



It's rather fitting on this night that we give thanks for being in community with Creation, that tomorrow is actually the anniversary that Grand Teton National Park was established nearly a century ago. As one of the most majestic sceneries in our country, Grand Teton covers over 300,000 acres in northwest Wyoming with almost a dozen glaciers as well as serene lake waters, not to mention being home to hundreds of bird species. But one of the uniquely interesting attractions for the church-going folk is the Chapel of the Transfiguration, a small log sanctuary built a few years before the surrounding area was ultimately recognized as a national park, to serve as a place for community worship for the nearby settlers. Over the years, this relatively miniscule spiritual house supported by our Episcopalian siblings in Christ, has grown significantly in popularity especially for weddings, as newlyweds,

understandably so, are blown away by the possibility of the best weddings pictures imaginable.

With all that being said, inside the chapel that is only meant to sit 65, at best, is another view that offers its own most breath-taking sight. As much as the history of church architecture can come down to a debate about what exactly you're going to put behind the altar, the main centerpiece, of sorts, of any sanctuary: whether you put a cross or a stained-glass window or something more unique like our reredos. And yet, I like to think the Chapel of the Transfiguration has one of the best of all.

Yes, we preachers do our best to use our voices to offer the Gospel to those in worship spaces of various sizes around the world, but sometimes the Creation has something additionally extravagant to offer as well, including when it's right behind an altar, a breath-taking centerpiece of God's bounty to the world. Now, it is estimated that over 3 million people visit Grand Teton National Park each year. Of course, with such memorable trips also comes an itinerary list with mind-numbing planning and carrying-out amidst hotel and rental car and dining accommodations. And perhaps it's only fitting that in the midst of all the comings and goings to make sure tourists maximize their travel experience, is a humble chapel inviting anyone to just come and sit and take it all in: take in the spellbinding Creation, take in the God who finds even greater beauty in you, take in the possibility that in the comings and goings of life complications and all the matters that try our souls; take in the possibility of us children of God coming together in community with a source of new life that we so often take for granted. Take in this community with a natural world that is meant captivate us, and also inspire us to taking care of the earth and each other, and also meant to make us stop altogether and dig in deep to the love of God brought to life in Jesus Christ that is even more captivating than all the Creation has to offer. So for that love for you and for all of us to sustain us during this season of Lent and throughout our journey on this beautiful earth, we most certainly give thanks to God, indeed! Amen!