



GUSTAVUS  
ADOLPHUS  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
FEBRUARY 2023



# Thoughts from Pastor John

## DOING MORE THIS LENT

It feels like we just packed up our Christmas decorations, following our wonderful Christmas celebration, and already we begin Lent. We will gather on Wednesday, February 22nd for Ash Wednesday worship at 6:00p.m. Ash Wednesday is the first day of our 6 week season anticipating and preparing for Easter. Lent is an important time in our church year, because our focus turns back to God and we are reminded of why Good Friday and Easter Sunday need to happen.

There are many traditions that people practice during Lent. One of those practices is the idea of giving up something you really enjoy during the days and weeks of Lent. The idea, as I understand it, is each time you want to enjoy that luxury, but don't because you gave it up, you are reminded of what Jesus Christ gave up for you. It's one type of Spiritual Practice.

Now don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with this spiritual practice of giving something up, but I want to challenge you. Rather than doing less during Lent, what if we did more? How richer would our spiritual lives be if we added something to our lives during Lent, rather than giving something up?

Here is what I am thinking, do more during the 6 weeks of Lent, something that will help you learn more or connect more with God. I provide some suggestions for you, but it would be my hope you find something that works well for you.

- Attend a Bible study
- Spend time daily in scripture. This can be as little as 5 minutes a day.
- Find a Lent devotional that will guide you through the days of prayer.
- Set aside time daily to pray or be silent.
- Try Lectio Divina-Lectio divina is a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures. Lectio Divina a Latin term, means "divine reading" and describes a way of reading the Scriptures whereby we gradually let go of our own agenda and open ourselves to what God wants to say to us.
- Choose a text of the Scriptures that you wish to pray. It can be one verse or many.
- Place yourself in a comfortable position and allow yourself to become silent.
- Turn to the text and read it slowly, gently. Savor each portion of the reading, constantly listening for the "still, small voice" of a word or phrase that somehow says, "I am for you today."
- Speak to God. Whether you use words, ideas, or images--or all three--is not important.
- Rest in God's embrace.

As you do more, I will be praying that you connect deeper with God.

✝ Pastor John

### Gustavus Adolphus Office Hours

**Monday — Thursday**

**9:00 am — 12:00 pm**

**by Appointment Only, Please**

**Schedule Your Visit with  
Individual Staff Members**

**The Sanctuary Is Available for Prayer by  
Request, Email Pastor John for  
a time at [johnh@gachurch.org](mailto:johnh@gachurch.org)**





## Meet Pastor Jacqueline

*Pastor Jacqueline Belzer has accepted our request to serve as interim Associate Pastor at Gustavus beginning February 13 as we discern better our needs as we call a permanent pastor.*

My name is Reverend Jacqueline Belzer. I have been a rostered minister of the ELCA since 2014. I started working for the church in 2008, not being ordained yet.

My first work as a grassroots organizer for Isaiah, a faith-based organization, shaped my values and deepened my faith in organizing people to understand their self-interests, longings, dreams, and the power given through the Holy Spirit. I learned and perfected the One on One (face-to-face) conversations to create relationships and help me to encourage them.

I'm self-aware of the gifts given by God to be empathetic, loving, and truthful to my values and what I represent to the church and others.

During these years in the USA, I have accomplished more than I can imagine.

- Organize thousands of people during the large marches in the early 2000s
- Helping others to translate English to Spanish and vice versa, documents,
- Youth and family ministry in West St. Paul with youth at risk, organizing 25 of them.
- God has used me and moved me to be in places I would never imagine.
- Develop and redevelop two congregations.

I have a 3-year-old grandson named Miles, who I love to care for.

I love to cook and share meals with others in my free time.

Reverend Jacqueline Belzer  
jacquelineb@gachurch.org



# Worship Schedule

## OUR LIFE TOGETHER

### FEBRUARY 2023

We invite you to join us for worship at church or from home.

With the exception of February 5, when we have a single worship service at 10:00 am followed by brunch, we gather Sunday morning for Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary at 9:00 am and Contemporary Worship at 11:15 am.

We also come together for midweek worship on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 pm, following our Open Table meal.

<b>February 5</b>	<b>Sunday Worship at 10:00 am (Sanctuary)</b> <b>Fifth Sunday After Epiphany • Brunch Follows Worship in Luther Hall</b>
<b>February 8</b>	<b>Wednesday Worship - 6:00 pm • Chapel (Holden Evening Prayer)</b>
<b>February 12</b>	<b>Sunday Worship at 9:00 am (Sanctuary) and 11:15 am (Luther Hall)</b> <b>Sixth Sunday After Epiphany</b>
<b>February 15</b>	<b>Wednesday Worship - 6:00 pm • Chapel (Campfire Worship)</b>
<b>February 19</b>	<b>Sunday Worship at 9:00 am (Sanctuary) and 11:15 am (Luther Hall)</b> <b>Transfiguration of Our Lord</b>
<b>February 22</b>	<b>Wednesday Worship - 6:00 pm • Sanctuary (Will Be Livestreamed)</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b> <b>The sanctuary will be open and a pastor to meet with you between 9:00 am and 11:00 a.m. for the imposition of ashes, prayers, and Holy Communion. Join us if you are unable to make it to worship at 6:00 p.m</b>
<b>February 26</b>	<b>Sunday Worship at 9:00 am (Sanctuary) and 11:15 am (Luther Hall)</b> <b>First Sunday in Lent</b>

JOIN WORSHIP AT GACHURCH.ORG OR 833-452-0202...LIVE OR LATER!

# Worship With Us

IN-PERSON & ONLINE

**SUPPER IS  
SERVED FROM  
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
EACH  
WEDNESDAY**



## Open Table

**ALL are welcome!**



## OUR LIFE TOGETHER

JOIN US FOR BRUNCH!!!!!!

ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF FEBRUARY, MARCH, AND APRIL AT GUSTAVUS WE'LL COME TOGETHER FOR A SINGLE WORSHIP SERVICE AT 10:00 AM FOLLOWED BY A FESTIVE BRUNCH SERVED BY GA STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS! JOIN US!



WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR SERVING AND BRINGING TREATS FOR OUR SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE HOUR. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT JILL YOUNGREN AT 651-335-2487 OR DIANE HEDENSTAD AT 651-429-4036...OR SIGN UP AT THE WELCOME DESK!



ON THE FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH IN FEBRUARY, MARCH, AND APRIL WE WILL HAVE ONE SINGLE 10:00 AM WORSHIP SERVICE AT GA TO ACCOMMODATE BRUNCHING AFTER! THE FIRST SUNDAY MORNING FEAST IS ON FEBRUARY 5! PLAN TO ATTEND!

### The Gustavus Zoom Book Club - Join Us in FEBRUARY

Most recently we discussed the novel

Homegoing and the PBS Documentary The Murder of Emmett Till. The Book Club resumes in February with a conversation on Thursday, February 16 at 7:00 pm. Our topic of discussion will be the novel *The Seed Keeper* by author Diane Wilson. This novel explores a Dakota family's struggle to preserve their way of life as it spans four women's stories across generations. Contact [Sherrie@gachurch.org](mailto:Sherrie@gachurch.org) for the link.



### BREWING



### FAITH

Brewing Faith will be continuing in 2023, however we will be meeting on a new day of the month. For the past few years we have been meeting on the fourth Thursday of the month. However, moving forward we are going to move that up to the second Thursday of each month.

Please join us at Jimmy's in Vadnais Heights on **Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 6:00 pm.** We will have one of the private party rooms reserved for our group.

# CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRY

## Sunday Mornings in Kids Cavern

February 5 - NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

Feb. 12 - Jesus Teaches about Anger  
Valentine Fun

Feb. 19 - The Transfiguration

February 26 - The First Sin

Library Day - Hear a story and check out a book!

2023 Family Ministry Winter Gathering at Fort Snelling State Park

Sunday, February 26, 2:00-4:00pm • All Ages are Welcome!

Join us for a fire and hot chocolate. There are skiing and hiking trails, a playground, fire pit, picnic tables etc. You will need a MN State Park sticker or stop at the office to pick up a day pass. Please let me know if you plan to join us.

Link to Map of Event Location: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1t>



*For more information about Sunday School and Confirmation programs, contact Sherrie Nordquist by calling the Church office 651.289.9882 (direct line) or [sherrie@gachurch.org](mailto:sherrie@gachurch.org)*



## Confirmation Group for Youth in Grades 6-8

February 5 - Echo the Story: Promise (Abraham)

February 12 - Echo the Story: Jacob and Esau

February 19 - Deep Dive: Caring for Elders @ Lyngblomsten

February 26 - Off - Camp Onomia Confirmation Retreat

## YOUTH GROUP Wednesdays at GA

6:30 pm Grades 6-12 Youth Hang-Out



# OUR LIFE TOGETHER

## THE GREAT GA GARAGE SALE IS BACK!

Do you have too many rolling pins? Need a screwdriver? Drowning in throw pillows? But fresh out of garden hoses? Don't worry...the GA Garage Sale is coming back this Spring. We will be collecting gently used but still usable items from Tuesday May 16 through Thursday May 18. Then the sale will be held on Friday May 19 and Saturday May 20. As we get closer we will be looking for volunteers to help set up, run and tear down the sale, but for now and the next few months please think of us as you put away Christmas decorations, de-clutter, Spring clean, etc. Your junk could be another's treasure!



February 28 at 1:00 pm in the Church Library we will be discussing *This Tender Land* by William Kent Krueger. Readers are asked to find their own copy of the book at their local library or bookstore. Please contact Sherrie Nordquist or Carol Sandberg for more information.

Our March book selection will be *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks.



## LENTEN AND HOLY WEEK

### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

ASH WEDNESDAY — 6:00 PM

WEEKLY WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

(6:00 PM CHAPEL)

MAUNDY THURSDAY — 6:00 PM

GOOD FRIDAY — 7:00 PM

(OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN)

EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM



## Middle School Winter Blast RETREAT AT CAMP ONOMIA!



The winter months get long, so we want to spice up your life a bit with an awesome weekend filled with fun, friends, and outside play in the winter wonderland!

Camp style worships and evening devos, camp songs and camp games... this is all of summer camp condensed into a short weekend for youth in Grades 6-8.

Phone a friend NOW for this event on February 24-26, 2023



# OUR LIFE TOGETHER

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS AT GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS

1	Case Vouk	9	Bob Barduson		Mark Reidenbach
2	Darryl Dieman		Bennett Lowther	16	Bobby Fraser
3	Ronald Carllson		Cheryl Resch	17	Jerry Siverson
	Cathy Van Ert	10	Faith Wilhelmy	18	Lisa Engelstad
4	Donna Bordsen	11	Heather Nelson	19	Marilyn Brakke
	Raymond Landkamer		Marion Stone		Richard Johnson
	Kirsten Vouk	13	Patricia Garmin	20	Wendy Dording
5	Sha Yang	14	Dawn Lindgren	23	John (J.P.) Harrison
8	Mary Peters		Bonnie Olson	24	Alivia Garbe
	Deborah Zenk	15	Michael Jones		Trista Goepfert
				25	Andrew Nelson

## FEBRUARY SPECIAL CONCERN GIVING: LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

LCM is a grace-filled, Christ-centered community, welcoming to all University students. All stories and gifts are welcomed and celebrated at LCM, and Gustavus is a long time supporter of this campus ministry. Welcoming to conservative or liberal, introvert or extrovert, city kid or country kid, engineer or English major, queer or straight, questioning or certain, there's a place for all at Lutheran Campus Ministry.

Thank you for your support of their work.



LUTHERAN  
CAMPUS  
MINISTRY  
TWIN CITIES

## GA Church Library Spotlight!

Near the end of this month Pastor John and several other GA members will join another congregation in traveling to the Holy Land. To learn more about the places they will be exploring stop by the library this month to check out one of the books on the display table including...

*Walking the Bible: A Journey by Land Through the Five Books of Moses* by Bruce Feiler

Feiler describes his journey by foot, jeep, rowboat, and camel following the stories of Moses including crossing the Red Sea and climbing Mount Sinai.

*Bethlehem Besieged: Stories of Hope in Times of Trouble* by Mitri Raheb

The pastor of Christmas Church, a Palestinian Lutheran congregation, Mitri Raheb here presents a powerful collection of compelling personal stories of desperation and hope in the midst of lethal conflict, bringing the Palestinian/Israeli conflict up close and personal.

*Snow in Jerusalem* by Deborah da Costa

Avi and Hamudi are two boys who live in Jerusalem's Old City - Avi in the Jewish Quarter and Hamudi in the Muslim Quarter. Although neither boy knows it, both are caring for the same beautiful white stray cat.



# OUR LIFE TOGETHER



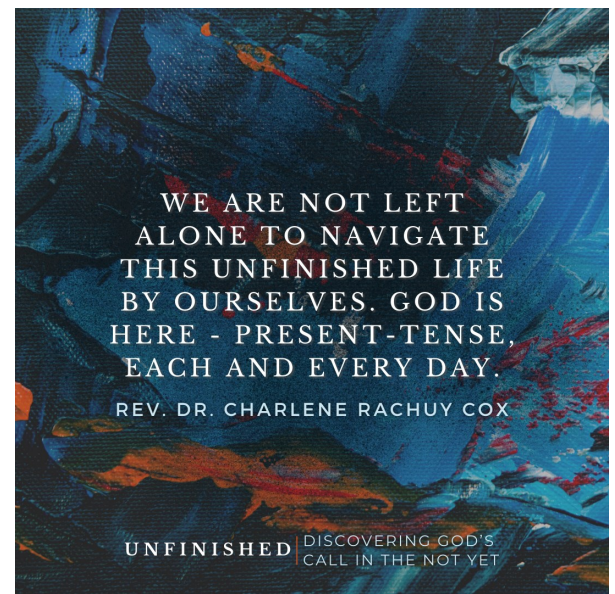
## UNFINISHED:

## DISCOVERING

## GOD'S CALL IN THE NOT YET

“Honor the space between no longer and not yet,” so writes author and life coach, Nancy Levin. We can probably all think of a host of experiences

from our own lives in which we occupy the space between no longer and not yet. The space between no longer pre-pandemic life and not yet what will settle into post-pandemic life. The space between before and after a medical diagnosis, before and after living with a loss, before and after navigating a relationship change, a job change, a move. The space between childhood and adulthood, young adulthood and midlife, midlife and the autumn years. The space between yesterday and tomorrow, your comfort zone and uncharted territory. The space between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday.



# LECTIONARY BLOG: TRANSFIGURATION(S)

I've always had a little trouble connecting with the transfiguration story. It's really neat that Moses and Elijah appear and talk with Jesus. I, as a scholar, have been interested in the parallels among the lives of Moses, Elijah, Jesus and Peter. But that interest, if I'm honest, has been mostly intellectual and hasn't really changed how I feel about Jesus. What difference does it make if he got shiny for a little bit? In rereading this passage to prepare for writing this article, it struck me that Jesus' transfiguration makes all the difference to us.

The transfiguration is a strange event in the already quite unique life of Jesus. The Messiah took a break from teaching and healing to climb a mountain with his inner circle of disciples. Once there, he became radiant and had a conversation with the prophets of old. But then, the disciples heard the voice of God from heaven proclaim: "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him" (Matthew 17:5).

Jesus could have snuck off by himself, as he frequently did, for this mystical experience. Instead, he chose to bring his disciples. Then, as if seeing a radiant Jesus speaking with Moses and Elijah weren't enough, God spoke to the disciples directly, affirming Jesus' beloved sonship, and ordering the disciples to listen to him. God did not, that we know of, speak to Jesus here. Jesus and God the Father arranged this whole event on the mountaintop so Peter, James and John could witness it. Why? The language used gives us a big hint. The Greek word that we translate as transfigured is familiar: *μετεμορφώθη* (from which we get "metamorph"). It carries a valence of being utterly transformed into something new. Think of a caterpillar metamorphizing into a butterfly. This word, with different conjugations, is used four times in the New Testament. Twice it is used (in Matthew and Mark) to describe Jesus at the transfiguration. The other two times, it's applied to other humans. In Romans 12:2, Paul uses the word "metamorph" to describe a process that happens as our minds are made new and we no longer conform to the patterns of this world. To think differently is to undergo the sort of radical transformation that Jesus experienced.

"Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white" (Matthew 17:1-2).

Even more interesting to me is 2 Corinthians 3:18, which prophesies that we will be changed by the Spirit's power into the same radiant image as we behold God's glory. Transfiguration into a glorious, radiant body is not just for Jesus, but for us too—eventually.

But 2 Corinthians 3 is about Moses, not Jesus.

Hundreds of years earlier, Moses had asked to see God's glory, and God granted him at least a partial fulfillment of that request. Indeed, all the people gathered at Sinai saw the glory of the Lord (Exodus 24:17). But for Moses, to whom God's presence was so powerfully intimate, transformation was unavoidable. When Moses returned to the people after conversing with God, his face was radiant, like Jesus' would be on the mount of transfiguration (Exodus 34:29-35). And like Jesus on the mountain, the transfiguration was only temporary. If the mountaintop experience was only temporary, what's the point of Jesus' transfiguration? I argue that Jesus and God the Father wanted the disciples to get a foretaste of what the kingdom of heaven and New Jerusalem would be like. Jesus is the pioneer of our salvation (Hebrews 2:10; I've always appreciated the New Revised Standard Version's and New International Version's translation of *ἀρχηγόν* as "pioneer"). Literally, he is the one who goes first to show the way. And the end realization of the path that we follow Jesus on is to be in the company of God and all the saints who have gone on before us. We will all be transfigured into our heavenly, resurrected bodies, just as Jesus now is permanently transfigured.

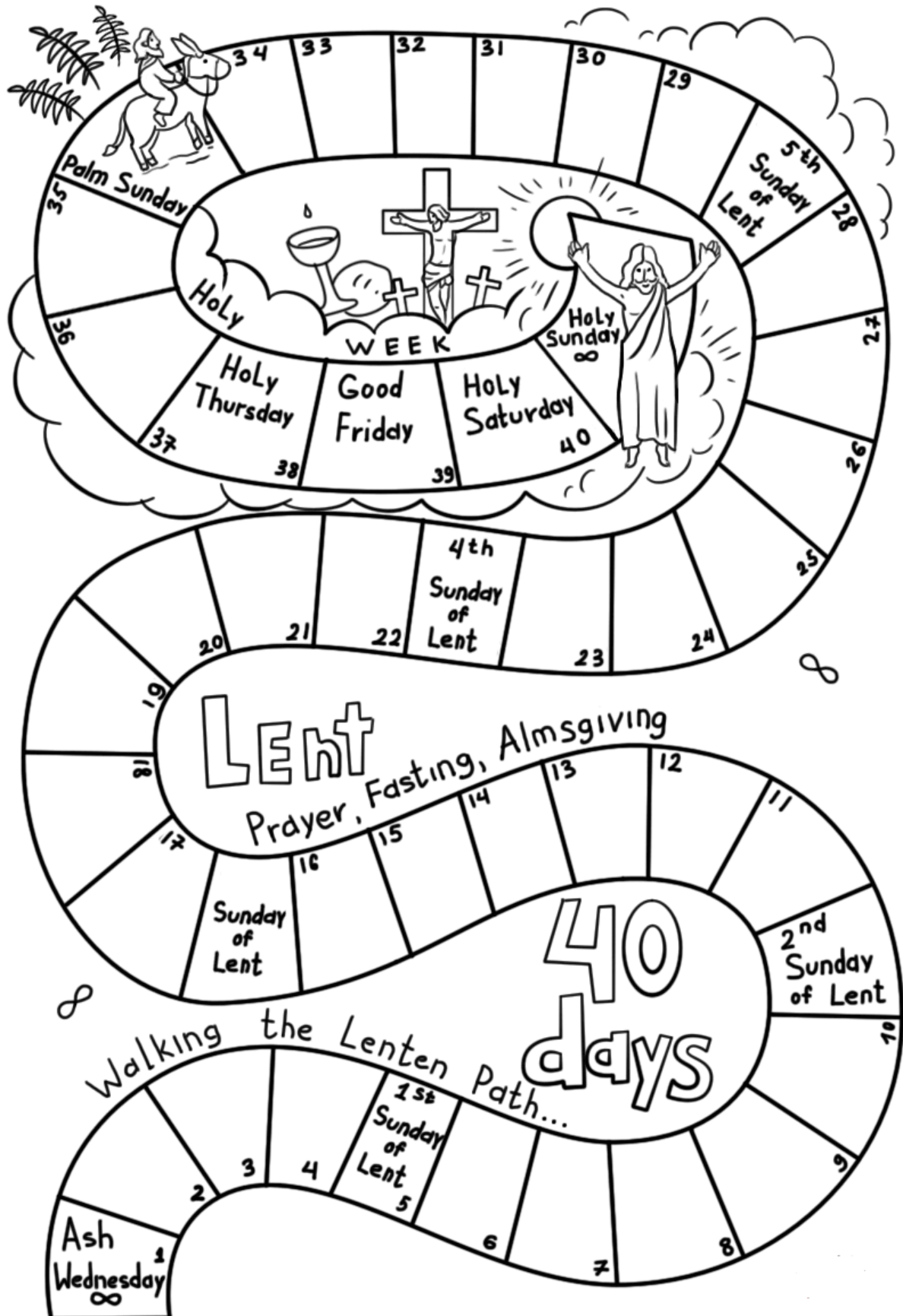
And what God said of Jesus, God longs to say of all of us: "Behold, this is my beloved son, my beloved daughter." Jesus' transfiguration was meant to show the disciples, and us who come after, part of what awaits us when, at last, we enjoy God's holy presence.

Living  
Lutheran

Published February 17, 2020

The Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord  
Is February 19, 2023

# KID'S COLORING PAGE







## GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Gustavus Adolphus is a member of the Saint Paul Area Synod (SPAS · [www.spas-elca.org](http://www.spas-elca.org)), of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA · [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org))



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**We are inspired by the Spirit to:**  
**GROW** in spiritual vitality  
**WORSHIP** creatively and faithfully together  
**EMBRACE** our wonder  
**BUILD** authentic Christian relationships



**Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church is financed entirely by the generous, direct financial gifts of its members and friends.**

There are several ways you can bless this mission of Jesus with your gifts:

- Place your **check or cash** in the offering plate during the service. Envelopes are in the pews.
- **Electronic Funds Transfer** from our website, [gachurch.org](http://gachurch.org) (upper right corner). You can set up a one-time or recurring donation. You can also give electronically from your phone by texting the numeric value of your desired gift to 651-204-1921, then follow the prompts.
- **Bill Pay.** Follow the directions for your bank or credit union to create GA as a Payee at 1669 Arcade St. N, St. Paul, MN 55106, and choose to make a one time or regular weekly or monthly offering.
- **Stock Transfer to the church.** Contact John Messiter in the business office at 651.289.9885.