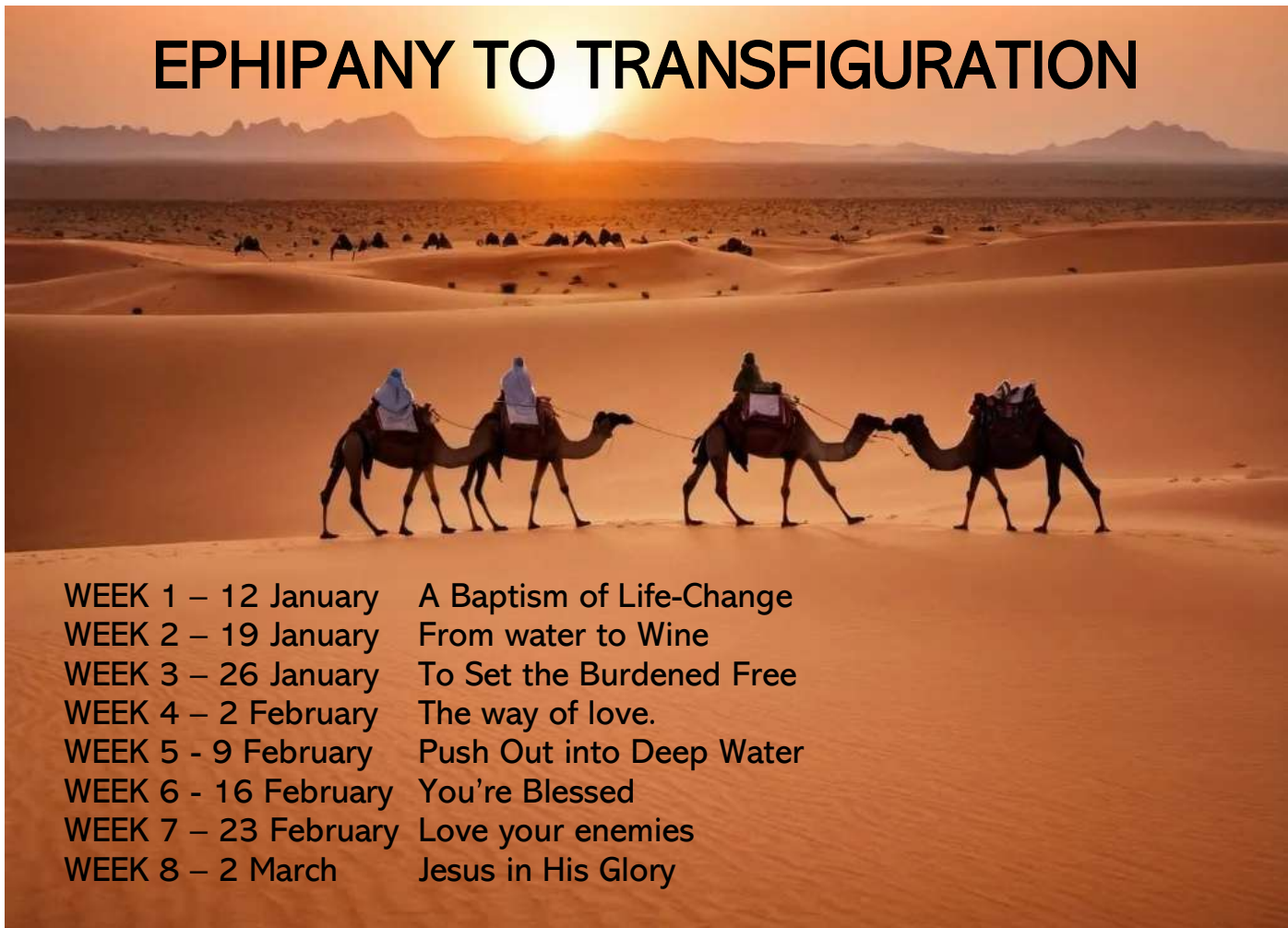


EPHIPANY TO TRANSFIGURATION



WEEK 1 – 12 January	A Baptism of Life-Change
WEEK 2 – 19 January	From water to Wine
WEEK 3 – 26 January	To Set the Burdened Free
WEEK 4 – 2 February	The way of love.
WEEK 5 - 9 February	Push Out into Deep Water
WEEK 6 - 16 February	You're Blessed
WEEK 7 – 23 February	Love your enemies
WEEK 8 – 2 March	Jesus in His Glory

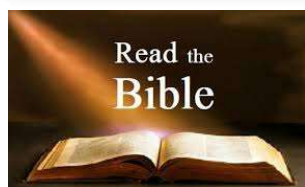
We welcome you joining us on the Liturgy journey from Epiphany to Transfiguration Sunday. This material reflects the Sunday sermons ensuring the whole church are on the same page and can take the learnings deeper with scripture readings, daily devotions and questions for group discussions. May you draw closer to God whilst learning His truths, find the journey transformative and experience God's love for you in a very deep and real way.



Promises (feat. Joe L Barnes & Naomi Raine) - Maverick City | TRIBL
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNOw5iBoCd0>

WEEK 7 23 FEBRUARY

Love your enemies



Genesis 45:3-11, 15
Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40 –
1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50
Luke 6:27-38

Luke 6:27-38 The Message

27-30 "To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the supple moves of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, gift-wrap your best coat and make a present of it. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more payback. Live generously. 31-34 "Here is a simple rule of thumb for behaviour: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of

pawnbrokers does that. ³⁵⁻³⁶ "I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You'll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we're at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind. ³⁷⁻³⁸ "Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. Don't condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you'll find life a lot easier. Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity."



Monday, February 24: Psalm 38; Genesis 33:1-17; 1 Cor 11:2-16;

Tuesday, February 25: Psalm 38; 1 Samuel 24:1-22; 1 Cor 11:17-22, 27-33;

Wednesday, February 26: Psalm 38; Leviticus 5:1-13; Luke 17:1-4;

Thursday, February 27: Psalm 99; Deuteronomy 9:1-5; Acts 3:11-16;

Friday, February 28: Psalm 99; Deuteronomy 9:6-14; Acts 10:1-8;

Saturday, March 01: Psalm 99; Deuteronomy 9:15-24; Luke 10:21-24;



This week was written by:

Nompelo Khayi (*Local Preacher*)

In this passage, we find Jesus surrounded by a large crowd of people, including his disciples. In the present moment, it's clear that his popularity has grown greatly. The crowd that gathered was diverse and probably included common people, religious leaders, and even Roman officials who may have been observing His teachings. All these individuals dealt with problems and disputes daily. According to Luke's account, many people gathered wanting to hear Jesus speak and be healed by him. The desire to be close to Jesus seemed to be accompanied with a sense of desperation. However, as seen by the teachings he subsequently delivers in this Sermon on the Plain, Jesus is aware that following Him comes with great responsibilities.

Loving your enemy is one of the lessons this sermon teaches. In this context, enemies were not just personal adversaries but also societal and political oppressors. However, for some present in the audience, the idea of loving an enemy was difficult to accept, as it challenged their deep-seated resentment and yearning for justice. His teaching to "love your enemies" was revolutionary, particularly in a society that frequently justified revenge. He also addressed the destructive consequences of holding on to negativity toward enemies, also challenging the natural human tendency toward retaliation and hatred.

By encouraging those around him to "*do good to those who hate you*" and "*bless those who curse you,*" Jesus emphasised that responding to hostility with love breaks this cycle and reflects the character of God. We are reminded that treating evil with compassion and forgiveness could transform hearts. Those who choose to live in rage are eventually consumed by the negativity of having enemies, which only serves to breed disagreements, suffering, and destruction.



God gave people the ability to choose between peace and conflicts, between love and hatred. This is also embedded in our Methodist teachings, which encourage the recognition of our Christian responsibility to be peacemakers. Humanity continues to be impacted by conflicts, social divisions, and personal grievances, but Jesus reminds us that choosing love and peace has spiritual benefits even if it is normal to feel angry and resentful.

Jesus' teachings urge us to put compassion above animosity. We are reminded that responding with love instead of hate can end vicious patterns and foster peace, whether we are dealing with personal

betrayals, political disagreements, or problems at work. Furthermore, this passage challenges us to consider the freedom that God has granted us in making decisions. Choosing love and forgiveness is a compelling demonstration of God's grace in a society that is frequently characterised by anger and conflict. By living out this extreme love, we glorify God and help bring peace and healing to a broken world.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you react to people who are hostile or unfair to you? Does your reaction align with the love and compassion Jesus taught?
2. Where in your life are you holding on to anger and grudges, and how can you invite God's grace to help you let go and make the decision to choose to love instead?
3. What practical steps can you take this week to show love and kindness to someone who may have wronged you?
4. How does choosing love and forgiveness strengthen your faith journey?



FAMILY TIME:

Written by Jenny Blake
CHILDREN'S PASTOR
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Week 7 - Love Your Enemies

Scripture: Luke 6:27-38 (The Message)

Key Verse: *"Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them!"* (Luke 6:31)

Introduction

Have you ever had someone treat you unfairly or say something mean? Our first reaction might be to be mean back or avoid them. But Jesus teaches us a different way—the way of love, even for our enemies!

Bible Story Recap

Jesus told His followers to do something very difficult: love their enemies. He said they should pray for those who are unkind to them, be generous without expecting anything in return, and treat others the way they want to be treated.

Instead of getting even, Jesus calls us to respond with kindness, patience, and forgiveness. This isn't always easy, but it shows the world what God's love looks like.

Family Discussion

1. **Why do you think Jesus wants us to love our enemies?**
Talk about how love can change hearts and bring peace.
2. **What does the Golden Rule (Luke 6:31) mean in our everyday lives?**
Share examples of how treating others the way we want to be treated makes a difference.
3. **How can we practice loving our enemies?**
Think of ways to respond kindly when someone is unkind.

Activity: Love in Action

Write down a name or situation where showing love is difficult. As a family, pray together, asking God to help you show love, patience, and kindness in those situations.

Prayer

"Dear Jesus, loving our enemies isn't easy, but You showed us how to do it. Help us to be kind, even when others aren't. Fill our hearts with Your love so we can share it with everyone. Amen."