Today we celebrate a significant event in the life of Jesus, and a significant event in the life of the early church – the Transfiguration. Matthew, Mark and Luke each include this story in their Gospels, with very little variation. That means that this Transfiguration experience was extremely important to the early Christians. We heard that Peter, James and John were surprised, astonished, shaken by the experience. Through the Transfiguration event they understood who Jesus really was and it also gave them an amazing story for sharing this revelation with the world. Jesus was not just a carpenter turned rabbi, healer, prophet. He was God’s own son, God’s Chosen. This man, Jesus, shown with the dazzling glory of God. He spoke with the prophets Moses and Elijah.

For us in the 21st century, in an at least nominally Christian culture, it is hard to be surprised by the Gospel stories that we hear year-in and year-out. We know these great stories of our faith. We know who the actors are, for the most part. We certainly know who Jesus is...God made man, crucified and resurrected and ascended. And yet there do come those moments in which we can be startled by what we hear, by what we perceive, by what we experience about this Jesus. It may not happen here inside this building. It may not happen even on the mountain top. But it happens. And I presume - I hope - that each of us has had a glimpse at one time or another, in one way or another, about who Jesus is for you personally, and who he is for the life of the world: our brother or best friend, our teacher or healer, our Savior or Comforter.

Remembering these moments of personal revelation, we gather for communal prayer; the reading of scripture, and the breaking of the bread. These gatherings provide us with an opportunity to reflect on what we have experienced, to share that experience with others, to open ourselves to being transformed, transfigured, changed again and again into an ever more perfect reflection of God’s glory. We may not be as outwardly transfigured as Jesus was, but we are changed from glory to glory, no matter how minimal that may seem in our eyes. But to those around us, such a transfiguration sometimes can be quite revealing…he is walking on air…she is glowing like the sun.

We don't need to climb mountains, or get enveloped by clouds, or experience supernatural events in order to be transfigured, transformed, changed. Every time we have an epiphany, an insight, perhaps just a glimpse of God's presence in our lives, we are changed. Every time we experience love, forgiveness, healing, we are changed. And as we are changed, we help change all who are around us. God is at work in our midst. Just look at your family life, your life in the work place your life in the neighborhood, your life here at St. John’s. What are the transformations you see, the revelations, the signs of new life? Experiences such as these signify that things have changed. They provide a moment of insight. They reveal the transformative power of God’s love made flesh, Jesus our Lord and Savior. Transfigurations, transformations, changes happen all the time. What a wonder they are to behold. What hope they inspire.

This past Wednesday, your Vestry made some significant decisions, hoping that they will transfigure, transform, change life here at St. John’s. Lynn Young was appointed to the Vestry succeeding Linda Longoria Neff. A charge, a mandate for a Calling Committee was approved. This Calling Committee will be responsible for discerning the best applicants for consideration as your next permanent priest. The Vestry also created a committee to complete the parish profile. This document is the main electronic advertising tool to attract an appropriate pool of candidates for consideration as your priest. And the Vestry accepted my offer to remain here at St. John’s until your new priest is in place.

Know that each of these decisions will bring about change, and while change can be a scary thing, for we Christians, change is part of our way of life. As you heard in last week’s readings and sermon, unless there is death, there can be no new life. “What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.” Perhaps one of the biggest changes that will be required of you as a congregation is to let go of a specific timeline for the calling of your next priest. Let go of the desire to control this, remembering that God is in control. That alone should give you hope even in the midst of your anxiety. Please know that the diocese is committed to supporting you in having the time and space needed to conduct a full, credible call process. The Reverend Laura Sheridan Campbell, whom you met at our Annual Meeting, will be directly involved, acting as your consultant, mentor and guide, and supporting you in prayer, as well.

Some of the work that needs to be done includes ensuring that the parish profile truly reflects who you are today, while also sharing your history. Several of you have agreed to take on this task. Also, there is significant work to be done by the Calling Committee in fleshing out a process for identifying appropriate candidates, interviewing them, and then presenting the Vestry with a final slate of nominees. Invitations to join this committee are already being made. In the midst of this, there is work for the Vestry to do as well, in discerning a vision for this congregation and then appropriately managing the many facets of your life here at St. John’s. And believe it or not, there is work that you the parishioners need to do during this time of transition. Along with praying for one another, and financially supporting the operations of this parish, there is also the work of becoming ever more responsible members of this congregation.

That might mean taking a more active role in one of the worship ministries. That might mean finding new ways to support this congregation’s outreach to our neighbors near and far. That might mean transforming your vision of what it means to be St. John’s Episcopal Church in Chula Vista. It definitely will mean getting out into the community and telling your faith story – sharing how you have been changed, transformed, transfigured by your experiences here.

Transfigurations, transformations, changes happen all the time. They are all around us, not just in the Bible, and not just on mountain tops. Look around and see that all of creation is being made new. It is being changed in your sight, in the blink of an eye. Be transfigured, O people of St. John’s. Be changed into a more perfect reflection of God’s glory, into a more perfect likeness of Jesus, God’s only Son, into a more perfect image of faith-filled disciples. Be about God’s great mission – loving God about all else and loving your neighbor as much as you love yourself, without exception.