



26 February 2017
Transfiguration

Welcoming the Stranger – Welcoming the Christ

“Thinking allowed; thinking aloud allowed”

Minister: Rev Dr Robyn McPhail
Musicians: Kato Akau'ola KK Clyde Foster Kaeo
Readers: Jean Andrewes KK tba Kaeo

An awake heart is like a sky that pours light.

Hafiz, 14th century

Activity Space at Cornerstone

Children and young people, and those who like to do something while they listen, are invited to go to the Activity Space whenever they wish.

Plugging in

Gathering with all the Saints

Hymn *There's a light upon the mountains* WOV207

Prayer

A Wee Worship Book Fifth Incarnation, p.19

Symbol of God's Presence

Hymn [KK] Here to the house of God we come AA61 [Jean's choice]
 home of the people of the Way,
 here to give thanks for all we have,
 naming our needs for every day,
 we who have roof and rent and bread,
 sure of a place to rest our head.

There is a knocking at our door,
 sound of the homeless of the world,
 voice of the frightened refugee,
 cry of the children in the cold,
 asking the least that is their right,
 safety and shelter for the night.

God who is shelter, who is home,
 in borrowed rooms you came to live,
 pleaded to save the dispossessed,
 crucified, lay in borrowed grave:
 these are no strangers in your eyes,
 this is your family which cries.

We are all tenants of your love;
 gather us round a common fire,
 warm us in company with Christ,
 give us the heart to feel, to share
 table and lodging with free hand,
 space in our living, in our land.

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[KAEO] *Holy Spirit, come confirm us* WOV327

Clarifying our Purpose

Conversation with the Word

Symbols of Christian Faith

What is your favourite symbol of faith?

What would be the symbol par excellence?

Listen in a moment to today's Gospel reading. The inter-textual voices in the background – that is, pieces of Hebrew Scripture that would be in the mind of the writer and early listeners – are chapters in Exodus, different occasions when Moses goes up the mountain and encounters the Holy One. Chapter 24, chosen in this year's cycle, speaks of “the glory of the Lord” settling on the mountain. Think of glory as something they experienced – palpable, visible even. In this case it's described as “like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain”. A storm, an extraordinary sunset, a presence of energy and imminent impact of some sort.

For Matthew Jesus is the new Moses. Remember the Sunday after Christmas, with the slaughter of the innocents? Herod behaving like Pharaoh, Jesus like Moses the target.

Listen now to the events of Jesus going the mountain.

Matthew 17:1-9

Sitting here, and having sung and prayed, and now listened to today's scripture, all things which stir our own thinking about faith, the symbol that stands out is surely LIGHT.

It is the symbol par excellence. From the very beginning, the first act of living reality: “Let there be light”. The cycle of light and darkness enables all kinds of life to proliferate.

Then, as a pillar of fire it is the Lord's guiding presence through darkness in the wilderness.

Later, when Israel's faith breaks out of its ethnic base – just for us – and the Lord is seen as Creator of all the earth, Israel is called to share the light in the vision of all the earth coming together, living in peace with justice, to be “a light to the nations”.

And of course the early Christian tradition developed quickly a central image of Jesus as the Light of the World.

This is one reason the big pole at the grand entrance to Cornerstone – Whare Karakia o Manako has at the top of it a light. (A light that is still is search of a light switch – on the list for the sparkies!) This is indeed a symbol of faith for the building and its people. For us it is symbolic of being light for the world, of being a means for Jesus' light to be visible; for others it is a symbol that speaks of being open, inclusive, spacious – obviously positive (when very often church is experienced as a particular confined viewpoint – a challenge for us to break out of that).

Light opens up space in which to move safely. Light enables vision – seeing what's around us, appreciating it, enjoying it; noticing what's needed from us, where things are not as good as they could be. Light connects with words like illuminating and enlightening.

It points to vision in its whole range of meanings.

Without light... Think of what it is like to feel in the gloom. In a black hole even.

Light is a very positive symbol, life-giving, life-enhancing, in ways that are physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual.

A symbol for what integrates all these aspects, that is, a symbol par excellence for FAITH.

Just a word about symbols. There are quite a number of symbols of Christian faith, handed down from early Christian beginnings and it could be good to explore these. The oldest symbol is not, by the way, the cross. The first symbol ever recorded was the fish. The early centuries of the church did not have a cross in view at all as it was a symbol of execution and tyranny. It still is a symbol of suffering and death. In contrast to symbolism, Jesus spoke, in Gospel reports, of taking up one's cross and following him. It is a task more than anything.

Back to symbols. To work, a symbol has to be much more than a badge or a logo. It needs to be alive, in the sense of engaging those who see it in a way that connects with them. Or if a connection is not obvious, it captivates enough to have them curious and ask questions about what it means.

So today sit with the symbol of light. Light that transfigures. Metamorphoses – that's the Greek word used – like a caterpillar becoming a butterfly.

Now transfiguring doesn't sound like an everyday thing. Listen to this story for an example of how it can be.

Laurel Dykstra, a writer with the Sojourners network, wrote:

My first night at Guadalupe House, a Catholic Worker “transition house” where I spent nearly 10 years, I sat at the wobbly-legged table amid a circle of men’s faces, black and brown and white, and looked at the peeling linoleum, tattered sheer yellow curtains, broken couches, and roach-filled corners. I had never seen a place so ugly. After a week of hospitality, laughter, community, and connection, I sat in the same seat and caught myself thinking, “What a kind and homey room this is.” Transfigured.

Hymn *Let there be light* WOV671

Conversations around the Table

Continuing the Conversation

Prayers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands

Prayer for Faith, Hope and Love

Let us pray for Faith:

That it will be the fruit of right hearing.
That at all times there will be people
with an open mind and open ears
who will listen sharply to your word
and pay attention to the needs around them.
We pray: LET US BE SUCH PEOPLE.

Let us pray for Hope:

That it will be the fruit of a living faith.
That at all times there will be people
growing towards the light,
continuously filled with courage and never cease being hopeful.
We pray: LET US BE SUCH PEOPLE.

Let us pray for Love:

That she is the fruit of a living faith and hope.
That at all times there will be people
never giving up being alarmed
about the continuing existence of the earth:
The care for animals and entire environment
that lend assistance in friendship,
that abolish loneliness,
that help working out sorrow and grieve,
that show sympathy with joy.

WE PRAY TO YOU, O LORD.

LET US RECOGNIZE ONE ANOTHER

IN DEEDS OF FAITH, HOPE AND ABOVE ALL THROUGH LOVE.

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Lord's Prayer

Sent to Carry Healing and Hope

Serving in the Week Ahead

In the community ... being Christ shaped

Offering Song *This little light of mine*

Dedication

Receive these gifts, Light of our Life. In hope and thanksgiving we offering them to you.

Blessing

Go forth into the light and share in the recreating of the world. And may God the beginning give you a new day, God the Christ take you by the hand and God the Spirit give you energy and peace.

Kia tau/The grace

...[singing] *A-men, a-men, a---men*

Robyn McPhail, 26.02.2017

NOTICES FOR TODAY – 26 FEBRUARY 2017

Parish email: admin@kkup.org.nz

Church Office at Cornerstone: 09 407 8250

Minister: Robyn McPhail (DD) 09 283 4802, 021 0247 6280

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Find us at www.kkup.org.nz and on [Facebook](#)

Notices: Jenny Phillips 09 407 8883 jenny.jane@xtra.co.nz

KK Pastoral: Jessica Scott 09 407 5555 jomscott2@gmail.com

ROSTERED FOR NEXT SUNDAY 5 MARCH 2017

Musicians: Diane Paterson KK Clyde Foster- Kaeo

Readers: Kay Blunkell KK tba Kaeo

Door and Tea: Gage and John Latell

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK:

Genesis 2:15-17 Psalm 32

Romans 5:12-19 Matthew 4:1-11

AN EVENING WITH COLIN GIBSON: details on flyer. Next Sunday 5 March at Cornerstone. NZ Hymns and Songs, and their stories. Pot Luck Meal at 5.30pm, workshop 7.00pm - 8.30pm. Suggested donation \$20.

KERIKERI SUNDAY SCHOOL PLANNING MEETING: Monday at 10am in the Children's Room. Interested in being part of a team, please feel free to attend.

BIBLE STUDY: Monday 27 February 1.30pm - 3.00pm in the Cornerstone Meeting Room, focussing on some or all of the readings above. A chance to share responses, hear some of the background, and dig out, and be fed a little for the journey of life.

KERIKERI RETIREMENT VILLAGE CHAPEL SERVICES: Every Sunday at 4.00pm at the Ted Robinson Chapel. Our parish leads the service (with Communion) **today**.

CAR BOOT SALES: Next sale is on 11 March 7am - 12noon at Cornerstone. Contact Mary 407 1117.

WOF TRAINING FOR YOUTH AND CHILDREN LEADERS: 4 March at 10.00am - 4.30am at Cornerstone run by Jill Kayser of "Kids Friendly" and Emma Page of "Northern Presbytery Youth" gold coin and bring your own lunch. Morning and afternoon tea provided. Can anyone help with child minding for this day or with morning tea?

CORNERSTONE Kerikeri is open each week day from at least 10am to 2pm. Pass the word around. Invite people to call by to visit.

VOLUNTEER HOSTS: *Can you help increase the team?* Get in touch with Robyn if you could spare a couple of hours, late morning or early afternoon, through the week. Whatever will work for you.