

MUMC At-Home Worship: February 14, 2021

Happy transfiguration Sunday! In the Christian calendar, today is traditionally the day for hearing the story of Jesus' transfiguration on a mountain and with the appearance of Moses and Elijah. Since we'll be reading through the whole gospel of Mark this Lent (watch for a reading guide to be included in next week's mailing or find it on the website!) we'll be reading this story in just a few weeks. Instead, we'll take today to explore the related Old Testament passage of Elijah's ascent to heaven leaving the prophetic mantle to Elisha and consider how God might be seeking to draw something good from the most unexpected place of all: ourselves. It's good to worship with you! ~ *Pastor Dillon*

If available, place a candle in the center of your gathering space and light it with this prayer:

God of the planned and the unexpected, of faithful love and surprising grace, teach us the rhythms of your Spirit. Guide our feet, that we might follow you wherever you might lead. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

Hymn: *It's Me, It's Me, O Lord*, United Methodist Hymnal #352 [watch/listen here](#)

Scripture Reading: 2 Kings 2:1-14

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Reflect:

1. Twice in this passage, Elisha responds to prophets speaking of Elijah's departure by telling them to be quiet. Between this and his insistence that Elijah not leave him behind, it seems clear that Elisha doesn't feel ready to be left without his mentor. What emotions might Elisha have felt in this moment? Have you ever felt similarly?
2. While often seen as appropriately audacious, Elisha's request to have twice Elijah's spirit could also be the nervous request of a prophet unsure he had what it would take to do things on his own. Like so many of us, Elisha seems to be underestimating the gifts God has given him and forgotten that even with Elijah gone, he would not be left alone. What might be the difference between honest humility and discounting our God-given abilities? What gifts do you recognize in yourself that God has given you?
3. In the end, Elisha follows in Elijah's footsteps even parting the waters of the Jordan River to pass through on dry land. Where do you see yourself in this story? How might God be drawing an unexpected good from you as an incoming or outgoing leader?

Hymn: *The Voice of God Is Calling*, United Methodist Hymnal #436 [watch/listen here](#)

Prayer Requests: Share prayer requests and have a moment of silent prayer

Lord's Prayer

Hymn: *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*, The Faith We Sing hymnal #2129 [watch/listen here](#)

Closing Prayer: Holy God, you have called us all to live as your disciples. May we, like Elisha, follow the lead of the faithful who have gone before us, trusting that you will use what we have and provide all that is needed, as we serve you. Amen. (*Blow out the candle*)

It's Me, It's Me, O Lord

United Methodist Hymnal #352

Refrain:

It's me (it's me), it's me, O Lord,
standing in the need of prayer.

It's me (it's me), it's me, O Lord,
standing in the need of prayer.

1. Not my brother, not my sister,
but it's me, O Lord
standing in the need of prayer.
Not my brother, not my sister,
but it's me, O Lord
standing in the need of prayer.
2. Not the preacher, not the deacon,
but it's me, O Lord
standing in the need of prayer.
Not the preacher, not the deacon,
but it's me, O Lord
standing in the need of prayer.
3. Not my father, not my mother,
but it's me, O Lord
standing in the need of prayer.
Not my father, not my mother,
but it's me, O Lord
standing in the need of prayer.

*"It's Me, It's Me, O Lord" words and music are an
Afro-American spiritual; arr. by William Farley Smith,
1986. Arr. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing
House*

2 Kings 2:1-14 (CEB)

Now the Lord was going to take Elijah up to heaven in a windstorm, and Elijah and Elisha were leaving Gilgal. Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, because the Lord has sent me to Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives and as you live, I won't leave you." So they went down to Bethel. The group of prophets from Bethel came out to Elisha. These prophets said to Elisha, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master away from you today?" Elisha said, "Yes, I know. Don't talk about it!" Elijah said, "Elisha, stay here, because the Lord has sent me to Jericho." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives and as you live, I won't leave you." So they went to Jericho. The group of prophets from Jericho approached Elisha and said to him, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master away from you today?" He said, "Yes, I know. Don't talk about it!" Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here, because the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives and as you live, I won't leave you." So both of them went on together. Fifty members from the group of prophets also went along, but they stood at a distance. Both Elijah and Elisha stood beside the Jordan River. Elijah then took his coat, rolled it up, and hit the water. Then the water was divided in two! Both of them crossed over on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "What do you want me to do for you before I'm taken away from you?" Elisha said, "Let me have twice your spirit." Elijah said, "You've made a difficult request. If you can see me when I'm taken from you, then it will be yours. If you don't see me, it won't happen." They were walking along, talking, when suddenly a fiery chariot and fiery horses appeared and separated the two of them. Then Elijah went to heaven in a windstorm. Elisha was watching, and he cried out, "Oh, my father, my father! Israel's chariots and its riders!" When he could no longer see him, Elisha took hold of his clothes and ripped them in two. Then Elisha picked up the coat that had fallen from Elijah. He went back and stood beside the banks of the Jordan River. He took the coat that had fallen from Elijah and hit the water. He said, "Where is the Lord, Elijah's God?" And when he hit the water, it divided in two! Then Elisha crossed over. *Scripture quotations noted CEB are taken from the Common English Bible, copyright 2011. Used by permission. All rights reserved.*

The Voice of God Is Calling
United Methodist Hymnal #436

1. The voice of God is calling
its summons in our day;
Isaiah heard in Zion,
and we now hear God say:
"Whom shall I send to succor
my people in their need?
Whom shall I send to loosen
the bonds of shame and greed?"
2. "I hear my people crying
in slum and mine and mill;
no field or mart is silent,
no city street is still.
I see my people falling
in darkness and despair.
Whom shall I send to shatter
the fetters which they bear?"
3. We heed, O Lord, your summons,
and answer: "Here are we!
Send us upon your errand,
let us your servants be.
Our strength is dust and ashes,
our years a passing hour;
but you can use our weakness
to magnify your power.
4. From ease and plenty save us;
from pride of place absolve;
purge us of low desire;
lift us to high resolve;
take us, and make us holy;
teach us your will and way.
Speak, and behold! we answer;
command, and we obey!

"The Voice of God Is Calling" words are by John Haynes Holmes, 1913, music is by William Lloyd, 1840, and both are in the public domain.

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus
The Faith We Sing hymnal #2129

1. I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus,
no turning back, no turning back.
2. The world behind me, the cross before me,
the world behind me, the cross before me,
the world behind me, the cross before me,
no turning back, no turning back.
3. Though none go with me, still I will follow,
though none go with me, still I will follow,
though none go with me, still I will follow,
no turning back, no turning back.

"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" words and music by anonymous, and both are in the public domain.