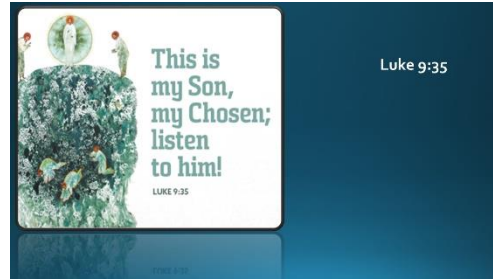


The Readings on This Day

***Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)

The Transfiguration of Our Lord—the Last Sunday after the Epiphany

On the Lutheran calendar, the Sunday before Ash Wednesday is a celebration of the mystery of Christ, as Jesus' divinity is shown forth on the Mount of Transfiguration. In other traditions the Transfiguration is celebrated on August 6, which date is now marked by the memory of the bombing of Hiroshima. The three-year lectionary sets the Transfiguration as the climax of the time after the Epiphany, a final glorious manifestation of the mystery of Jesus Christ before the season of Lent. Martin Luther had first proposed this calendar change.



[Exodus 34:29-35](#)

The story of Moses' veil is one of the three Old Testament passages that the lectionary places next to the Transfiguration. Moses can look directly at Jesus; the disciples are able to see the shining divinity of Christ; and in the resurrection by faith, so can we all.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

Having heard the story of Moses' veil, we respond by joining in [Psalm 99](#). This royal psalm, which lauds God as great, awesome, holy, and mighty, refers to Moses and the divine cloud. It is as we in our church building are now on "God's holy hill."

[2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2](#)

Contemporary devout Jews do not think of the Torah's representation of God as shining so radiantly that they cannot approach it. However, Paul's encounter with the risen Christ (1 Cor. 15:8) had led him to regard Judaism as a veil that could be removed in Christ. The Spirit of God means to transform us, just as Jesus was himself transformed by God. Paul's interpretation of passages from the Hebrew Scriptures begins the Christian practice of seeing in biblical Judaism the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ and the vocabulary we use in speaking of salvation.

[Luke 9:28-36 \[37-43a\]](#)

We too have encountered the presence of God, not on a Palestinian mountain, but in Jesus Christ. We too are called children of God, thanks to our baptism into Christ. Here on Sunday we listen to him, and for us now and at the end of time Jesus is the transforming manifestation of God. The optional verses are the one place in the three-year lectionary with the story of the healing of the epileptic boy. To proclaim both stories is to tie the inexpressible glory of God with the power of Jesus to exorcize evil.