

Sunday, March 3, 2019

Exodus 34:29-35

2 Cor 3:13:42:2

Luke 9:28-36

Shining in the Light of Christ

It is great to be able to officially welcome to Glenwood Church—the youth and leaders of the 45th Scouting! Glenwood has a long history of sponsoring Scouting in South Windsor—almost as long as the church has been in existence! When it was learned that 66th was closing down it was my prayer that Glenwood would be able to support another group. So we prayed about this and I am very pleased that you are here= not only worshipping here this morning in this church parade which I understand you have not been able to participate in for many years! We are here as your sponsors but most of all we are your sisters and brothers in Christ who welcome you as we worship and work together; as we live and love others as Jesus taught! We look forward to many years together and pray that amongst your parents leaders will continue to emerge so that your groups will continue to provide wonderful experiences for the youth of all ages!

I have a few questions for you this morning as we get to know each other. I would like to ask you about some of your scouting experiences.

Have you ever been camping in the snow? Or the rain?

Have you ever hiked up really high hills and then looked down realizing it is a long way to get down?

How many of you have ever planted trees?

Now just think to yourself about one memorable moment you have had as a beaver, cub or scout.

To the 45th Scouting parents and other parents or former scouters/ guiders or people with adventurous spirits—I ask you to think about one memorable moment you have had when outdoors—whether it was canoeing across a quiet lake, or swimming in a lake where it was really cold, or even just sitting and watching the sunrise/fall.

Just hold on to the memory for a moment. Go into that space—what do you see? Light, sunshine, a view that goes beyond description because of the colours of the leaves or meeting someone really famous who was only somebody you knew on paper.

How did this moment you are remembering make you feel? Angry, upset, confused, worried or were you thinking I can't become anxious I am so happy, anxious and genuinely content and happy.

There are times when we each get both angry and anxious, upset and happy, confused and in awesome wonder, and even filled with joy as tears flow down our cheeks. But what is certain in these moments which you have keenly remembered is that there is an emotional response to what was experienced—by what you saw, heard or even did yourself.

Jesus and his close friends Peter, John and James have been going around the countryside with Jesus teaching, healing and telling others of love. Jesus asked Peter who he thought he was and so when Peter responds, he states in a manner of facts- you are the Christ. With Peter saying this, Jesus knows that it will soon be time for the purpose of his life to unfold.

So over a week later, Jesus invites John, James and Peter on a hike. They walk up the side of a mountain and they pray together. They need to get away from it all and yet something amazing happens. Jesus is praying when his face changed, his clothes become bright and then two men Moses and Elijah are near Jesus and they talk together. They are talking about the day when Jesus would go to heaven and then they shared info about the disciples. Meanwhile Jesus is radiantly bright and once they are aroused by the light, Peter James and John ask what's up- what's going on? Peter wants to trap the moment by building shelters for Moses, Elijah and Jesus. But quickly, we are told that he cannot. For God's purpose in this moment is to show Jesus' friends who he really is—God's Son.

Suddenly a cloud appears and wraps them all up. They are afraid as they enter the cloud. But then a voice from the cloud says, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him". God speaks and when he stops, they see Jesus all alone just as we was before. They stare him as Jesus is no longer glowing. What an experience? They then hiked down the mountain saying nothing to any one about what happened.

This was quite a hike for those involved. Jesus needed to reveal himself once again to his closest friends, Peter, James and John and he enters into God's presence where he has a bit of a visit with Moses and Elijah. Moses who led his people from slavery into the promised land and Elijah who prophesied about a messiah. Yet it is Jesus who transfigures before the 3 friends and he is glowing. Shining brightly like the sun made quite an impression but the disciples don't even talk about as they descend the hill because they are unsure of what really happened.

What was this about? A mountain top experience where there is excitement, joy, wonder and bright light and God's voice reassuring the disciples that Jesus is the Son of God. These disciples Peter, James and John are changed because they are spending time with God. These people are readying themselves for what it is that will come even though they do not have any idea what lies ahead for Jesus. It is this mountain top experience that enables the disciples to be able to follow Jesus right to

the moment that they deny knowing him and he is nailed on the cross. For they remember Jesus as God's Son, the One promised by God who was sent to save sinners. And they are grounded in this knowledge once again.

They have spent much time with Jesus just as Moses had spent time with God on his mountaintop experience. Moses spoke to God and God answered. And when he returned to his home—he was glowing and radiant because he had been in God's presence.

As adults and kids we will have moments when we can get away and explore new worlds. To see something no one else has, to explore the world in which we live and to go home and back to our routines with new eyes, a rejuvenated spirit and of course many good memories. But we must also acknowledge and offer praise and thanksgiving for those places to where we escape and to do this means praying to God, spending time reading the Bible and its amazing stories of hope as well as looking at what it means to be in community.

Jesus knew what was going to happen to him later. He wanted his closest friends to realize and fully know who he was and how they were to act around him. He wanted them to realize that God was in control and they needed to be supportive of Jesus and listen to him as he lives and prepares for his passion story to unfold.

Peter James and John go up the mountain and when they encounter Jesus in his brilliance, they are forever changed because what they thought they believed was true—Jesus is God's Son and he will continue to do amazing things for the sake of others.

In hearing this story of Jesus brilliance and encountering Moses and Elijah become aware of the glory of God and brilliance of Jesus. We have decisions to make—to stay like we were or tell others.

This is the same in your life before and after those wonderful memories you remembered earlier. How did you change because of those experiences? What helped you to mature a little, how did what you experienced teach you? How have these memories prepared you for your life?

Jesus calls us to follow him. WE sing of Jesus as the Light which we follow for Jesus came into the world and at his birth a bright star appeared. That star shone brightly so that people from near and far knew that the saviour was born. And as we strive to be like Jesus, we reflect his light and live shining as brilliantly as possible doing what we are called to do. We must therefore shine for him so that others will know who we are. And we are the children of God, disciples of Jesus who experience God's Spirit as we live here and now. Let us pray
God of grace and love. Shine your brilliance upon us now so that we might shine for Christ throughout our whole lives. Amen.