

Welcome to Niskayuna Reformed Church  
February 27, 2022  
Transfiguration Sunday  
Rev. Rett Zabriskie

*Preparation for Worship*

*Death shows existence to be suspended in the void because communion which sustains existence seems to be exhausted or rather negated by the limits of creaturehood. Man was not created immortal, but by having his personhood he was made capable of communion with the immortal God. Death came to him not as a punishment in a juridical sense but as an existential consequence of the break in this communion; it came at the moment that man became introverted, and limited the ecstatic movement of his personhood to the created world. Sin entered as idolatry, an ecstasy of communion with the created world alone.* John Zizoulas

**The Approach to God**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Welcome and announcements.

The Prelude: Dwelling In His Word

Hughes

Introit

Votum: Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

**Amen**

The Call to Worship: (*Psalm 99*)

**Leader:** The LORD is king; let the peoples tremble! He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!

**People:** The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted over all the peoples.

**Leader:** Let them praise your great and awesome name. Holy is he!

**People:** Mighty King,<sup>[a]</sup> lover of justice, you have established equity; you have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.

**Leader:** Extol the LORD our God; worship at his footstool. Holy is he!

**People:** Extol the LORD our God, and worship at his holy mountain; for the LORD our God is holy.

\*A Hymn: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

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\*The Salutation and People's Amen: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession: **Father in Heaven, we confess that we don't get awed easily. We think it is unsophisticated to be overcome. We like to see all as our equal, making ourselves the measure of all things. Have mercy upon us. Teach us to measure greatness rightly, before the cross of Christ. Have mercy upon us and forgive our sin. In Jesus Name, AMEN**

Kyrie Eleison: **Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us; Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Words of Assurance

\*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.**

Anthem: Wondrous Love

Shackley

### **The Word of God**

The Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson:

Exodus 34:29-35

Epistle Lesson:

2 Corinthians 3:4-16

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Junior Sermon

Gospel Lesson:

Luke 9:28-43a

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon: "Because It Is There"

A Prayer for Blessing upon the Word

### **The Response of God's People**

Offering

Offertory      Lighten Our Darkness      Shepard

\*Hymn      Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning      175

The Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

The Lord's Prayer: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

\* Hymn      Christ Whose Glory Fills the Skies      47

\*The Benediction

Benediction Response

The Postlude:      Voluntary On Lyons (O Worship The King)      Ritter

\*Please stand if you are able.

**Announcements**

Our new interim minister is Reverend Rett Zabriskie. Rev. Zabriskie will be in the pastor's office Thursday mornings from 9-10:30. Otherwise, any time the American flag is flying outside the parsonage, you are welcome to stop over and come right in! You can reach him by calling his cell at 201.819.7629. To help Rev. Zabriskie learn our names, we ask that you wear your name tags on Sundays. If you need a name tag, please contact Ellen.

For three Sundays in Lent, we are going to have an extended conversation between me and you on the general topic of the future of the Christian Church in general and NRC in particular. These sessions are going to be "Coffee Hour Conversations", in the hope that all manner and sorts of people can participate - including families and kids. For the three sessions, Coffee Hour will begin as usual - however after 15 minutes of the normal chat at tables, I am going to ask that we have a group conversation. The format will be that I present some hopefully, interesting material that encourages curiosity and then we will talk together about it. Sessions are not a "program" teaching how to get a desired result. We will be wondering together about what our Christian reality actually is just now and what God might have in mind for the next little while. The sessions will be:

**March 6, 2022: Session I "I just feel at home here" Gathering Language for Talking About a Congregation**

**March 20, 2022: Session II "Back to the Family Farm"**

**April 3, 2022: Session III "Whad'Ya Know?"**

Protestants have only begun to observe Ash Wednesday fairly recently, so we have no real traditions for how to do it. Covid has complicated much, including Ash Wednesday. I believe the goal for any observance of Ash Wednesday should be an opportunity for as many as possible to participate in a moment of worship and reflection and to receive ashes if they wish. As no single service is possible for all, this Ash Wednesday we will have five. The Sanctuary will be open from 7am to 7pm for any who wish to spend time in reflection and prayer. There will be a 10-minute liturgy, including the Imposition of Ashes, offered five times during the day, viz. At 7am, 9am, 11:30am, 1:30pm, and 5:30pm. Those times are picked in the hopes of making before work, around lunch, or just after work possible for many. As I am available all day, if you wish to receive ashes and none of these times are possible, I would be happy to meet you at church anytime that day.

The NRC Sunday School will be holding a Communion Workshop for students in 3rd grade and above in March. This workshop will teach students about the Holy Sacrament of Communion and prepare them to participate in this beautiful ritual with us in the future (they will also get to make a stole to take home!). The Communion Workshop will be held on March 13th at 11am. For more information, please contact Sabrina at [christianed@niskayunareformed.org](mailto:christianed@niskayunareformed.org)

The **Guardian House** on Route 50 in Ballston Spa is a place where military veteran women find rescue from homelessness. The home houses up to 11 women veterans at a time. They come from various military backgrounds, and the stories that forced them into homelessness range from sexual assault trauma, to substance abuse to deep depression. The center helps them with all kinds of services, whether to bring them to the Veterans Affairs hospital for medical care, find an apartment, apply for a job or complete higher education. The goal is to eventually help these women rely on their own strengths. (<https://www.vchcny.org/veterans-housing-programs/transitional-housing-programs>) The NRC Women's Fellowship Group has learned that the home is currently in need of **pillows, pillowcases, paper towels and laundry-related items such as dryer sheets, fabric softeners, laundry tablets, stain removers** and such. We will be collecting these items through **February 27**. If you would like to help, you may place your donations in the marked plastic bin on the lower level of the Education Building. We thank you in advance for your generosity and compassion.

The YWCA of NorthEastern New York's (Schenectady) domestic violence program offers safe shelter and other related services to victims of domestic violence. NRC's **Women's Fellowship Group** is once again sewing pillowcases and providing pillows to the shelter for these women. If you would like to help, we would welcome your contribution of standard-sized pillowcases (self-made or purchased in a finished size of 20x26") and/or new standard-sized pillows. You will find a drop-off bin in the foyer on the lower level of the Education Building. End date for collection will be **Sunday, February 27**, after which the items will be delivered to the YWCA on Washington Ave. in Schenectady. For more information about the program, please visit the WYCA website at: <https://www.ywca-neny.org/dv/>

The February Mission will benefit the Schenectady City Mission. The City Mission exists to meet the needs of the hungry and homeless in our community. The Mission's ongoing goal is to provide "not only HELP for today, HOPE for tomorrow. In 2021, the City Mission provided 27,223 nights of shelter, 159,343 meals, 1,200 weekend backpack meals, job training through the Schenectady Works Programs, free medical clinics and well as community

picnics. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Many of our guests of the Schenectady Food Pantry have requested personal care items such as toothpaste and deodorant for all genders. These items can be expensive and are often the most requested by our food pantry guests when they visit. We try to care for each family the best we can when it comes to these requested items. If you can help, please put any donations in the blue buckets by door in Fellowship Hall. Thank you for your continued support of the pantry. Parents with infants and small children are reminded of the room behind the balcony with an audio system to hear the worship service if needed.

## Scripture

### Exodus 34:29-35

Moses came down from Mount Sinai. As he came down from the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant<sup>[a]</sup> in his hand, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. <sup>30</sup> When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, the skin of his face was shining, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup> But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses spoke with them. <sup>32</sup> Afterward all the Israelites came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him on Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup> When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; <sup>34</sup> but whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the Israelites what he had been commanded, <sup>35</sup> the Israelites would see the face of Moses, that the skin of his face was shining; and Moses would put the veil on his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

### 2 Corinthians 3:4-16

Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. <sup>5</sup> Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, <sup>6</sup> who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

<sup>7</sup> Now if the ministry of death, chiseled in letters on stone tablets,<sup>[a]</sup> came in glory so that the people of Israel could not gaze at Moses' face because of the glory of his face, a glory now set aside, <sup>8</sup> how much more will the ministry of the Spirit

come in glory? <sup>9</sup> For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, much more does the ministry of justification abound in glory! <sup>10</sup> Indeed, what once had glory has lost its glory because of the greater glory; <sup>11</sup> for if what was set aside came through glory, much more has the permanent come in glory!

<sup>12</sup> Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness, <sup>13</sup> not like Moses, who put a veil over his face to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that<sup>[b]</sup> was being set aside. <sup>14</sup> But their minds were hardened. Indeed, to this very day, when they hear the reading of the old covenant, that same veil is still there, since only in Christ is it set aside. <sup>15</sup> Indeed, to this very day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their minds; <sup>16</sup> but when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed.

### **Luke 9:28-43a**

Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus<sup>[a]</sup> took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup> And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup> Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. <sup>31</sup> They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup> Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake,<sup>[b]</sup> they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. <sup>33</sup> Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings,<sup>[c]</sup> one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. <sup>34</sup> While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. <sup>35</sup> Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen;<sup>[d]</sup> listen to him!” <sup>36</sup> When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen. <sup>37</sup> On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. <sup>38</sup> Just then a man from the crowd shouted, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son; he is my only child. <sup>39</sup> Suddenly a spirit seizes him, and all at once he<sup>[e]</sup> shrieks. It convulses him until he foams at the mouth; it mauls him and will scarcely leave him. <sup>40</sup> I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.” <sup>41</sup> Jesus answered, “You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.” <sup>42</sup> While he was coming, the demon dashed him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father. <sup>43</sup> And all were astounded at the greatness of God. While everyone was amazed at all that he was doing, he said to his disciples,

