



ABOUT THE PROPER

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



Last Sunday after Epiphany Transfiguration of Our Lord February 15, 2026



Identity Revealed: Jesus Is the Son of God in Glory

On the mount of transfiguration we see the God of Majestic Glory, who became a man to suffer and die for us, just as Moses and the Prophets had foretold. The festival of the Transfiguration of our Lord serves as a one-week bridge between the season of Epiphany, where Jesus is revealed as the true Son of God, and the season of Lent, where we witness what the Son of God came to do.

First Lesson ¹ Exodus 24:9-18

How different Mt. Sinai was from the Mount of Glory! Moses entered into thick darkness (Exodus 20:21) to receive the Law of God and the two-sided covenant for Israel. When he came down from the mountain and found Israel dancing before a golden calf, he could see how man would never be able to keep this Law. Yet on the Mount of Glory in the midst of a bright cloud, Moses saw God's new covenant in the person of Jesus Christ. Here was the Man who would not just keep the covenant, but who would be the covenant for all mankind. On Mt. Sinai, the people covered in fear at the glory of God which looked like a consuming fire. But on the Mount of Glory, that same glory looked like a man—a man who touched his disciples and gave them the message of the covenant fulfilled, "Don't be afraid!"

Second Reading ¹ 2 Peter 1:16-21

"We were eyewitnesses of his majesty." Only two remained, since Herod had killed James years earlier. But for Peter and John, that day on the sacred mountain continued to shape their lives. From John 1 to 2 Peter, these men who had seen Christ's glory testified that the man Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God. Peter promised that the Lord Jesus Christ would come again in power, and he offers us a three-fold assurance of his reliability: Peter was an eyewitness of the glory of Christ; Peter heard the Majestic Glory call Jesus the Son of God; Peter had the word of the prophets which were inspired by the Spirit and fulfilled in Christ.

Gospel ¹ Matthew 17:1-9

Six days earlier, Peter had his moment of great triumph and great failure. After witnessing the ministry and miracles of Jesus, his mouth confessed what his heart believed: You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. But his great failure of faith came immediately thereafter when he wanted no part with a crucified Christ. Six days later, God gave him proof for what his faith confessed, and hope in the face of what his heart feared. God showed Peter, James, and John all the glory that belonged to the Son of God shining out in the person of Jesus. They heard God the Father testify that this was his own Son. They understood that Jesus' death and departure were a fulfillment of the Old Testament promises of God. As Peter said, it is good for us to be on this mountain and see this Jesus, because it prepares us for Lent, and it prepares us for life. We have seen his glory, so we know he goes to his suffering and death willingly, lovingly, to be our Savior. We have seen his glory, so we know that no matter the sorrow or darkness we face in this life, we are going to heaven.

Psalm of the Day ⁴ Psalm 2 A "You Are My Son"

The Church sings Psalm 2 in services that emphasize the relationship of the Father and the Son. The Son rules with the same authority as the Father even when government officials try to thwart God's rule. The New Testament frequently quotes this psalm as applying to Christ, the Son of David. Martin Luther said, "Psalm 2 is a prophecy of how Christ will suffer and become King and Lord of the entire world. This psalm promises that those who believe in Christ will be blessed. Through Christ, God has delivered us from sin, death, and hell, and brought us to eternal life. This is the blessing that we pray for in the Second Petition of the Lord's Prayer, that his kingdom come."

Gospel Acclamation Mark 9:7

“A cloud covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: ‘This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!’” The voice of God the Father from the cloud (a symbol of God’s presence) declares Jesus to be his beloved Son, repeating his announcement from Jesus’ baptism. The Father’s command to listen to Jesus reminds us that we are saved through the Word of Christ.

Prayer of the Day

O God, in the glorious transfiguration of your only-begotten Son, you confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the testimony of Moses and Elijah, and in the voice that came from the bright cloud, you foreshadowed our adoption as your sons. In your mercy, make us co-heirs of glory with Jesus our King, and bring us at last to heaven; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn of the Day 388 “Down from the Mount of Glory” (Werner Franzmann, 1905-1996)

The hymnist tells the story of Jesus on the Mt. of Transfiguration (vv1-2), and his subsequent journey to the cross on the Mount of Calvary, to suffer in our place (vv3-4). **Two different mountains: one showing our Lord’s majesty, the other his humility** – both needed to save us.

Church Year Season ² Epiphany

The readings during the Epiphany season carry forward the emphasis in the readings for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the theme of Jesus revealing himself to us as God and Savior. At the same time the readings present us with a real conundrum. The conundrum is that he hides the manifestations of his deity, so that his glory remains a secret and a mystery, even while he is revealing it. All the riddles are present in the readings for the Feast of the Epiphany. The theme present in all of the Epiphany readings is: he shows his hidden glory to those he calls. You may notice that in many of the Epiphany season readings appropriation is much easier than application. There is a good reason for that: in Christmas and Epiphany our attention is on getting to know Jesus, who he is and how he works; thus there is not so much emphasis on our response beyond the response of faith, which itself is always seen as his work and not ours.

Colors & Symbolism White

White is the color of our Triune God and heaven. It also symbolizes joy, celebration, gladness, light, purity and innocence. We receive these blessings through faith because Christ, our righteousness Savior, has forgiven all our sins.

Traditions & Customs Transfiguration of Our Lord

Transfiguration is a distinctly Lutheran addition to the Christian calendar. In the 16th century, Johannes Bugenhagen and Veit Dietrich placed the celebration at the end of Epiphany before Lent, remembering that Jesus descended the Mount of Glory and set his face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51). On Transfiguration, the Church says “farewell” to alleluias. The Church refrains from using her most jubilant words of praise during the muted celebration of Lent. The alleluias will return with the risen Lord at the celebration of Easter.

Nain Paraments Christmas

Superfrontal: “Immanuel” is Hebrew for “God with us.” This name for Jesus Christ was revealed to God’s people through Isaiah in a prophecy of the Savior’s birth (7:14). The angel Gabriel announced to Joseph in a dream that the child in the Virgin Mary’s womb would be that promised Immanuel – God who had come to be with us (Matthew 1:23) in order to save us. Sometimes the name is spelled *Emmanuel*, which is the Latin alphabet transliteration of the Hebrew pronunciation of the same name.

The vines next to Immanuel represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God’s children, the branches (John 15:5).

Lectern antependium: *The Greek Cross*: distinguished by four arms of equal length.

Pulpit antependium: *The Celtic Cross*: similar to the Latin cross (†), but with a circle surrounding the center, which symbolizes the eternal nature of Christ and the gift of eternal life to all who believe in him.

¹ Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year A”. Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author.

² Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year B”. Daniel M. Deutschlander, Author.

³ Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year C”. Joel J. Gawrisch, Author.

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