

Prayer of Preparation: *Listen to the voice from heaven – the voice that speaks by the waters of Jordan and atop mountains on high. This voice speaks to us still, revealing truth and guidance through the words of scripture and the lessons of Jesus.*

Last week was Super Bowl Sunday. I'm not going to mention the teams or who won and such...even though we know all the details. We know one team won and one team lost. Most of us probably watched every second of the game, ate some really good food, and watched all the commercials and the half-time shows.

Most of us had our super bowl dance and cheers ready. And, don't forget the fan gear. Hats, jackets, #1 foam fingers...the works. Getting ready for Super Bowl Sunday is serious business. Over the top business. Pregame shows started at 1 p.m. and the show started at 6. And if you're a real fan, if you're all in for football, you were ready.

Today is Super Sunday. Not Super Bowl Sunday...Super Sunday. Today is the day we realize that all Sundays are super. If you prepared for today like you did for last Sunday's super bowl, I know you're all geared up. You've read today's lessons, you've got your "team triune God" gear on, you know your hymns, and you're just waiting to cheer for the best parts of the sermon. If you're ready to treat today like you treated last Sunday's game day festivities, today's going to be a real Super Sunday.

But we don't do that, do we? We treat Sundays very austere. We come in quiet and tell the babies to "hush" and the kids not to squirm. We save the dancing and sit very still, even though Exodus, Jeremiah, 2nd Samuel, Judges, Job, the Psalms, Luke, Matthew, and more books of the bible tell us to dance. Where am I going...what could I possibly be talking about?

Transfiguration Sunday...the day when the disciples saw the light that is Jesus in full color brighter than any television show or half-time production could ever produce. This is the day when everything about Jesus was absolutely over the top. Jesus shone with a light that makes the Super Bowl, and all its pregame and half-time game shows, look ordinary.

Jesus shone. Jesus lit up the world. Not for a few seconds like a commercial. Not for a few minutes to sing some of his latest hits. Not for a few hours of play-time. No. Jesus shone a light on the world and that light has never stopped shining.

If you noticed, talk of the commercials and half-time shows are over. They game is a dim memory and it's only been a week. Yet, Jesus transfigured in front of Peter, James, and John and the world has never been the same. No super bowl rings. No cameras. No news stations. Yet Jesus changed the world. One person, fully human, fully divine. Three disciples ready, willing, and able to spread the good news and carry Jesus' light down the mountain.

Here's the message, the light, the disciples carry: *this is my son, the Beloved* and worship. That's what we do every Sunday, every Super Sunday. We gather in the name of God's beloved son and we worship. Not on a tent high in the mountains like Peter wanted to. Not away from the world so no one learns who Jesus is and how much God loves us.

No, our job is to come down from the mountain, rather the steps of the church, and bring God's light with us. And shine God's light on the world. God's light which is bigger and brighter and lasts longer and means more than any pregame, game, half-time show, or commercial the world could ever see.

God's light. Big words for a small church. And a really, really, really big idea. What does God's light mean here and how will it shine? I always go back to Paul's message about gifts. We each have gifts and graces and in our baptism vows we promise to use them on behalf of the church and the world.

I like how Peter describes our gifts in 1 Peter 4:11: *Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.*

For Peter we speak or serve. I would expand Peter to say we do both, we speak and we serve. Each of us is called to speak of the light Peter, James, and John saw. Each of us is called to tell the world that Jesus is God's beloved son...and we are God's beloved children. Each of us is called to worship God together as a congregation...and each of us is called to carry that worship into the world as light and service.

Having lived in the inner city for many of my formative years, having been poor, homeless, hungry, oppressed and distressed, having been educated in inferior schools and bussed around town for special programs, it will be of no surprise to you that I have a passion for education, feeding the hungry, and uplifting the oppressed and distressed. My life of service stems from my life's experiences. My life of service also fulfills the church's mission, God's vision of the world. It's how I bring Jesus' light into the world.

Today is Super Sunday. I don't expect a famous singer to come out for a half-time show and I'll forgive you if you don't have a huge cooler of Gatorade to pour over my head. But as you leave worship today, I want you to remember that every Sunday is Super Sunday and each time you leave the building it's the same as Peter, James, and John leaving the mountain. Leave carrying the light. Leave and preach and teach the word. Leave and serve the world. How you serve and who you serve is all about who you are and whom God has placed on your heart. But you must serve the world because that's what Jesus did when he went down and that's why God sent him.

Response to the Word: *Light of light, True God of true God, as you spoke from the pillar of cloud to Moses and the people, so you spoke from the bright cloud to Jesus and his disciples. May your word live through us today, that our world of sorrow may be transfigured into joy.*