



Transfiguration

OUR SAVIOR
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Transfiguration of Our Lord
Sunday, February 14, 2021



OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH
745 Front Street S., Issaquah, WA 98027
425-392-4169

SERVICE OF THE WORD: TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

GATHERING: THE HOLY SPIRIT CALLS US TOGETHER AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Melody in A — Michael Shea

Jiyoung Lee

WELCOME

Pastor Jim Kruse

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

PM: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

C: Amen.

PM: We are joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, where we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for the gift of water that sustains life, and praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love. To you be honor and praise, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

GREETING

PM: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; a light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the community of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

GATHERING HYMN

Oh, Wondrous Image, Vision Fair

Cantor

Text: Sarum, 15th cent.; Music: English ballad, 15th cent.

Oh, wondrous image, vision fair of glory that the church may share,
Which Christ upon the mountain shows, where brighter than the sun he glows!
With Moses and Elijah nigh the incarnate Lord holds converse high,
And from the cloud, the Holy One says, "This is my beloved Son."
With shining face and brighter ray, Christ deigns to manifest today
What glory shall be theirs above who joy in God with perfect love.
And faithful hearts are raised on high by this great vision's mystery;
For which in joyful song we raise the voice of prayer, the hymn of praise.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

PM: Let us pray. Almighty God,

C: the resplendent light of your truth shines from the mountaintop into our hearts. Transfigure us by your beloved Son, and illumine the world with your image, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST LESSON

2 Kings 2:1-12

¹Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. ²Elijah said to Elisha, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me as far as Bethel." But Elisha said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel. ³The company of prophets who were in Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he said, "Yes, I know; keep silent."

⁴Elijah said to him, "Elisha, stay here; for the Lord has sent me to Jericho." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So they came to Jericho. ⁵The company of prophets who were at Jericho drew near to Elisha, and said to him, "Do you know that today the Lord will take your master away from you?" And he answered, "Yes, I know; be silent."

⁶Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the Lord has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the Lord lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. ⁷Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. ⁸Then Elijah took his mantle and rolled it up, and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground.

⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." ¹⁰He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." ¹¹As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. ¹²Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces.

AM: Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

SECOND LESSON

2 Corinthians 4:3-6

³Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. ⁴In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. ⁶For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

AM: Word of God, word of life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION*Arise, Your Light Has Come!*

Cantor

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947; Music: William H. Walter, 1825-1893

Arise, your light has come! The Spirit's call obey;
Show forth the glory of your God which shines on you today.

THE GOSPEL

Mark 9:2-9

²Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, ³and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them. ⁴And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, who were talking with Jesus. ⁵Then Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁶He did not know what to say, for they were terrified. ⁷Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!" ⁸Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

⁹As they were coming down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

PM: The Gospel of the Lord. C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON*Little Visits With God*

Pastor Jim Kruse

There was a book in our home when I was growing up called, "Little Visits with God." It was a very popular book among Lutheran families in the 1950's for parents to use as devotional aids with their children in the 1950's and 60's. "Little Visits with God" was a medium sized book, about 150 pages, that was made up of many many little stories. Each story was a couple of pages long. And each story was written in such a way as to teach children a special moral such as "always tell the truth," or "taking cookies from the cookie jar without permission is the same as stealing," or "it is good to stop whatever you are doing to help a friend who is hurting." The one story I still remember from that book was about some boys who go sneaking out to play baseball when they didn't have permission. (There were a lot of stories where the granting of permission was a key element.) Anyway, the boys who go off to play ball without permission end up breaking a window in the neighbor's house and get into big trouble. I remember that story well, because it actually happened to my brothers and me. My mother may have even read that story to us more often than the rest of the stories because of that.

A few years ago, I found "Little Visits with God" on the shelf of a church library where I was serving for a short time as an Interim Pastor. This time, as I read through some of the stories, I was reading through the eyes of an adult. I was surprised at how these stories presented a strict, very narrow interpretation of what is morally right and wrong. And as I read through the first few stories I was left with the impression that "visiting with God" was a little like visiting with some sort of "super" parent—going over the rules over and over again—impressing on you the importance of not violating them. I remember thinking, "Boy, that makes visiting with God kind of scary." How strange," I thought. As an adult, just turning 60 years old, that was not my image of God at all.

The Old Testament Reading for today, however, is the account of someone who did have such a view of God. Years earlier, when Elisha was a young man working in a field, the prophet Elijah had come walking down the road looking to adopt his successor. At the time, it took some convincing to get Elisha to leave everything he had and follow Elijah. But now, in this lesson, the time has come for Elisha to take over the full responsibilities of being a prophet. And once again, it takes some convincing. Elisha has become so comfortable in the role of having Elijah running his life--telling him what is right and what is wrong, telling him what road to travel and with whom to speak--that he is now frightened by the prospect of going on without Elijah guiding him every step of the way.

In the reading for today Elijah travels from holy place to holy place, moving south beginning in Gilgal, then to Bethel, then to Jericho, and finally to the crossing at the Jordan River. Elijah does what Joshua had done many centuries earlier as he, along with Moses, led the People of Israel out of the wilderness and into the New Land of Promise. Elijah stops the flow of the water so that they can cross on dry ground.

With each leg of the journey Elijah tells Elisha to stop following him. Elijah tells Elisha that it is time to separate from him, to stand on his own and become a prophet in his own right. But each time Elisha declines saying, "I will never leave you." And each time the hometown prophets at that location try to convince Elisha that Elijah is going home to be with the Lord. But each time Elisha responds like the child who covers her ears when a friend tries to tell her something she doesn't want to hear. "Yes, I know that, but I don't want to hear it." Elisha has become dependent upon Elijah's mentoring and does not want to imagine having to go through life without it.

When we are children, we have spiritual work to do, as we do at any age. The writers of "Little Visits with God" understood that the spiritual work of children is the installation of a basic moral compass, a guide that will steer them into appropriate ways of living in the world with others and with God. What we are learning during this time is a combination of religious principle, cultural mores, and family and church traditions. There is nothing wrong with this work. In fact, it is important work. It is necessary work. And it must be completed to a certain level of competency if we are going to be able to live as happy healthy adults in this life. But our spiritual growth does not end with the acquisition of the moral compass of the child. Ultimately our God is not simply a rule maker and rule enforcer. Our God is more than that. Our God is a living, dynamic, responding being. One who is constantly looking for ways to know and be known, to love and be loved, to create and re-create his best works of creation.

The spiritual work of adults is to move from knowing God as a "Super-parent," to knowing God as something more personal; as "Brother," or "Friend," or even as "Lover." The biblical witness to the ongoing relationship between God and humanity is full of these kinds of grownup images. When we fail to grow into these more mature relationships with God, our spiritual lives as adults become heavy, lifeless, and flat. We become out of touch with the realities of the world. We live with the fear that if we lose our grip on the rules that tell us what is right and what is wrong, we will lose our grip on God's rule in our world and in our lives. Spiritually, our lives become a scary place to be.

This is the place where Elisha found himself in today's lesson. Like a young puppy, Elisha finds himself nipping at Elijah's heels, following Elijah around, waiting for Elijah to initiate the next adventure. Growing tired of Elisha's sad act, Elijah turns to Elisha and says, "What do you want from me?" That is to say, "What can I do for you so that you will leave me in peace?" And Elisha asks for something Elijah cannot give him, a double portion of God's Spirit. Fearful that he is losing his only guide, Elisha realizes that simply knowing the rules of life is not the same as knowing the Author of Life. He needs what Elijah has, he needs to see and walk and talk with God. Elijah responds by saying, "Watch me. If you see God in me when I am taken away, you will have what you need."

On Transfiguration Sunday, we stand with one foot still in the Season of Epiphany—the season where we have been focused on the gradual revealing of this gift, "God with Us," that we received on Christmas; and one foot leaning into Lent—with its focus on the fulfillment of Christ's work of self-sacrifice on the cross. We are standing with Elisha, thankful for the way God has blessed and guided us in the past, while watching for God's spirit to be given directly to us.

Like Elisha before us, and Peter and James and John as well, we don't just want to know God through the lessons of childhood, or the teachings of those we trust, or even through the good and loving acts of family and friend. We want to see God face to face. We want to know what Elijah knew as he rode off in the fiery chariot to be with God. We want to see what Peter and James and John saw as Jesus stood glowing before them with a white brightness such as the world had never seen. We want to know, not just God's intentions for creation, but God's intentions for us. We are looking for direct, quiet, intimate visits with God where we can address the tough, grownup, complicated issues of being faithful in a tough, grownup, complicated world.

There are many ways opportunity many transfiguring moments, when we can have these simple little visits with God in our lives. But they are not moments that can be captured in a book, or moral lessons that can be taught to children. They are moments like a fresh new sunrise after a gentle cleansing overnight rain, that the difficulties of the past have been washed away and there is only the promise of what is new and good ahead of us. They are the moments of listening with, talking with, or playing with the children we know or love. Moments that release us from the struggles of the day and let us attend to the child within us who continues to live for the simple joys of simple things. They are the moments of little kindnesses, words of gratitude, encouragement, sympathy and concern for others that turn us away, just for the moment, from our self-focused mindset, and remind us of the bigger, kinder world in which we live and thrive. They are the moments of sitting quietly with those who are dying.

These are the places where grownups go for "Little visits with God"—times where we can sit down with God and go over the important stuff of life. Little slivers of time where we go to see God in the lives and faces of those who are most trusting, most faithful, most at ease with God's divine providence over their lives. All of these moments come together in our imagination, to show us God as God really is, to show us life as it was intended to be, and to show us that love has real power to take over and win the final victory.

Again, when I was a young pastor, one of my mentors was always threatening to write a book entitled, "What I know about Jesus that I never learned from reading the Bible." For the longest time I did not know what he meant by that. But now, at this point in my life, I am beginning to understand what that a book would have been about. It is about the stuff of Elijah and Elisha, the stuff of the Transfiguration of Our Lord. It is "Little Visits with God" for grownups.

HYMN OF THE DAY

How Good, Lord, to Be Here!

Cantor

Text: Joseph A. Robinson, 1858-1933; Music: W. Mercer, 1854

How good, Lord, to be here! Your glory fills the night;
Your face and garments like the sun, shine with unborrowed light.

How good, Lord, to be here, your beauty to behold
Where Moses and Elijah stand, your messengers of old.

Fulfiller of the past and hope of things to be,
We hail your body glorified and our redemption see.

How good, Lord, to be here! Yet we may not remain;
But since you bid us leave the mount, come with us to the plain.

OFFERING

A new year has begun, and with it, God again refreshes the daily blessings of life and all that is needed to be sustained. Please open your hearts in gratitude to God as you help to financially support our ministry at Our Savior Lutheran Church.

OFFERING PRAYER

PM: O God, receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace.

C: Amen.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

From the Ministry Site Profile being used to call the next pastor:

"As members of the body of Christ in this place and time, we are a welcoming congregation of people who gather to worship God, to share life together, to grow in love for each other and to be shaped by God's Word, with the purpose of living out God's love and being a sign of God's loving and forgiving presence in our community and world."

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the

world, and all people in need.

[A brief silence.]

For the gospel proclaimed in word and deed, for communities of faith far and near, and for all who show the face of Christ throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For creation: sun, moon and stars; life forming in the dark earth and ocean deep; mountains, clouds and storms, and creatures seen and unseen, and for the Holy Spirit's guidance in our stewardship of God's creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For those responsible for safety and protection: for emergency responders and security guards, attorneys and advocates, civil servants and leaders of governments, that they witness to mercy and justice throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For all who suffer this day, especially Leslie, Evy and her family, the Smith & Taylor families, James, Joan and Stephanie, Betty, Brandi, Katia & Rahul, Willie & Mary, Donna, Bruni, the Kowal and the Zazueta families, Roger, Carol, Weatherly Inn residents and staff, Les, Mayah, Judy, Jerry, Ron, JD, communities across the country, Dave, Guests of the Community Meals Program, Sonja, Nicole, Josee and Jeannie that Christ our healer transform sickness into health, loneliness into companionship, bereavement into consolation, and suffering into peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For companions on life's journey in this worshiping community, for loved ones who cannot be with us this day, and for guidance during struggles we face, that God's glory is revealed around and among us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of the powerful and helpless, you clothe us with strength when our spirits are weak and weary. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to surge in our community and around the world, comfort the families of those who have died, heal the bodies of those who are suffering, sustain those who provide care, encourage those whose livelihood has been affected, and hasten the distribution of medical vaccines. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of grace, we are thankful for the ELCA mission partnership with churches in China. We lift up the Autism Rehabilitation Center in Qingdao for its care of the children and its community service initiatives.

For what and for whom else do the people of God pray this morning?

[Here other intercessions may be offered.]

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed who now rest from their earthly pilgrimage, especially Del, John, Alec, Beverly, Gail and Mike, that their lives of service and prayer inspire us in our living. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

PM: Lord, remember us in your love as you teach us to pray:

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

SINGING OUT THE ALLELUIA *Alleluia, Song of Gladness/Celtic Alleluia* Cantor

Text: Latin hymn, 11th cent.; Music: John Goss/Fintan O'Carroll, Christopher Walker

Alleluia cannot always be our song while here below;
Alleluia our transgressions make us for a while forgo;
For the solemn time is coming when our tears for sin shall flow.

In our hymns we pray with longing: Grant us, blessed Trinity,
At the last to keep glad Easter with the faithful saints on high;
There to you forever singing alleluia joyfully.

Alleluia...

INVITATION TO LENT

BLESSING

PM: May the love of Jesus Christ, the light of the world, fill your hearts and illumine your path. Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

POSTLUDE

O.Sons and Daughters — Alfred V.Fedak

Jiyoung Lee

Serving in Worship:

Worship Leader:	Pastor Jim Kruse
Assisting Minister:	Sue Johnson
Cantors:	Lori Downey, Scott Hafso
Organist:	Jiyoung Lee
Videographer:	Leslie Waltzer
Video Editor:	Dave Carlson
Banner:	Elaine Stamm

Readings for Ash Wednesday: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:10;
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

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Our Savior Lutheran Church Staff

Rev. James R. Kruse, *Transition Pastor*
Shari Lundberg, *Parish Administrator*
Dr. Jiyoung Lee, *Parish Organist*

Scott Hafso, *Director of Worship & Music*
Kate Gagnon, *Lay Visitation Minister*



Additional worship resources:

Reading: Psalm 50: 1-6

Suggested Hymn for Listening: *Christ, Whose Glory Fill the Skies*

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788; Music: J. G. Werner, 1815

Prayer is putting our faith into action. We invite you to include these people in your daily prayers. You can make prayer requests via email at office@oslciissaquah.org. All written requests will remain on this list for 4 weeks.

Leslie Lapp hit by a car and recovering from injuries, wife to a pastor in California. (Mary Ann Hult)
Evy Sneva and her family as they grieve the loss of her son.

The Smith and Taylor families, James Murphy recovering from COVID (Shelley & Mark Howe)
Joan Perry admitted to the hospital for COVID 19, and her daughter, **Stephanie**. (Cheryl Neeb)
Betty Anderson-healing of intestinal issues. (mother of Shelley Howe)

Brandi Kowal-peace and strength after a miscarriage. (niece of Shelley Howe)

Katia & Rahul, Willie & Mary, Donna, Bruni, the The Kowal & Zazueta families recovering from COVID (Shelley & Mark Howe)

Roger Stanley strength and healing. (Alice Lewis)

Carol Harbolt peace and healing. (Ray Harbolt)

Weatherly Inn residents and staff (Ray Harbolt)

Les Gagnon peace and healing. (Kate Gagnon)

Mayah healing. (Connie Fletcher)

Judy Shaffer comfort and peace of mind. (Sandy Aldworth)

Jerry Nack healing and strength. (Kate Gagnon)

Ron Gerde healing for recent medical issues. (Brother to Bob Gerde)

JD Golick diagnosed with cancer, undergoing chemotherapy. (nephew to Patty Gerde)

Safety and peace for communities being torn apart during these difficult times. (Karen Hansen)

Dave Carlson continued healing and following kidney transplant surgery.

Guests of the Community Meals Program safety, health and peace of mind. (Connie Fletcher)

Sonja 3 years old undergoing treatment for cancer. (granddaughter of Henrik & Patty Christopherson)

Nicole DeCamp healing and strength. (Ken DeCamp and Cheryl Leiter)

Josee Jordan peace of mind as she faces health challenges. (Dianne Tanner)

Jeannie Lindquist continued healing and strength.

Healing and peace of mind: Henrik & Patty Christopherson (Dianne Tanner); **Vern Lindquist**; **Marian James**; **Gregory** (nephew of Joanne Suttmeier); **Doug Patur**; **Katie Moeller**; **Margot Inman**; **Ken Acker** (son of Lucy Acker); **Marilyn**

Carlson; **Taufik Hidayut** (Ken Konigsmark); **Don Wilkinson** (husband of Gwynn Wilkinson); **Rebecca Thomas**; **Tanisha Foote** (Marilyn Carlson); **Dorothy Soland**; **Randi Strom**; **Jeanne Kuipers**; **John Pass**; **Florence Kinnune**; **Carol Harbolt**; **Sandy Aldworth**; **Jen Winslow**; **Larry Pruitt**.

Undergoing cancer treatment: Carol Howe (cousin of Mark Howe); **Tom Killoran** (Shelley Howe); **Les Carlson** (father of Dave Carlson); **Harold Mandt** (brother of Mary Ann Hult and Lorna Robertson); **Chris Howe** (brother of Mark Howe); **Peggy Scalise** (cousin of Mark Howe); **Eileen Letts** (cousin of Mark Howe); **Keith DeCamp** (brother of Ken DeCamp); **Barbara Jones** (mother of Ron Sordahl); **Doug McVety** (Helen Nychay); **Al Batt** (Connie Fletcher); **Larry Harbolt** (Ray Harbolt); **Gerald Welch** (Vern and Jeannie Lindquist); **Christy Williams** (Bill Bergsma); **Dana Mancini** (Jan Setterlund); **Greg Petersen** (Wes Collum); **Barry Donker** (Joan Parish); **Germaine Korum** (Lyle and Alice Lewis); **Kathryn Aitcheson** (Gerrie Hendrickson); **Yuko Takiguchi** (Teiko Soland); **Barb** (Janette Singley)

Living with cancer: Liz Kidd (Bob Beck); **Duane Jacobson**; **Mary Lewis** (sister-in-law of Lyle and Alice Lewis); **Mark Becker** (uncle of Paula Seeger); **Barbara Krogh Jarvis** (sister of Steve Krogh); **Suzanne Lewis** (daughter-in-law of Lyle & Alice Lewis); **Mira Bergsma**

Expectant Mothers: Marian Martin (Stacy Smith); **Alyssa Saavedra** (Cheryl Neeb); **Shawna McIntyre** (Cheryl Neeb)

Mourning the death of loved ones: For peace and comfort during this time of grieving for the family and friends of: **Del Elliott** (Kate Gagnon); **John Sneva** (Evy Sneva's son); **Alec Wright** (Shelley & Mark Howe); **Beverly** (sister of Ashley Saunders); **Gail** (sister of Sandy Aldworth); **Mike Golick** (brother-in-law to Patty Gerde)

Members and friends serving in the military; fire & police departments, & emergency rooms: Mike special ops, unexpectedly called up. (nephew of Dave and Marilyn Carlson)

Global Missions and Missionaries: The Autism Rehabilitation Center in Qingdao. Congregations in Chiclayo, Peru: **Pepe** at Las Brisas, **Merci** in San Antonio and **Harold** at Las Lomas. **MaaSae Girls Lutheran Secondary School** in Tanzania.