**St. David’s Episcopal Church**

Beanblossom, Indiana

✠Transfiguration, Year B, February 11, 2024

Sermon by the Rev. Kate Wilson

### **2 Kings 2:1-12**  **Psalm 50:1-6**2 **Corinthians 4:3-6 Mark 9:2-9**

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Good morning!

Today is the end of the football season. It is the end of the season of Epiphany. In the former, we end months of heart-stopping moments, the thrills of victories and the agonies of defeats. In the latter, Epiphany, we conclude a story of heart-stopping moments of miracles and teachings and debates with Jewish authorities, growing in our understandings of just **who** this Jesus is and why he was sent to us.

And as the ultimate days of meaningful events demand, each ends with a bang! With glory! With wonder! One could not be more public. The ad rates could not be higher. The other, Jesus demands, will remain private. Despite Peter’s best intentions, this will not become a side-show, there will be no tee-shirts, or caps, or pennants.

And the private second event, the Transfiguration, offers more. What do Peter and James and John witness, in their terror? What exactly **is** this Transfiguration?....

Everything Jesus did and taught and touched… touches us. It **gives** us something, as well. What does Jesus’ Transfiguration give each of us?

Jesus, like us, is both a physical and a spiritual being. His spiritual being is divine. **Our** bodies are finite, our souls are eternal and strive to touch and unite with the divine. The Transfiguration marks the day Jesus was changed from a being **recognizable** by his physical form into a spirit being, with just enough of his form visible for the apostles to recognize him. They also recognize spirit beings of two historic and revered ancestors: Elijah, who represents all the prophets, and Moses, who represents all the law, stand and confer with Jesus. The ultimate Epiphany message is that Jesus is indeed divine. The final Epiphany message is that Jesus is the new order, the new covenant, who summarizes and re-enl**i**vens the law and the prophets.

Yes, a spectacle. Yes, a marvel. And let’s think about what this event gives each of us.

When we spend time in our spirit, when we attend to it, feed and nurture it, our spirits, our souls transform. Have you seen it? I have been blessed to witness people transforming in a few ways. People who commit themselves and follow the path of Alcoholics Anonymous transform spiritually before your eyes. It is not quick. It may be bumpy, but by committing to that spiritual path, people grow and change and soften. I have long said “The thicker the jacket the softer the heart.” People drop their defenses, become open. Sitting in a circle of fellow travelers one day, I realized that I was in that circle too, and began to see that I, too, was transforming.

As co-leader of the diocesan deacon formation program for a number of years, I witnessed and journeyed with people who began with “I have no idea why I am here! This is crazy.” To people who were transformed into understanding and following their calls. Each was different and suited the transformed deacon.

And, as a priest, I witness people who follow a spiritual path consciously and consistently as they transform into being more forgiving of themselves and others, who have a higher purpose, and who love more freely. It is as if they are the human touching the finger of God in Michelangelo’s Sistine Chapel.

You usually can’t see this transformation in people’s jobs or clothing or daily demands. You can see it in their eyes and actions and in their sharing the wisdom of the transformed soul. We are human. Transfiguration is beyond us, and frankly, I’m relieved. You know we would build booths and sell tee-shirts, defeating the transformation and peace it brings.

There are many roads to transformation. When I was a child, I never once said, “I sure hope I can become an alcoholic and then a priest so I can transform and see others transform, too!” I was happy with wanting to be a teacher. So thanks be to God there are so many other paths. The first step toward transformation is willingness: willingness to explore and set aside time for your soul. Or being willing to renew that exploration and time for your soul, your true being. Think about tithing your time. How does devoting 10% of your time to transformation sound? Start with the 168 hours in a week. Consider your obligations to your wellbeing and that of those you love. Subtract your work time, family time, time tending to your personal health or that of another; subtract your sleeping time, your needed sabbath and entertainment time, your volunteer time. Subtract your mealtime. What have I missed? What is 10% of that remaining time? How much time is that each day? Not so much.

Where might you start? If you have a beloved practice of journaling, consciously add your soul to the page. What is your relationship with God? If you have a practice of daily prayer, consider if it is becoming rote and how to enliven it. If you have no practice at all, talk to someone who does. They can be a great source. How about Amazon? How about searching online for the local area? Is there a meditation or walking group that looks inviting? William has admiral practices; and both he and I love to listen and to share. That’s why we are here.

The Transfiguration is a great mystery, sometimes doubted. But personal transformation is real, an enormous gift Jesus practiced and handed over to us for the taking. And you don’t need to buy a hat.

Thanks be to God!