each other. For, in the days to come they would need to be there for Jesus, and they would need to be there for each other. Perhaps this is why that voice from the clouds gave such a clear command: "Listen to him!" Listen to him because he needs loving hearts and attentive ears to share in his hopes and fears! Listen to him because he has so much to say that you need to hear! Listen to him because when all is said and done the mission is yours to carry on!

Friends, as we approach the season of Lent, starting on Ash Wednesday this very week, let us take the time to reflect on how we, also, live with fear and anticipatory grief. As we begin to mark the season of Jesus' march to Calvary, let us ponder how much power these two forces have over us—over the ways that we view the world, the ways that we act in the world, and the ways that we allow the world to act in us. Most importantly, let us seek to understand the truth that at every moment of every day God is reaching out to us in the midst of our fear and grief to offer us uninhibited, unveiled love and encouragement. The thing is, though, that we have to be willing to climb the mountain to meet God there. We have to open our eyes to the dazzling light of God's constant, glorious presence. We have to open our ears to the still, small voice. We have to open our imaginations to the creative ways that God is meeting us and encouraging us and loving us—in moments of breathtaking natural beauty, in honest and vulnerable conversations, in the support of loved ones, in the

mystical miracles of everyday life, no matter how hard everyday life might be. And the more we access God's uninhibited, unveiled love and encouragement, the more that we ourselves will shine. And the more that we shine, the more that others will see the light and feel the warmth of God's love and encouragement. And that light and warmth will pass from person to person, lighting up the world in ways that we cannot even imagine! Perhaps this is how the Kingdom comes—through transfiguration. Listen! Can you hear that voice coming from the clouds? "This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him!" Amen

192 Lord, the Light of Your Love

Is Shining

Shine, Jesus, Shine

Capo 2: (G) A (C) D (G) A (D) E (G) A

1 Lord, the light of your love is shin - ing, in the
2 Lord, I come to your awe - some pres - ence, from the
3 As we gaze on your king - ly bright-ness, so our

(C) D (G) A (D) E (C) D (D) E

midst of the dark - ness, shin - ing; Je - sus, Light of the
shad - ows in - to your ra - diance; by the blood I may
fac - es dis - play your like - ness; ev - er chang - ing from

(Bm7) C#m7 (Em7) F#m7 (C) D (D) E (Bm7) C#m7

World, shine up - on us; set us free by the truth you now
en - ter your bright-ness. Search me; try me; con - sume all my
glo - ry to glo - ry, mir - rored here may our lives tell your

(Em7) F#m7 (F) G (Dsus)(D) E G (F) G (Dsus)(D) Esus E

bring us. Shine on me; shine on me.
dark - ness. Shine on me; shine on me.
sto - ry. Shine on me; shine on me.

Refrain (G) (D) (Em) (C) (G) (Am7) (C) (D7) (C) (D)
A E F#m D A Bm7 D E7 D E

Shine, Je - sus, shine; fill this land with the Fa - ther's glo - ry.

(G) (D) (Em) (C) (G) (Am) (Am/G) (F) (D7sus)(D7)
A E F#m D A Bm Bm/A G E7sus E7

Blaze, Spir - it, blaze; set our hearts on fire.

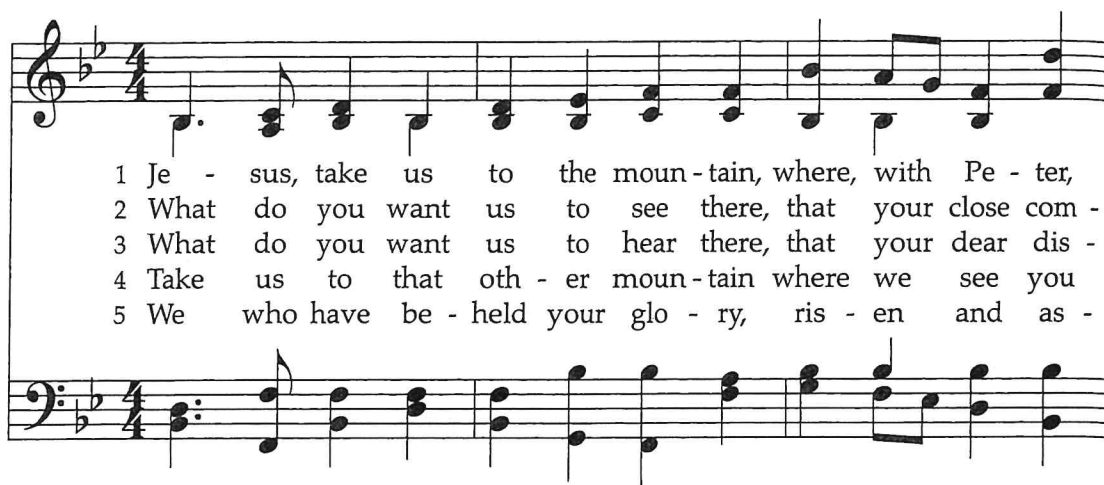
(G) (D) (Em) (C) (G) (Am7) (C) (D7) (C) (D)
A E F#m D A Bm7 D E7 D E

Flow, riv - er, flow; flood the na - tions with grace and mer - cy.

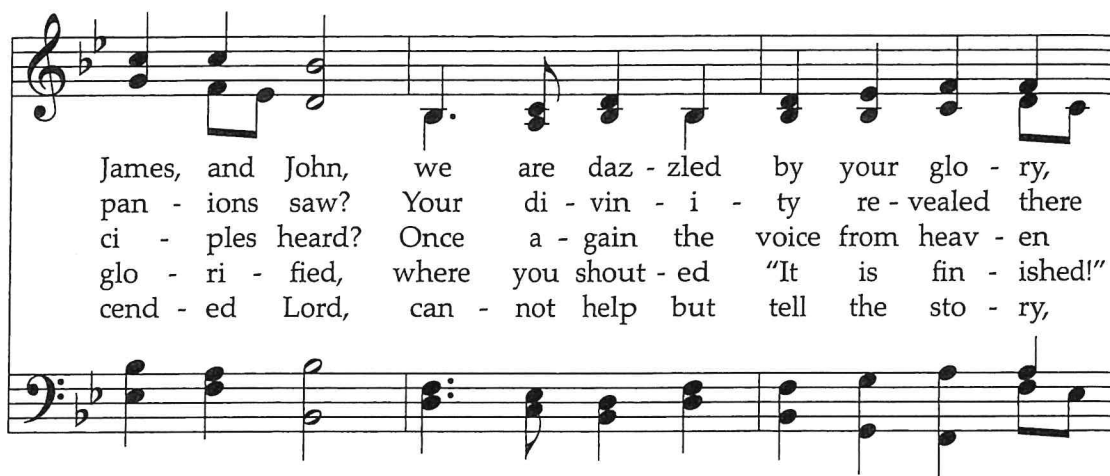
(G) (D) (Em) (C) (G) (Am) (D7) (G)
A E F#m D A Bm E7 A

Send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.

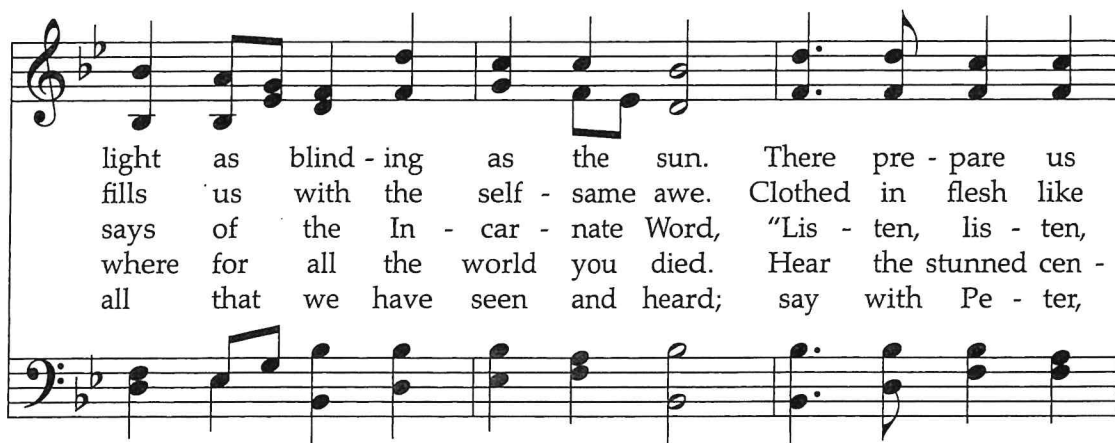
193 Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain



1 Je - sus, take us to the moun - tain, where, with Pe - ter,
 2 What do you want us to see there, that your close com -
 3 What do you want us to hear there, that your dear dis -
 4 Take us to that oth - er moun - tain where we see you
 5 We who have be - held your glo - ry, ris - en and as -



James, and John, we are daz - zled by your glo - ry,
 pan - ions saw? Your di - vin - i - ty re - vealed there
 ci - ples heard? Once a - gain the voice from heav - en
 glo - ri - fied, where you shout - ed "It is fin - ished!"
 cend - ed Lord, can - not help but tell the sto - ry,



light as blind - ing as the sun. There pre - pare us
 fills us with the self - same awe. Clothed in flesh like
 says of the In - car - nate Word, "Lis - ten, lis - ten,
 where for all the world you died. Hear the stunned cen -
 all that we have seen and heard; say with Pe - ter,



for the night by the vi - sion of that sight.
 ours you go, matched to meet our dead - liest foe.
 ev - ery - one: this is my be - lov - ed Son."
 tur - i - on: "Tru - ly this was God's own Son!"
 James, and John: "You are God's be - lov - ed Son!"