**Last Epiphany 2025**

The legendary Hank Williams wrote a song we all know called “I Saw

 the Light”…

I wandered so aimless life filled with sin

C G

I wouldn’t let my dear savior in

G

Then Jesus came like a stranger in the night

G D G

Praise the Lord I saw the light.

Chorus:

G

I saw the light I saw the light

C G

No more in darkness no more at night

G

Now I'm so happy no sorrow in sight

G D G

Praise the Lord I saw the light.

Just three simple chords, G, D, and C but a powerful punchline. *I saw*

*the light…Praise the Lord, I saw the light!*

 The Epiphany season, which concludes this week, is the season of

God’s glory piercing a dark world. It ends with the greatest story of that

glory called the Transfiguration. It’s a well-known story to all of us. The

disciples that day up the mountain saw the light for sure. Jesus

Transfigured in glory with Moses, representing the law, and Elijah

representing the prophets. They want to stay there basking in Glory of

the Lord, safe and sound, but they have to come back down to earth to

somehow become the light for others.

 In the ancient Byzantine view, the Transfiguration is not only a feast

 in honor of Jesus, but a feast of the [Holy Trinity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Trinity), for all three Persons of

the Trinity are interpreted as being present at that moment: God the

Father spoke from heaven; [God the Son](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_the_Son) was the one being

transfigured, and [God the Holy Spirit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_the_Holy_Spirit) was present in the form of a

cloud.

 There is a tradition of bringing grapes to church to be blessed during

the [Divine Liturgy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_Liturgy) on the day of the Transfiguration. If grapes are not

available in the area, apples or some other fruit may be brought. I’ll

bless apples this morning that we can share during fellowship time

later. This begins the "Blessing of [First Fruits](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Fruits)" for the year.

 The concept of first fruits is introduced in the Torah, where the

Israelites are commanded to bring the first yield of their harvest to the

Lord as an act of worship and thanksgiving. In [Exodus 23:19](https://biblehub.com/exodus/23-19.htm) , it is

written, "Bring the best of the first fruits of your soil to the house of the

LORD your God." This command underscores the principle that God

deserves the first and best of what His people produce. This is the

antecedent of the modern tithe: The first thing I give off the top of my

monthly paycheck is a tithe or 10% to Trinity.

 Sometimes God’s light in our lives is blinding and disorienting, as was

 the case for Paul on the Damascus Road being knocked off his horse in

a blaze of light with Jesus speaking to him out of the future through the

light of the coming Kingdom. Light is the best disinfectant and we

welcome God’s light into places in our lives that may be dark and scary.

Beginning on Ash Wednesday, the season of Lent is for opening the

curtains and letting in the light of God’s love and forgiveness. It should

not be seen as a dreary season, but nonetheless a challenging season.

 Another great songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and producer, Todd

Rundgren also wrote a song called “I Saw the Light.” Unlike Hank

 Williams’ song, the melody and chord progressions are more

sophisticated and beautiful. The song is about a man who was

afraid of the vulnerability of letting go that’s necessary to fall in love.

He finally gave in when he saw the light in her eyes…*When she gazed*

*up at me, the answer was plain to see, for I saw the light in her eyes.*

But I tried to run,

 Bm7 E

 though I knew it wouldn't help me none

 Bm7 E Amaj7---A7

 'Cause I couldn't ever love no one, or so I said

 Dmaj7 C#m7 F#m B7

 But my feelings for you were just something I never knew

 Bm7 E Amaj9---Bm7 Amaj9---Bm7

 'Til I saw the light in your eyes\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_in your eyes

 Mystics and monastics have from the very beginning of the Jesus

Movement, which became the organized Church, understood our

relationship with God in Christ as a love affair. It’s not a God-at-arm’s

length relationship, but a God in full embrace relationship. Over the

course of a lifetime, we fall more and more deeply in love with God and

one another as our preparation for eternity. Among other things,

heaven is a love feast.

 Before the fully developed Eucharistic Liturgies of the second and

third centuries, Christians gathered for Agape Feasts. These were

simply fellowship dinners in which believers shared food, beverage,

laughter and song. Following the meal, Jesus’s words at the Last Supper

were said over bread and wine and shared as His Body and Blood. I

wonder if there is a new future for the Agape Feast as a way to draw

people in who otherwise wouldn’t show up for Mass on Sunday

mornings. We shall see.

 So dear ones of Trinity Church, let’s spend the Lenten season ahead

intentionally falling more deeply in love with God and one another.

Practice seeing the light of Christ in one another, then trust that

those people God sends us to will see the light in our eyes and us in

theirs.

**May it be so!**