

Grace and Peace to you all from God our Creator, his only son Jesus Christ, and our eternal guide, the Holy Spirit. Amen.

It is a joy for me to be with you this evening/morning. I was at King of Glory about this time last year for Campus Ministry Sunday, and I loved getting to preach, have fellowship with everyone, and bring some attention to the important role, that campus ministry plays in the life of the church. Today I bring you greetings from your siblings in Christ at Lutheran Campus Ministry at Colorado State University and Front Range Community College. I am a senior at CSU this year, and looking back, this ministry has been such a formative part of my college career, and has helped me rediscover who I am as a Lutheran, a Christian, and a person. I would like to thank King of Glory for all the wonderful homecooked meals over the years. The support you offer to LuMin allows this ministry to not only feed my soul, but my body as well.

So in today's Old Testament lesson, reading about double portions of spirits, and whirlwinds, and everything else, I became confused. I sat in what I call "Old Testament Reader's" block. All the cryptic language, and these peoples unrelatable lifestyle...I mean really? They just walk around and meet other people in tents? Sounds like a weird life to me, but you do you, I guess. But the key with the O.T. is to look at what's physically happening in the story...so that's what I did.

So we have these two people, Elijah and Elisha, and they're on a journey together, and it seems like EVERYONE except Elijah knows he's gonna get taken up to heaven...seems like the worst kept secret on this side of the Jordan. However, even though everyone knows this, Elisha sticks with his master through it all, saying "As surely as the Lord lives, I will not leave you."

How many of you have been on a journey? The answer is EVERYONE. As Prince says, “we are all here to get through this thing called life.” I’m finishing up a journey called college, King of Glory is on a journey of growth as a church body. And I think every journey calls upon its traveler to do three things: to reflect on the past, be fully present in the now, and to look ahead with hope and (sometimes uncertainty), into the future.

When Jesus takes his disciples up onto the mountain, and becomes a dazzling white, he is not doing it to show off. Showing off isn’t really Jesus’ style. He’s giving the disciples, and us, a chance to do those three things required of us as travelers who are on a journey with Christ. We are just ending the season of Epiphany. Christ has been born in Bethlehem, he’s been recognized as the savior of humankind, he’s been presented in the temple, turned water in to wine. And now, on Transfiguration Sunday, we are given the chance to reflect on the amazing life of Jesus so far, to be present in this amazing moment with the radiant Christ on the mountaintop, and to look ahead at the even more profound journey that is to come. On Wednesday, we officially begin the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday, where we ponder our mortality, and prepare to follow Jesus to the cross.

Kind of a scary thought right? We are about to start on a journey that physically ends with the trial, torture, and crucifixion of Jesus. But the promise of God is that at the end of these long, arduous journeys is hope, a resurrection. We’ll witness this resurrection on Easter. We witnessed it today with the return of Elijah. You think he was just taken away in a whirlwind, and that was it? Of course not! He reappears with Jesus to give witness to the resurrection to come. People are always reappearing in the Bible, there are characters whose influence seems to last forever. Take Moses, for example. He physically died way back in the book of Deuteronomy, but we see him reappear MULTIPLE times in today’s readings. When Elijah

parts the waters of the Jordan, he has clearly inherited one of the gifts of Moses, who parted the waters of the Red Sea. And then Moses reappears with Elijah and Jesus on top of the mountain in the Gospel reading. This is showing us that the journeys we are on, the people we meet, they are interconnected, and more complex than we could ever imagine.

We sometimes describe this as the Communion of Saints. It is this spiritual union of Members of the Church, both living and dead, where everyone who is a part of it shares joy in each other's successes and triumphs, and pain in each other's failings. And when I say Members of the Church, I mean everyone. Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Jesus, you, me, everyone. And as we go on these spiritual journeys, we receive guidance from, and provide guidance to, the members of this Communion.

As I reflect on everything I've experienced, everything I've accomplished over the last four years at CSU, there is something I struggle with. I have a hard time letting go. I have a hard time relinquishing control. But my comfort that I am offered, is that I have the Communion of Saints to carry on my burdens and my triumphs, to make them better, to turn them into something more.

When I showed up at LuMin four years ago, I was a tired, lonely freshman. I was exhausted, and as an introvert, welcome week had way too many loud noises and activities for me to process. So I decided to close it all out by going to church. I walked over in the muggy August air to this weird, pizza-hut-shaped building on Shields, only to be greeted by a few smiling faces that sat down next to me, handed me a hymnal, and for the next hour, participated alongside me in the reading of the word, sharing of the peace, and the breaking of bread. And over time, I learned from those people. I built community with them in worship services and around the dinner table.

I laughed and cried with them. I asked them for advice, I studied the Bible with them, I complained about the church to them, I argued politics with them. And now that I'm graduating, those who come after me will do the same. And when I show up at my next church, I will start the process over again.

Everyone goes on journeys like this. Everyone experiences this cycle of getting comfortable with where you're at, and who you're with, having it rudely interrupted, and having to start over again. This is never easy. These journeys are difficult, meandering, and sometimes, they make you want to give up. But, thank God, we have mentors, friends, and our Communion of Saints to help us along.

On this Transfiguration Sunday, I'd invite you to be present with Christ, and reflect on the journeys you have been on in your life. What institution have you been a part of that just didn't work, and which ones fulfilled all your hopes and dreams? What impact have you made on the lives of others along the way, and who has challenged you? And once you've finished reflecting, prepare yourselves for the journeys ahead; for all their challenges, joys: moments of heartache, and moments that give you life, moments that make you laugh, cry, smile, cringe, breathe a sigh of relief. And just know that whatever journey lies ahead, God always promises us the hope of the resurrection at the end. Amen.