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## TRANSFIGURATION C

27th February 2022

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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## Opening Prayers

Here I am Lord, come to encounter you.

Come, Lord God, and may I be open to your presence. Shine in my heart, transform me by your love and your grace, that my face might shine with your glory, that your love might be all around me.

Lord of light, come here, by your grace.

In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.

*[Pause]*

Living God, for all I have received, for all that I count as gift, I am thankful. You, O Lord, are the provider of blessings and giver of gifts. Thank you.

And despite all you have done for me, I know I have failed you and fallen short of your desires for my life. I have stood with the apostle Paul when I have done and said the things I wish I hadn't, and regret the missed opportunities to do and say the things I wish I had.

In the quiet, I bring my own mistakes and regrets to God in pray.

*[Hold quiet for a minute or two]*

Living God, you accept each one of us just as we are, you welcome me into your presence, no matter what I have done or how I have let you down. Thank you for your forgiveness for me and for continuing to use me for your glory.

Amen.<sup>1</sup>

## Hymn:

664 STF – Lord, you call us to your service, each in our own way - [YouTube](#)

**You may now wish to say The Lord's Prayer in a version most familiar or comfortable to you.**

**Readings:** [2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2](#); [Luke 9:28-36](#)

## Responding to the reading

These two passages – from Luke's Gospel and a passage from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians – unpack the amazing moment of the Transfiguration, and what it might mean for us today. They speak of God's glory as something that materially changes us and the world around us. In this story, we see the power and might of God, revealed in Jesus.

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<sup>1</sup> Opening prayers written by Tim Baker

The story of the transfiguration, and the impact it has on the disciples, reminds us that we are called to be witnesses to God's power and God's love for us.

In response to God's goodness, we are called to share our praise and worship, so that others too might know of how good God is.

In today's world, there are many people who are facing the fear of persecution, or the threat of conflict. These challenges can be overpowering, and it can be hard to believe that God might transform the situation. As we stand alongside those facing the threat of persecution, we are called to be witnesses, and to believe that, in the words of the psalmist, the Lord might "give strength to his people" and "bless his people with peace". Through our words and actions, we can show that we believe God is more powerful. This could be anything from attending rallies, engaging with political structures or using our consumer power to call for change.

In Xinjiang, China, Uyghur Muslims are facing persecution based on their religion and culture. An estimated one million people have been detained by the Chinese Government, put into labour camps or moved to other regions to labour. They have been subject to human rights abuse, and forced by the fear of threat into detainment, family separation and forced labour.

Around 20% of the world's cotton is produced in the Xinjiang region in China. This cotton used internally in China as a raw product and then exported around the world as threads, fabrics and garments. Potentially, around 80 brands are directly or indirectly benefitting from the forced labour of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. This includes high street brands many of us are familiar with, such as Adidas, Nike and Gap.

We need greater transparency on how cotton production is playing a part in the persecution of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. One of the ways we can be a force for good against human rights abuse in supply chains is by choosing to buy from companies which uphold high ethical standards, and to hold the companies we shop with to account on their standards.

Could you use the template letter prepared for us by our friends at the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) to write to one of the high street brands you shop with to ask them what their ethical standards are?

Often, writing to a company on an issue is more likely to persuade them to control the ethical sourcing of their products, as opposed to simply avoiding them as a retailer. Showing that we care about the way fear, threat and discrimination play a part in our world is one way of witnessing that we believe God wants better for humanity. Through our actions, we are able to communicate that every person is worthy of dignity because they are created in God's image. God's power and might stretches beyond the fear and threat of this world, and brings justice and peace.

Find out more about the brands you can write to, and download a template letter to send, here: <https://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/modern-slavery/take-action-forced-labour-in-fashion/><sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Reflection written by the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT)

## Blessing

Go out with joy, seek peace.

Go out with love, seek hope.

Go out with comfort, seek to be a blessing to others.

Go out with the Spirit of God in your hearts, seek a better world,

In Jesus' name...

Amen.<sup>3</sup>

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## Prayers and Prayer Pointers for the Week

### Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February

- When you have chance today, head outside and look at the sky (ideally not when it's pouring with rain!). Take note of the clouds, of the speed they are moving, of the light the sun is casting, perhaps you can see the moon or some stars if it is after sunset.
- Under the vastness of the open sky, reflect on how far away the clouds are, and how much further the sun and the stars are...
- As you look at the huge expanse of the horizon, think about how much bigger our Creator is, how the God we worship knows each one of us and yet is also holding the whole universe together.
- You may wish to give thanks for the amazing universe you get to be a part of.

### Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March

- On this day in 1946 the Bank of England was nationalised, and on the same date the following year, the International Monetary Fund was established. On the anniversary of these significant moments for the banking sector, you might like to turn your prayers towards your money.
- Lord, thank you for the money I have access to – this day, this week, and throughout this year, help me to use my resources to make a difference, to spread justice, and to do so with a grateful heart. Help me to be a good steward of the resources you have placed in my care.  
Amen.

### Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March

- Take a moment to look at your hands. Reflect on the things you have used them for already this week: to do housework, to write emails, to make phone calls, perhaps some digging in the garden or some manual labour tasks.
- Thank you God, for these hands. Help me to use them as your hands in the world – to use my body, my mind, my whole life, for the building of your Kingdom here on earth.  
Amen.

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<sup>3</sup> Additional prayers by Tim Baker

### **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March**

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> March is World Wildlife Day, where the UN invites us all to play our part in preserving endangered species of wild fauna and flora.
- Today, you might like to pray for the natural environment – around your house and around the world. You might like to give thanks for rich diversity in God's creation, and for the responsibility that you have to steward and protect it appropriately.
- If it helps, go for a walk as you pray, and try to find some green spaces where you can notice the beauty of the local trees, plants, insects and animals.

### **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March**

- You might like to use this prayer as a blessing or grace before one of your meals today.
- Gracious God, thank you for the many ways you have blessed me, and for the nutrition in the meals I am eating this day. Thank you for the strength that comes from my food to keep me going. Thank you for the tastes I can enjoy and the refreshment I can feel.
- Gracious God, today, as I eat, I remember that all I have is gift – and I look out on the world around me, knowing that many people are not as blessed as I am, and many will go hungry today.
- God, help me to seek justice in your world.  
Amen.

### **Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March**

- Holy God, you have called me here, in this moment, this day, this weekend.  
Lord of life, I see you at work in the world around me.  
Open my eyes, and open my heart,  
That I may be ready to receive your Spirit into my life.  
Amen.