



Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

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Bishop's 2025 Lenten Letter "A Transfigured Lent"

Dear Beloved Disciples,

The Sunday before Ash Wednesday is traditionally known as Transfiguration Sunday. This is intentional, as Lent is a season in which we are called to see God and our faith in a new and transformative way - like the disciples saw Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration.

In the Gospel passage from Luke 9:28-43, Jesus takes Peter, James and John up the mountain to pray, and while they are there, something extraordinary happens – Jesus somehow changes, and the disciples see in him something they have not seen before. Shortly before this, Peter proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, and now he sees something amazing and inexplicable that confirms his declaration. Moses and Elijah appear alongside, and a voice from heaven says that Jesus is the Chosen One, God's Son, to whom we must listen.

This encounter gave the disciples a new vision of God, a new way of seeing and experiencing God. It was new ground, and it left people feeling different. Peter was excited and desperately wanted to hold on to the moment. He wanted to stay in that place, experiencing God's glory. Peter's encounter with Jesus revealed God in a new and transformative way, and he was forever changed.

This Lent let us approach the journey with a sense of excitement and eagerness. How can we discover new ways to meet with God and grow in our faith? If we've been Christians for many years, we can become stale and even cynical about trying new things – believing that the way we like to meet God is the only way. But just as Peter thought that he knew all there was to know about God, we too can discover new things, and God can be further revealed to us through our experience of the Holy Spirit.

One of the most significant obstacles to being a Christian is the failure to understand Jesus. Oh yes, you can know that he was an attractive teacher who lived two thousand years ago. If such people only read the Gospels, they discover he can't be written off so quickly. Jesus challenged people to commit to faith in God and live in a self-sacrificing way. He challenged us to turn the other cheek, take up our cross, and share the knowledge of God's love with others. He foretold his death, describing it not as a disaster but a triumph. He offered eternal

life to everyone with faith because he had a special relationship with God, whom he described as his heavenly Father.

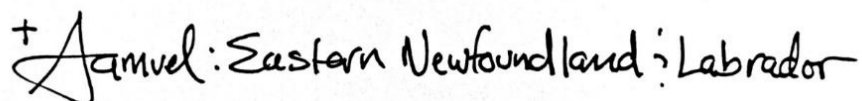
Lent is an excellent time to seek more of God as we follow Christ on his journey to the cross and beyond. So, what might we do to experience God in a new way? Let's be open to change. Perhaps we could get to grips with the Bible, read some parts we don't know so well, revisit some of our favourite passages, or read them in a new translation. Perhaps we could read a spiritual devotion, Lenten book, or Bible Study. We could learn to pray more regularly – or in a new way. Changing our pattern of prayer can have remarkable results as we meet God in new and surprising ways. Why write down every time you are aware of God at home or work or stop to reflect when you experience God's grace each day – that can be very illuminating and humbling.

How about meeting God in the beauty and wonder of creation in a new way? Try learning something new about God's incredible universe. Maybe it's time to review your stewardship. How we use our money, time, and gifts says much about our relationship with God. Have you tried fasting? This is traditionally the time to give up something, to go without, so that others may benefit and we may grow, too.

Whenever we meet with God, we are changed. We may not notice any difference, but others will and do. We should be able to see it in one another glimpses of the glory of God shining out from each other. Peter and the disciples were changed. We also can be changed. This Lent, let Jesus meet you in a new way or a new place. Let Jesus surprise you and others as he reveals more of God to you, calls you deeper into himself and changes you more and more into the person you are called to be as you grow into his likeness.

Do you want to deepen your relationship with Jesus? Don't try to avoid the challenges, but climb the mountain with your hand in Jesus's hand and trust him. Then the difficulties will evaporate, your understanding will be transformed, and you'll listen to Jesus's words as if God were speaking to you.

Wishing you a blessed and transfigured Lent

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads '+ Samuel: Eastern Newfoundland; Labrador'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Right Rev. Samuel Rose
Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador