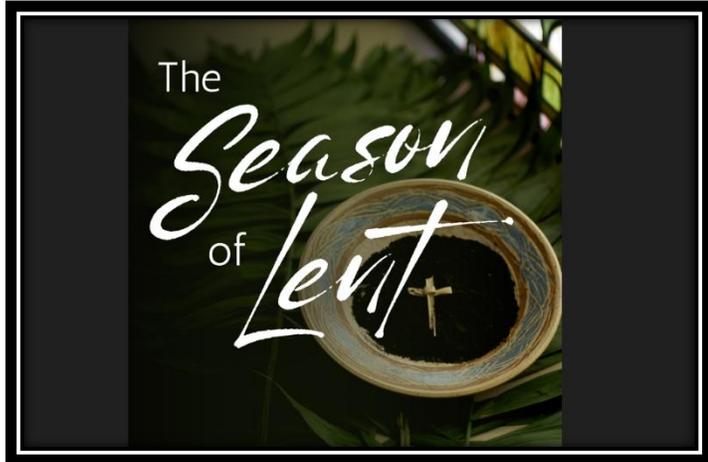


**First United
Methodist Church
of Fort Lupton
306 Park Ave., Fort
Lupton, CO 80621
303-857-2257**

**Staying
in Touch**

→
First United
Methodist Church
of Fort Lupton



2.19.26

**Email - [office@fumc-
fortlupton.org](mailto:office@fumc-fortlupton.org)**

**Website - [www.fumc-
fortlupton.org](http://www.fumc-fortlupton.org)**

**Message
"The First Sunday of Lent "
Pastor Anna**

Scripture: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'"

4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, 5 for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.

7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.



WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH

NO HASSLE GIVING
 Have your donations automatically come out of your bank account.
 Contact Church Office or Church Treasurer for information

Safeway cards -available downstairs after worship



DONATE TO THE CHURCH ONLINE.

<https://fumc-fortlupton.org/donations/donate-to-the-church/>

King Soopers
 Community Rewards Program:
 Visit <http://www.kingsoopers.com>
 search for First United Methodist Church of Fort Lupton either by name or VY166.
 Need assistance call church office.

What's Happening

- 2.24.26 7:00 pm Ad Board Meeting
- 2.25 – 3.25.26 6:00 pm Lenten Diiner
- 6:30 pm Lenten Activity

Wednesdays

- 9:30 am Wednesday Bible Study
- 7:00 pm Choir

Fridays

- 5:00 pm MYF/Youth

Jan. 1 - December 31, 2025 Financial Update	
Income	\$ 202,986.19
Expenses	\$ 212,004.40
Revenue/(Loss)	\$ (9,018.21)

*Interest received from CD's \$12,735.47 and, Money Market Closed \$5262.99 due to budget shortage.

Lenten Dinner Schedule
(These groups will provide dinner and activity)

February 25 Adult Sunday School
March 4 UMW
March 11 Youth
March 18 Bible Study Class
March 25 Worship Group



"The Transfiguration
2.15.26 Pastor Anna Viehland

I used to have a sweatshirt that I loved. It had a sloth carrying a backpack on it with the words "Sloth Hiking Club: We'll get there when we get there" underneath. I loved it because it really encapsulates my personal feelings about hiking. Don't get me wrong...I ENJOY hiking! But to me, there's hiking and then there's HIKING. Some folks like to summit peaks and challenge themselves to hike the craziest, steepest trails as quickly as humanly possible. Me, not so much. I like a nice walk through a pretty forest. I like to stop and smell the roses (or wildflowers, in this case). I like to listen to babbling brooks and enjoy the company of my companions. To me, "we'll get there when we get there" is a solid motto.

Still, there are times when I--against my better judgement--agree to a more challenging trek. As much as I huff and puff and cuss all the way up the trail, I have to admit that the payoff is always excellent. There's really nothing like climbing a mountain, looking around, and seeing everything for miles and miles around. I don't know about you, but I feel a sense of awe when I get there, a feeling of happiness and joy that swells in my chest. I'm amazed by everything I can see and how big the sky is. And I think about God. I think about how God made all of these mountains, and the great, big sky, and everything I can see from where I'm standing. I think about how God made all of this and still thought the world needed someone as small and frail as me. I can't help but think..."WOW."

Jesus and his friends, Peter, James, and John, had a similar experience in our scripture passage today. It comes from the Gospel according to Matthew. They went up on a mountain and were amazed...but not by the stunning views. They got to see something even better. They see Jesus start to shine like the sun, and his clothes become blindingly bright. Now, Matthew's audience would understand this as a reference to an important story in the Hebrew Bible. Scripture says that when Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments, his face also shined like the sun. This tracks for Matthew's Gospel. Scholars call it the most "Jewish" of the Gospels because Matthew references the Hebrew Bible so frequently. Each of the four canonical Gospels has an underlying theme or goal. Mark paints Jesus as the powerful, suffering Son of God. Luke emphasizes Jesus' compassion for the marginalized. John asserts that Jesus is the Son of God, revealing God's love and bringing eternal life. Matthew's portrayal of Jesus as the Jewish Messiah and fulfillment of prophecy,

True to form for Matthew, two important people from the Jewish tradition appear next to Jesus: Moses, the great law giver, and Elijah, the great prophet. All of this--the shining face and clothes, Jesus' companions, reminds his friends, and us--that Jesus is continuing the story of God and God's people. Just as God spoke through Moses and Elijah, God is speaking through Jesus too.

Enter Peter. I have a soft spot for him. Some folks might read this story and think Peter is a bit dense. I prefer to think that Peter, like yours truly, has ADHD. He's impulsive, constantly putting his foot in his mouth. He's always rushing to do, do, do, whether it's frantically building tents on the mountaintop or cutting the ear off a soldier in the Garden of Gethsemane. On this mountain, he offers to build three dwellings, one for Jesus, one of Moses, one for Elijah. A deep voice from a bright cloud interrupts his frenzied efforts. The voice booms "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" The voice repeats what God says at Jesus' baptism; God reminds the apostles of who Jesus is; the son of God. And then God tells them, "listen to him." The Greek word here is BLANK here implies more than simply listening. They are supposed to listen, and obey.

As a preacher, it is often difficult to find something different to say about the same passage year after year. However, I find that I have the opposite problem with the Transfiguration; there's an *overabundance* of topics in this story. There's the majesty of God, the nature of Christ as fully God and fully human, Jesus' place alongside the great figures of Judaism. But for some reason, my mind always seems to return to Peter. At this point in our story, Christ begins to prepare his followers for his death. There will be difficult, dark times ahead. The apostles will experience doubt, fear, and despair. Even though *God the Father Himself*, tells Peter that Jesus is the Son of God and that he must obey him, Peter will *still* deny Christ on the day of the Crucifixion. And he's not the only one who will stumble--all but one disciple will abandon their Savior on Calvary.

Still, the risen Lord will still appear to his disciples. And those disciples, flawed as they may be, will begin a movement that changes the world. Peter will become the rock on which Christ's church is built.

Maybe I love Peter so much because I relate so heavily to him. Like Peter, I've had times where I've stumbled in my faith. Lord knows I'm prone to say the wrong thing at the wrong time. There have been times when I've doubted God's goodness and most days, I doubt myself. But I've also been to the mountaintop--literally and figuratively. I'm sure many of you have been there too. You've had moments when the ordinary becomes extraordinary, when the secular, even the profane transforms into something holy. that you've had moments when you've experienced the presence of God and your heart just sings, "WOW!"

I experience this regularly on my little "sloth hikes," when I take in the grandness of God's beautiful creation. I experienced it on Christmas morning last year when I helped hand out suitcases to our unhoused neighbors in Denver. This might sound wild but I also experience it in hospital visits and in officiating funerals; bringing the presence of God into moments of mourning might be difficult, but it's sacred and necessary work. Episcopal Priest Maryetta Madelene Anschutz writes that in these moments of transfiguration, "God prepares people in the transcendent encounters of our lives to endure the world below, the world of the cross, the world that has the ability to break us and yet is never beyond God's redemption." Peter was not beyond God's redemption; none of the disciples were. I am not, contrary to how I may feel some days, beyond redemption. YOU are not, and never will be, beyond redemption. I can't think of anything more beautiful, more astounding, more "WOW" than that.

And so, my challenge to you this week is to look for moments of transfiguration in your own life. They don't necessarily have to be grand and transcendent; they might not always happen on a mountaintop and might not always be shiny and bright. Where do you experience these "God moments"? The moments that make you go "WOW." Then, when you identify them, do not rush to move forward too quickly; don't be like our friend Peter. When we have these moments, God tells us the same thing God tells Peter: *LISTEN*. Yes, God calls us to action, but God also calls us to contemplation and obedience. Sit in that moment. Thank God for it. Allow that moment to deepen your understanding of God, yourself, and the world around you. I'll admit that it's difficult for me to soak in the "WOW" moments in my life; maybe it is for you too. But remember what Peter--impulsive, clumsy Peter who through God's grace became one of the greatest disciples in history--learned on the top of that mountain. There will be a time to build. There will be a time to serve. There will be a time to move. But first, be still. Stand on the mountaintop. Be present to the holy moment right in front of you. And take heart knowing in the valleys, on the mountaintops, and everywhere we go, God is there, doing what must be done to get our attention. We just need to stop and listen.

Carol's Corner
Carol McDermott

I think Colorado is going back to the desert like climate from years ago. I'm sure the rains and snow will come eventually, and we will be looking back wistfully at the mild weather we are enjoying – for now. We had a lovely service on Sunday with a good crowd, even though it was a holiday weekend. Evelyn had a wonderful Children's sermon and talked about that big word "transfiguration" when the disciples, Peter, James and John got a peek at the glory of heaven and the glory of Jesus as the God-Man for a brief time. It was pretty mind blowing to the disciples – and would have been to anyone else! The choir sang a beautiful rendition of "The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi", such a challenging and inspiring song.

Pastor Anna talked about personal hiking experiences when the grandeur of the experience as well as the beauty all around are breath taking. She said Peter, James, and John saw something even better than a beautiful view, they saw Jesus "start to shine like the sun, and his clothes became blindingly bright." She said in all of the drama unfolding before the disciples, she always thinks of Peter. There are dark days ahead for the disciples that they cannot anticipate, but this glimpse of the glorified Christ must surely have carried them through those early dark days after the crucifixion. She assured us that none of us is beyond redemption. She said to look for moments of transfiguration in our own lives,

"God moments" and to listen for God to call us to action. First, be still. Stand on the mountaintop and be present in the holy moment right in front of us. Often, I find myself thinking "What's next", rather than stopping and listening. I need to stop and listen. Sometimes it might be a song, or a picture, or a small child that brings new life. Stop, look, and listen is good advice for us all, every day, in every way. When you experience these "God moments", write them in your journal, or share with a friend. Your blessing will grow and grow.



Pics to Enjoy!

Our Praise Team helping us prepare our hearts and minds for worship.



Evelyn asked the children a beautiful question: *“Have you ever cloud-watched?”* What a gentle reminder that sometimes God speaks to us in the simplest moments—when we slow down, look up, and let our imaginations go.



**Our choir offering a moment of peace as they shared
*“Make Me a Channel of Your Peace.”***



Pastor Anna’s challenge this week is to look for moments of transfiguration in your own life. They don’t necessarily have to be grand and transcendent; they might not always happen on a mountaintop and might not always be shiny and bright. Where do you experience these “God moments”? The moments that make you go “WOW.”

