

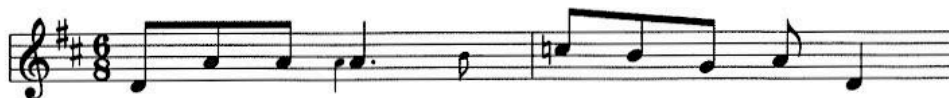


**The First Church of Monson, Congregational
United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Church
Transfiguration Sunday
Sunday, March 2, 2025**

*As a Christian community of faith and love,
we at First Church strive to accept and respect all people.*

- Core Values, 2022

Gather Us In



1. Here in this place new light is stream-ing,
 2. We are the young — our lives are a mys - t'ry,
 3. Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter,
 4. Not in the dark of build - ings con - fin - ing,



now is the dark - ness van - ished a - way,
 we are the old — who yearn for your face,
 here we will take the bread of new birth,
 not in some heav - en, light - years a - way, but



see in this space our fears and our dream - ings,
 we have been sung through - out all of his - t'ry,
 here you shall call your sons and your daugh - ters,
 here in this place the new light is shin - ing,



brought here to you in the light of this day. _____
 called to be light to the whole hu - man race. _____
 call us a - new to be salt for the earth. _____
 now is the King - dom, now is the day. _____



Gath - er us in — the lost and for - sak - en, gath - er us in — the
 Gath - er us in — the rich and the haugh - ty, gath - er us in — the
 Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion, give us to eat the
 Gath - er us in and hold us for - ev - er, gath - er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en,
 proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so low - ly,
 bread that is you; nour - ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
 make us your own; gath - er us in — all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name. _____
 give us the cour - age to en - ter the song. _____
 lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true. _____
 fire of love in our flesh and our bone. _____

WORDS: Marty Haugen (Matt. 5:13)
 MUSIC: Marty Haugen
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GATHER US IN
 Irregular

**First Church of Monson, Congregational
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Transfiguration Sunday
Sunday, March 2, 2025**

Prelude Variations on “Hyfrydol” - Charles Callahan (1951-2023)
A) Andante
B) Adagio

Welcome and Announcements

Dedication of the Lenten Meditation Booklets

Introit

***Passing of the Lord’s Peace**

***Call to Worship (responsive)**

One: Something drew us together this morning;

**All: *something we can’t name but that we experience
in worship,***

One: some holy mystery we call God;

All: *some sacred calling we hear in the life of Jesus;*

One: some indescribable hope we feel when we gather in the
Spirit.

**All: *May our experience of the Divine transform our
doubts and fears and prepare us to love the
world.***

***Morning Prayer (Unison)**

O God, You are beyond words and description and Your love is beyond knowledge and explanation. Make our hearts ready to receive You. Change us, we pray, that our lives may reflect the glory of Your transfiguration. We are often tempted to keep the experience of the Divine to ourselves, to enjoy the company of the saints instead of going back down the mountain to continue the work of the Kingdom of God. Call us down from our mountains of privilege. Expect more of us as Your disciples. Remind us always to listen to Your Son and follow Him out into the waters of humanity. Amen.

***Gloria Patri**

Glory be to the Father; and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Anthem

“Transfigure Us, O Lord”

- Bob Hurd (b. 1950)

Giving of Ourselves

Call to Offering

The needs of our world are too numerous to name. Shelter, food, clean air and water... Our gifts touch these needs, but the greatest gift we can give is to love the world so much that we give of ourselves; to come down from our places of privilege and battle injustice with our full resources. Nothing will transform need more than sacrificial love. Today's offering will now be taken...

Offertory “*Transform Us as You, Transfigured*”

(Page 7)

***Doxology**

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

***Prayer of Dedication**

Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

First Reading

Joshua 1:1-9

After the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua, son of Nun, Moses’ aide: “Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land, I swore to their ancestors to give them.

Second Reading

Matthew 17:1-8

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

Sermon

“The Mountaintop”

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Friends, if you have not yet experienced Christ’s meal here at FCM, please know that all are invited to this table. So come, take your seat, and let us join together in Holy Communion.

Rev: Peace be with you!

All: *And also with you!*

Rev: We gather around this table, set before time began.

All: *We come to this table to celebrate, share, and experience God’s life-giving love!*

Prayer of Invocation

Rev: Holy are You, God of all creation, and blessed is Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Yearning for us to know You, He came to earth to be with us. Longing for reconciliation between You and Your children, He became the broken Bread of Life. Aching for our release from the agony of sin and death, He suffered on the cross, so we might be made whole. All this, so we may gather around this table.

Words of Invitation

Friends, today is a joyful day! It is a day that we gather around Christ's table and partake in the wonder and grace of communion. All are invited to this table; this table does not belong to any one of us; this table does not belong to First Church; this table does not belong to the United Church of Christ; friends, this table belongs to God, and all whom God created have a seat at this table. So come, take your seat, you belong here...

Rev: The table is set, the time is right; Your meal, like no other, claims us.

All: *We are called to God's table of love, prepared for all people.*

Rev: The Table of Christ is long and has many chairs.

All: *There is plenty of room here!*

Rev: It is the table where LOVE is in charge of the guest list,

All: *And reservations are not required.*

Rev: Come, approach God's table of love, grace, and mercy,

All: *We come with open hands and open hearts.*

Rev: Come, just as God made you.

All: *For the gifts of grace are free.*

Rev: Come, for all things are ready...

Communion Hymn “*Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether*” (Page 8)

Words of Institution

Breaking of the Bread

One: On the night that Jesus was betrayed, He took bread, and, after giving thanks to God, broke it and said,

All: *“This is my body broken for you; do this as often as you eat, in remembrance of Me.”*

**Please partake of the bread at the moment most meaningful to you.*

Pouring of the Fruit of the Vine

One: In the same way He took the cup, looked lovingly at each face, and said,

All: “This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood; do this as often as you drink in remembrance of Me.”

**Please wait to partake of the cup until all are served; then we drink as one.*

Prayer of Gratitude

Thanks be to You, O God, for the blessings of this table. Because of Your selfless love, nations gather around one table of faith and are fed from one body and one cup. Let the peace of God, and the comfort in our future with God, rest our minds and our hearts. Now, nourished with grace and love, may we go forth to serve You; abounding in hope, strengthened by peace, overflowing with joy, and tenacious in love. Amen.

***Closing Hymn** *We Have Come at Christ’s Own Bidding* (Page 9)

***Benediction**

Postlude

“Picardy”

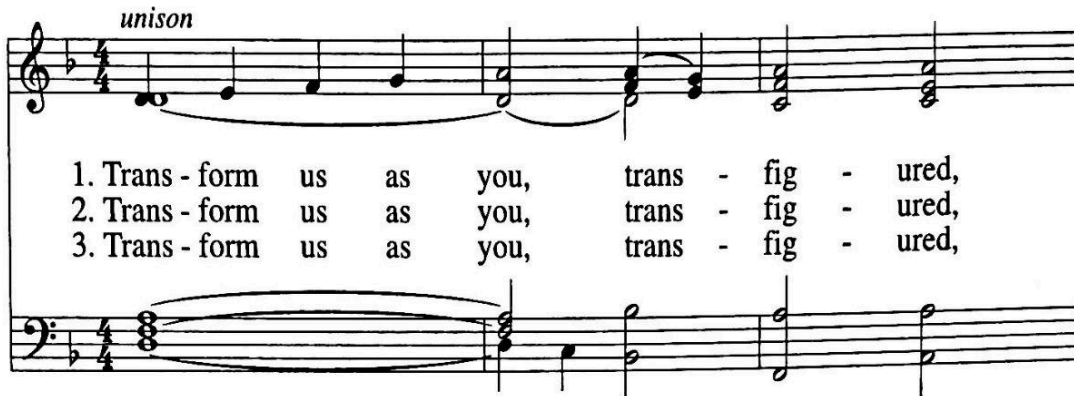
- Denis Bedard (b. 1950)

Transfiguration Sunday - White

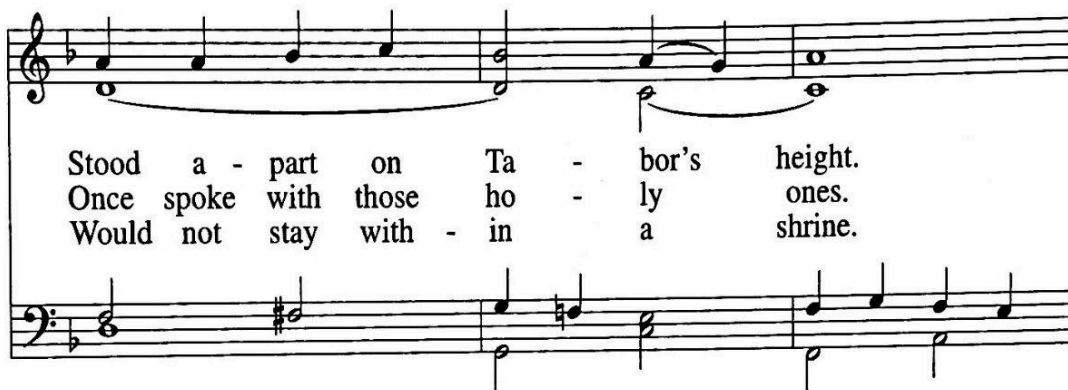
White symbolizes purity, light, and completeness. White commemorates the Transfiguration of Jesus when his face and clothes shone as white as light.

Transform Us As You, Transfigured

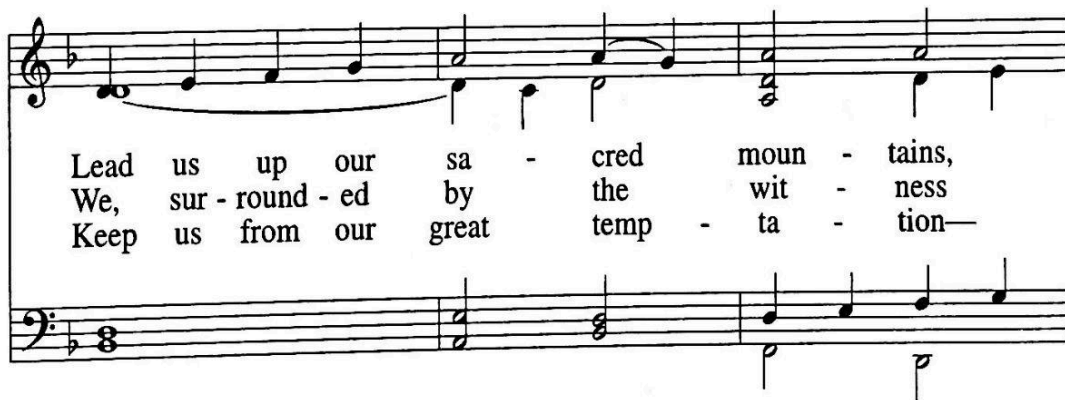
unison



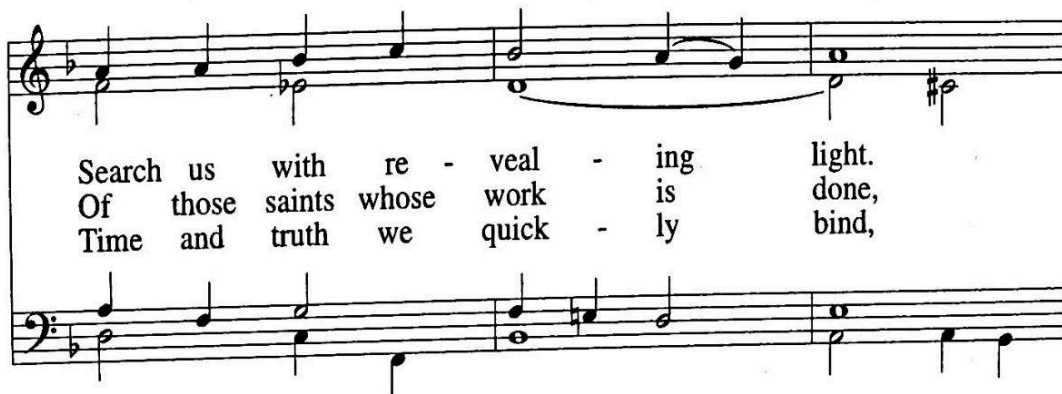
1. Trans - form us as you, trans - fig - ured,
2. Trans - form us as you, trans - fig - ured,
3. Trans - form us as you, trans - fig - ured,



Stood a - part on Ta - bor's height.
Once spoke with those ho - ly ones.
Would not stay with - in a shrine.



Lead us up our sa - cred moun - tains,
We, sur - round - ed by the wit - ness
Keep us from our great temp - ta - tion—



Search us with re - veal - ing light.
Of those saints whose work is done,
Time and truth we quick - ly bind,

Lift us from where we have fallen,
 Live in this world as your Body,
 Lead us down those daily paths.

Full of questions, filled with fright.
 Chosen daughters, chosen sons.
 Where our love is not confined.

Text: Sylvia Dunstan, 1955-1993, © 1993, GIA Publications, Inc.

Tune: PICARDY, 8 7 8 7 8 7; French Carol; harm. by Richard Proulx, b.1937, © 1986, GIA Publications, Inc.

Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

470 [H]

1 Draw us in the Spir-it's teth - er, for when hum - bly
 2 As dis - ci - ples used to gath - er in the name of
 3 All our meals and all our liv - ing make as sac - ra -

in your name two or three are met to - geth - er,
 Christ to sup, then with thanks to God the giv - er
 ments of you, that by car - ing, help - ing, giv - ing,

you are in the midst of them. Al - le - lu - ia!
 break the bread and bless the cup, Al - le - lu - ia!
 we may be dis - ci - ples true. Al - le - lu - ia!

Al - le - lu - ia! Touch we now your gar - ment's hem.
 Al - le - lu - ia! so now bind our friend - ship up.
 Al - le - lu - ia! We will serve with faith a - new.

Text: Percy Dearmer, 1867–1936, alt.
 Music: Harold Friedell, 1905–1958
 Text © Oxford University Press
 Music © 1957, 1985 H. W. Gray, admin. CPP/Belwin

UNION SEMINARY
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We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding

Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-8; Luke 9:28-36

Carl P. Daw, Jr., 1988

1 We have come at Christ's own bid - ding to this high and
 2 Light breaks through our clouds and shad - ows, splen - dor bathes the
 3 Strength-ened by this glimpse of glo - ry, fear - ful lest our

ho - ly place, Where we wait with hope and long - ing for some
 flesh-joined Word, Mo - ses and E - li - jah mar - vel as the
 faith de - cline, We, like Pe - ter, find it tempt-ing to re -

to - ken of God's grace. Here we pray for new as -
 heav - enly voice is heard. Eyes and hearts be - hold with
 main and build a shrine. But true wor - ship gives us

sur - ance that our faith is not in vain, Search - ing
 won - der how the Law and Proph - ets meet: Christ with
 cour - age to pro - claim what we pro - fess, That our

like those first dis - ci - ples for a sign both clear and plain.
 gar - ments drenched in bright - ness, stands trans - fig - ured and com-plete.
 dai - ly lives may prove us peo - ple of the God we bless.

Serving You Today

Worship Leaders:

Ministers of the Congregation

Pastor

Director of Music Ministries

Ushers/Greeters

Fellowship

Lay Reader

All Members of First Church

Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick

Kiel Krommer

Nick & Roseann Vinciguerra

Mary Newland/Carolyn &

Sprout Horacek

Jeanne Dill

Officers:

Moderator

Clerk

Treasurer

Chair, Board of Deacons

Chair, Board of Trustees

Cindy DeSellier

Carol Mullen

Suzanne Kelley

Jeanne Dill

Suzanne Kelley

Staff:

Church Administrator

Sunday School Superintendent

Custodian

Lee Brahen

Erin Greene Wallace

Linda Whippie

Office Hours, Pastoral Care, and Contact Information

The office is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Rev. Dr. Holly Norwick is in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and at other times by appointment. You can always leave a message on the church answering machine at 413-267-3312 when the office is not staffed or contact the office by email at office@firstchurchmonson.org.

IN OUR LOVE AND PRAYERS

Please complete a Prayer Request Form and place it in the offering plate if you wish to include a name in next Sunday's bulletin. Your loved one will remain on the prayer list for one month, after which you may resubmit a request if necessary.

For healing and support:

Doris Carpenter	Renee
Louise Carolyn	Lewis
Diana Nothe-Taylor	Beverly
Carol Snyder	Richard D'Aquila
Chris	Marlaina
Martha Warren	Josh Cash
Mary Linkenhoker	Joseph B.

For comfort in grief:

The Family and Friends of Sharon Allen
The Family and Friends of Earl Chaffee
The Family of Thelma Illig
The Family of Philip Wallander

For strength and comfort during war and disaster:

The people of Ukraine
The people of Israel and Gaza
The people of Palestine and Lebanon
The people of Syria
The people affected by the California wildfires

For all service people, wherever they may be:

Chelsea Carr	Stephen Dill, USN
Malik Pugh, USMC	Tim Olson, USN
Michael Wales, USN	

This Week in the Life of the Congregation

- March 2, Sunday
10:00 a.m. - Worship and Communion (S)
11:00 a.m. - Fellowship (F/K)
11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. - Community Choir (SA)
- March 3, Monday
3:00-4:30 p.m. - Girl Scouts (SA)
6:00-8:00 p.m. - Cub Scouts (SA)
- March 4, Tuesday
4:00-5:00 p.m. - Barre Above Class (SA)
5:15-6:15 p.m. - PiYo Class (SA)
- March 5, Wednesday
Ash Wednesday
6:00-8:00 p.m. - Boy Scouts (SA)
7:00-8:00 p.m. - Ash Wednesday Service (S)
- March 6, Thursday
5:15-6:15 p.m. - PiYo Class (SA)
6:30-8:00 p.m. - Adult Choir Rehearsal (SA)
6:30-8:00 p.m. - Prayer Shawl (F)
- March 8, Saturday
7:00-8:30 a.m. - AA (L)
- March 9, Sunday
Daylight Saving Time Begins
10:00 a.m. - Worship (S)
11:00 a.m. - Fellowship
11:30-1:30 p.m. - Church Council (L)
11:45-12:45 p.m. - Community Choir (SA)

C - Sprague Chapel

F - Fellowship Hall

K - Kitchen

L - Library

P - Parking Lot

S - Sanctuary

SA - Sunday School Auditorium

SS - Sunday School Classroom

Welcome to First Church



Welcome! If this is your first or second Sunday with us, we are grateful that you've come to be with us this morning. It is our hope that you experience the love of Christ and God's presence during our worship. If you have any questions at all about where to go or what to do, our deacons, ushers, and church members are here to assist in making you feel right at home, so please do not hesitate to ask.

All members and guests are encouraged to wear name tags. Guests may obtain a temporary adhesive name tag from an usher.

The Sacrament of Communion is offered the first Sunday of the month. All are welcome to partake of the Lord's Supper. It is up to parents to decide whether their children are ready to receive this Sacrament.

Handicapped parking and a wheelchair ramp to the church and Fellowship Hall are on the High Street side of the building. Hearing assistive devices are available from the ushers.

Coffee Hour begins after worship in Fellowship Hall (just follow the crowd). Please join us for refreshments and conversation.

Our *Let's Eat* breakfast is on the third Sunday of each month. Come enjoy a hearty breakfast from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. before worship. Donations are gratefully accepted but not required.

Learn more. If you would like to learn more about First Church, please call us at (413) 267-3312, email to office@firstchurchmonson.org, or visit our website at <http://www.firstchurchmonson.org>.

*"No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!"*