



Urbandale  
United  
Church of  
Christ  
God is still speaking,

“No matter who you are or where you are on life’s  
journey, you are invited and welcome here.”

*A Just Peace and Open and Affirming congregation*

February 14, 2021

10:00 a.m.

## TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

### PRELUDE

### INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

- If you can have multiple tabs or windows open on your device, you can pull up the bulletin for this service by going to [urbucc.org](http://urbucc.org). Words to The Prayer of Jesus and Closing Hymn will be on your screen as we go through the service.
- If you want to take a moment to set up your space for whatever helps you pray, meditate, or be mindful of God’s presence, please do that. A candle or cross or Bible or whatever helps you. Also, minimize distractions, like phones or alarms.
- We will be asking you to jot some things down, which you may be able to do on the device you are using or find a pad and pen/pencil.
- Later in the service we will read from the **Gospel of Mark, Chapter 9**, so if you have a Bible handy you might want to get it and turn to that passage. We will be reading from the New Revised Standard Version, so you can compare it with your translation.

### GREETING

“Most Christian ‘believers’ tend to echo the cultural prejudices and worldviews of the dominant group in their country, with only a minority revealing any real transformation of attitudes or consciousness. It has been true of slavery and racism, classism and consumerism and issues of immigration and health care for the poor.”

*Richard Rohr*

### CALLING OUR ATTENTION TO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

We find ourselves today on the cusp of a new season. We are ready to be done with life as it has been and want whatever is next. While vaccines promise a return to life as it was, we cannot undo all that has happened to and around us in the recent past. What we have experienced and witnessed has made significant changes to our world. Like Disciples stumbling down a mountain, eager to share with others our joy and optimism, we encounter a word of caution: “Wait until resurrection!” Could it be that the news we carry, the hope that sustains us, the transformation that renews us is best viewed through the lens of being raised? Is it necessary to revisit the waters of our baptism, where we die and are raised with Christ, in order to appropriate the full impact of God’s transforming grace? As we worship together and apart today, we may have to live with the paradox of keeping the experience of the mountaintop alive, while waiting for the right time to make it known to those awaiting what God will do next

### SONG OF HOPE

“In This Very Room”  
Steve Linn, vocalist

Ron & Carol Harris

### THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

Introduction

Declaration of Faith

Sharing of the Covenant

## TAKING STOCK OF OUR BLESSINGS AND RESOURCES

“Donate” tab at [urbucc.org](http://urbucc.org),

The United Church of Christ provides Disaster Relief funds to areas hard-hit by the storms, fires, and other natural and human-caused disasters. If you would like to know more, or contribute to the Disaster Relief fund, go to [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org).

Jot down what you have that you can share with others - sidewalk messages, a sign in a window or yard, a card or letter, phone call or e-mail to someone who is having a hard time. Allow the Spirit to guide your thoughts.

Think about how you might alter outcomes by sharing what you have with others.

## PRAYER OF GRATITUDE

God of mountaintop ecstasy and death valley shadows, we thank you for the promise of a constant partner in our journey. We thank you that you have carried us when we could not go on, and even more that you have insisted we keep going when we thought our strength was gone. That you have shown us the courage of those who have gone before us and the commitment of those who follow. That even though the path has been narrow and cluttered with the debris of conflict, loss, failure and despair, there was always a community of travelers sharing their blessings and strength with us. Forgive us, if we have relied too much on our own knowledge or made too much of what has already happened; if we have chosen a path that did not move us into your light; if we have denied others the benefit of coming with us. Open us always to the blessings all around us, so that we may take each step in gratitude and praise. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE

**Mark 9:2-9** (The New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>2</sup>Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, <sup>3</sup>and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. <sup>4</sup>And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. <sup>5</sup>Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” <sup>6</sup>He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. <sup>7</sup>Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” <sup>8</sup>Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

<sup>9</sup>As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

*There is some debate as to the significance of the appearance of Moses and Elijah with Jesus on the mountain. The most common understanding is that Moses represents The Law and Elijah represents The Prophets, two often competing strands of thought in Jewish culture. It was also widely accepted in first century Jewish culture that before the Messiah could come, Elijah must return and prepare the way. Chapter 9 of Mark’s Gospel continues with that conversation, making clear that Jesus understood John the Baptist to have fulfilled that role. (vss. 11-13)*

## MEDITATION

“Left Behind”

Pastor David Sickelka

## PASTORAL PRAYER

Take a moment now to check your own prayer list. Add the names that need to go on it, review the names of those for whom you have been praying. Has an answer or resolution come? If so, make gratitude known to others.

## LORD’S PRAYER

## CLOSING HYMN

“We Have Come at Christ’s Own Bidding”

Hymnal 182

## BLESSING

May songs of faith sustain you in the days to come. May ancient wisdom guide your steps and modern knowledge inform your choices. May the challenges before you lift you to new accomplishments and audacious hope! And may your expectations always be outstripped by God’s abundant Grace! Amen.

## POSTLUDE

## THE PRAYER OF JESUS

O God, our heavenly Father and Mother,  
may your name be sacred to us.  
May your realm become a reality for us.  
May your desires be fulfilled among us  
as they are in your courts.  
Give us today what we need for life.  
And forgive us for our wrongs  
as we forgive those who wrong us.  
Guide us in tempting situations,  
and protect us from the power of evil.  
For the realm that is coming,  
the power that is growing, and the glory  
that is building, all belong to you forever.  
Amen.

## **“We Have Come at Christ’s Own Bidding”**

**Hymnal 182**

We have come at Christ’s own bidding  
to this high and holy place,  
Where we wait with hope and longing  
for some token of God’s grace.  
Here we pray for new assurance  
that our faith is not in vain,  
Searching like those first disciples  
for a sign both clear and plain.

Light breaks through our clouds and shadows,  
splendor bathes the flesh-joined Word,  
Moses and Elijah marvel as the heavenly voice is heard.  
Eyes and hearts behold with wonder  
how the Law and Prophets meet:  
Christ with garments drenched in brightness,  
stands transfigured and complete.

Strengthen by this glimpse of glory,  
fearful lest our faith decline,  
We, like Peter, find it tempting to remain  
and build a shrine.  
But true worship gives us courage  
to proclaim what we profess,  
That our daily lives may prove us  
people of the God we bless.



# URBANDALE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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[www.urbucc.org](http://www.urbucc.org)

[www.facebook.com/UrbandaleUCC](http://www.facebook.com/UrbandaleUCC)

*“We welcome into this community of faith, and affirm the participation in all aspects of church life, persons of every age, race, gender identity and expression, nationality, ability, and sexual orientation. We will continue our efforts toward inclusiveness, and stand against all forms of discrimination. We will empower ourselves, our children, and one another to be fully present in the world, living in Christ’s image and striving for justice and peace.”*

## Staff

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*For pastoral care, please contact Pastor Dave at 276-0625 (church office), 720-6389 (cell) or david.sickelka@urbucc.org. Pastor Dave is off on Mondays but will still respond to emergencies if you call or text.*