



TRANSFIGURATION OF
THE LORD
August 9, 2020

St. Stephen's is a Christian community in the making.

At the intersection of what was and what will be, we invite you to gather with us around prayer, food, and the simple conviction that nothing is wasted in God's economy.

All are welcome at St. Stephen's.

Whether you come with great faith or great doubt,
regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation or marital status,
whatever your financial status or housing situation –
we hope you can find a home with us
as we explore together what it means to follow Jesus.

Ministry Team

Priest & Lead Pastor	The Reverend Jeff Potter jeff@ststephensmaple.ca (416) 569-4263
Honorary Assistant	The Reverend Mary Pataki mary@ststephensmaple.ca
Director of Music	Scott Weidler scott@ststephensmaple.ca
Pastor to Children and Families	Becky Potter becky@ststephensmaple.ca
Pastor of Outreach	Karen Shea karen@ststephensmaple.ca
Lay Pastoral Associate	Matthew Neugebauer matthew@ststephensmaple.ca
Sexton	Tieg Dawe tieg@ststephensmaple.ca



ST. STEPHEN'S

ANGLICAN CHURCH, MAPLE

Preparation

*Whether you participate in worship in a small group or alone,
know that you are joined together with the whole St. Stephen's community
and the wider church as we offer our prayers and praise to God.*

*Consider setting a candle or two out in the space you're using for worship,
as a reminder of God's presence. Light the candles, and say:*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all.

Almighty God,
to you all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hidden.
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Seek the Lord

Seek the Lord while he wills to be found;
call upon him when he draws near.
Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the evil ones their thoughts;
And let them turn to the Lord, and he will have compassion,
and to our God, for he will richly pardon.
For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
nor your ways my ways, says the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways,
and my thoughts than your thoughts.
For as rain and snow fall from the heavens
and return not again, but water the earth,
Bringing forth life and giving growth,
seed for sowing and bread for eating,
So is my word that goes forth from my mouth;
it will not return to me empty;
But it will accomplish that which I have purposed,
and prosper in that for which I sent it. *(Isaiah 55.6–11)*

Collect of the Day

Almighty God,
on the holy mount you revealed to chosen witnesses
your well-beloved Son, wonderfully transfigured:
mercifully deliver us from the darkness of this world,
and change us into his likeness from glory to glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

First Reading: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

Daniel wrote, "As I watched, thrones were set in place, and an Ancient One took his throne, his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and flowed out from his presence. A thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood attending him. The court sat in judgement, and the books were opened. As I watched in the night visions, I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven. And he came to the Ancient One and was presented before him. To him was given dominion and glory and kingship, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship is one that shall never be destroyed."

Psalm 99

The Lord is king; let the people tremble; he is enthroned upon the Cherubim; let the earth shake.
The Lord is great in Zion; he is high above all peoples.

Let them confess his name, which is great and awesome; he is the Holy One.

"O mighty King, lover of justice, you have established equity;
you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob."

**Proclaim the greatness of the Lord our God and fall down before his footstool;
he is the Holy One.**

Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among those who call upon his name,
they called upon the Lord, and he answered them.

**He spoke to them out of the pillar of cloud;
they kept his testimonies and the decree that he gave them.**

"O Lord our God, you answered them indeed;
you were a God who forgave them, yet punished them for their evil deeds."

**Proclaim the greatness of the Lord our God and worship him upon his holy hill;
for the Lord our God is the Holy One.**

Second Reading: 2 Peter 1:16-19

We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain. So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Gospel: Luke 9:28-36

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" not knowing what he said. While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

Reflection – Matthew

The following reflection can be watched online by clicking [here](#) or can be read in full below. Please feel free to engage with either or both options, and know that whatever you choose will enable you to fully participate in the worship of our community.

Peter and companions on a mountain, "weighed down with sleep." At least *this* time they manage to stay awake: the next time, not so much. But even here, we think Peter wants to control the situation, contain it within the confines of what he can handle. He sees something so tremendous, and his first instinct is to build "three dwellings, one for [Jesus], one for Moses, and one for Elijah." The excited thought escapes his mouth so fast, the knee-jerk is so automatic, that even he doesn't know what he's saying.

But there was some part of Peter that saw these "dwellings" as a good idea worth pursuing. What might that good idea entail? In the ancient world, mountains were often thought of as "thin spaces": places where humans could more readily encounter the gods, if they could make the ascent. Mountains are higher, closer to the heavens, so thinking went that the "wi-fi connection" to the gods was strongest there. And the best way to secure this connection was to literally *enshrine* it, to build a temple at the site of the encounter or maybe to record it in a sacred text.

Even the monotheistic Scriptures that Peter grew up with record a number of mountainous "thin spaces." A few of them come to mind: most of them temporary, and one of them seemingly permanent. Chief among them are Moses' encounters with God on Mount Sinai: the Burning Bush where Moses hears God's name, where, in a dark cloud, God later inscribes the Ten Commandments and utters the Law. This last experience leaves Moses' face in dazzling white. Another dramatic episode is Elijah's fiery confrontation with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, which is followed by his own encounter with God on Sinai (also known as Horeb) in the "still small voice." Finally, there is the seemingly permanent "thin space" on Mount Zion, the Temple where God declares, "my name shall be there."

While these Scriptures continually resist the notion that God needed a good wi-fi connection to meet us, they still show us that God sometimes used this construct of human imagination to reinforce for everyone that he had truly given an authoritative word to the person who encountered him, and that the priestly functions of the Temple were truly the place of *continual* encounter and atonement. It was as if to say, “look: this person has met me on a mountain. Listen to him.”

So perhaps Peter’s instinct to build a trio of tabernacles is closer to the mark than we often think. He wants to enshrine this encounter because he’s able to recognize that something new has happened in Jesus, a culmination of Moses’ nation-forming Law and Elijah’s prophetic confrontation with the powers of the world. And the extent to which Peter is wrong? Well, the cloud takes care of that: “‘This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!’ When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone.” There is no more Burning Bush, no more stone tablets, no more altars to prove God’s lordship over Baal, and the Jerusalem Temple’s days are numbered. There is Jesus, the Son and Chosen of God, standing alone: the Name of God, the reign of God, our encounter with God, are all found in Jesus himself. So all that Peter has to do to faithfully attend to God’s authority, and all anyone who reads his story has to do, is follow Jesus, listen to Jesus.

Of course, following and listening to Jesus, encountering God in Jesus, is more complicated than it sounds. Thankfully, the stories from Israel’s Scriptures are there to help us understand what this might entail. If Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law, then his followers continue to be a people bound together by the law of mutual love and care as our “true worship” of God. If Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophets, then his followers continue to give place to the Holy Spirit’s word of challenge that calls us to seek God more deeply, to love and serve God more fully, in our love and care for our neighbour. If Jesus is the Name of God, the reign of God, our encounter with God, then we continue to be a people who seek that encounter, especially as he comes to us now in Word and Sacrament.

We continue to be this people, even in a time of transitions: in the case of St. Stephen’s a transition in leadership, in the case of the Church more broadly a transition into a thoroughly secular, pluralist society. And right now, the transition to some as-yet-unsorted mix of digital and in-person form of church life, now that physical distancing has “pushed the cat out of the bag” on the need for churches to better integrate their online presence as part of their ministry. We very much look forward to one day gathering again in our cozy brick building at Keele and Major Mack, even though we don’t yet know when that’ll be. Like Peter’s own ancient desire to build and use buildings on the mountain, our desire to use our church building can be right and good: God still taps into our need for physical gathering spaces. But as Jeff’s email mentioned, we’re also going to be trying some new things online in the next few weeks, things that continue to be necessary given the need for physical distancing, but might continue be an integral part of many churches’ ministries going forward.

Whatever that future of church life looks like in the coming months and years, let us pray that through it all, we continue to follow Jesus, listen to Jesus, encounter God in Jesus, and put our hope and trust in him. Above all, let us pray:

“Holy God,
we see *your glory* in the face of Jesus Christ.
May we who are partakers of his table
reflect his life in word and deed,
that all the world may know
his power to change and save.
We ask this in his name.”

Amen.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again
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.

Prayers of the People

*As a community of people made one in Christ, we offer our prayers to God for ourselves,
our community, and the world. Feel free to adapt these prayers as you like,
and to make use of the spaces indicated to add your own prayers and petitions.*

Let us pray together to the Lord, saying, "Lord, hear our prayer."

Lord, hear our prayer.

Loving God, we thank you for your many gifts to us,
for the love which brings us together,
for the earth which provides for our needs,
for the new life you have given us in Jesus Christ, (for . . .).

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray to you for our Christian family (especially for . . .)
and for grace to grow in your love.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray to you for our world, for all its cares and needs,
and for all who lead us and care for us, (especially . . .)

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray to you for those in need, for the sick and the lonely,
for the hurt and the frightened, and for those who live without hope (especially . . .).

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those we love who have died, that you will surround them with your care and love
(especially . . .)

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for one another, asking you to bless us, our friends, and relatives.
Bless the places where we work, and bless our home and our life together.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us now name before God those for whom we offer our personal prayers.

*A period of silence is kept as we offer silent prayer
and listen for the leading of the Spirit.*

Let us remember before God our selfish ways, the things we have done wrong,
the sorrows we have caused, the love we have not shown.

Most merciful God, forgive us our sins against you and against each other.

**Strengthen us to overcome our weaknesses,
that we may live in love as you would have us live,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.**

Lord, you have called us to serve you.

**Grant that we may walk in your presence
and experience the present truth of resurrection:
your love in our hearts, your truth in our minds,
your strength in our wills, until, at the end of our journey,
we know the joy of our homecoming and the welcome of your embrace,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
**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, the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

May joy and nothing less find us on our way.
May we be blessed and be a blessing.
And may light guide us, and countless others, all the way home.
Amen.

May we go in peace, have courage, hold on to what is good,
return no one evil for evil, strengthen the faint-hearted,
support the weak, help the suffering, honor everyone, love and serve God,
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.
Thanks be to God.

MUSIC

Following are several hymns that you may want to sing and/or listen to.
Music and texts, as well as sample links, are provided.

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise



1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
3 To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small;
4 Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light;



in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;
in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;
thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;



most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
we blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,
all laud we would ren - der; oh, help us to see



al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise!
thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - eth thee.
'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824–1908, alt.
Music: ST. DENIO, Welsh traditional

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spE-BE23qxA>

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser - vice bore the weight of hu-man need,
2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun - gry cry for bread;
3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi - sion, till your love's re - veal-ing light
4 Called by wor-ship to your ser - vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up - on the cross, for - sak - en, worked your mer-cy's per - fect deed:
still the cap - tives long for free - dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.
in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up - on our quick-ened sight,
to the child, the youth, the a - ged, love in liv - ing deeds to show;



we, your ser - vants, bring the wor - ship not of voice a - lone, but heart;
As you, Lord, in deep com-pas - sion healed the sick and freed the soul,
mak-ing known the needs and bur - dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,
hope and health, good-will and com - fort, coun - sel, aid, and peace we give,



con - se - crat - ing to your pur - pose ev - 'ry gift which you im - part.
by your Spir - it send your pow - er to our world to make it whole.
stir-ring us to ar - dent ser - vice, your a - bun - dant life to share.
that your ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom may your mer - cy know and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984
Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844
Text © Oxford University Press

Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-726148

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqpeGrFud8M&t=35s>

For other hymns, check out:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGLVPtOYRgM>



ST. STEPHEN'S

ANGLICAN CHURCH, MAPLE

10103 Keele Street
Maple, Ontario, L6A 3Y8
416-569-4263
www.ststephensmaple.ca