

Worship at Home – Trinity 3

Sunday 20th June 2021

Prepared by Rev Adam Pawley, Rector



Prayer to start – Collect for Trinity 3

Almighty God, you have broken the tyranny of sin and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts whereby we call you Father: give us grace to dedicate our freedom to your service, that we and all creation may be brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Bible Reading – Mark 4:35-41 – Jesus calms the storm

³⁵ That day when evening came, [Jesus] said to his disciples, ‘Let us go over to the other side.’ ³⁶ Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. ³⁷ A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. ³⁸ Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, ‘Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?’ ³⁹ He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, ‘Quiet! Be still!’ Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. ⁴⁰ He said to his disciples, ‘Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?’ ⁴¹ They were terrified and asked each other, ‘Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!’

Thought

Today, Jesus calms the storm! He challenges his disciples to have more faith in Him, which in turn is a challenge to us to have more faith in Jesus Christ. I wonder what storms are you facing at the moment? And how is your faith in Jesus Christ? To where or to whom do you turn to in a moment of crisis? But also to where or to whom do you turn to in the ordinary times that follow a crisis too?

We are entering into a post-pandemic season, but not a post-Covid season, but life is starting to become (thankfully) a little more ‘ordinary’. In the height of the pandemic I wonder if we readily called out to God for his help but are we still doing this now that the worst of the pandemic is (hopefully) now past?

The storm in today’s story is huge, the disciples in the boat are clearly very scared of the sea. Jesus however obviously isn’t! In the boat, he’s fast asleep! But this is Jesus, he knows what he’s about, he knows where he is

going, he knows even when things are rough and tough, that he's ultimately in control. In their moment of crisis, the disciples call on Jesus to help. Jesus awakes, He calms the storm. Praise God!

But the story continues... Whilst at first the disciples are afraid of the sea, now they are afraid of Jesus! – So far in Mark's gospel, Jesus has healed the sick and cast out demons – but now he even controls the weather?

Jesus' response to the disciples is a challenge to us too – He rebukes the disciples and says, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

It's easy or easier to call on Jesus when we're at our wits end, when we're in a moment of crisis or in a storm raging against the sea. In crisis moments we may cry out to him and he might even answer us with his calm amongst the sea, but then the days or weeks go on – things stay relatively calm and ordinary – and we forget about Christ, we forget our encounters of him. We might even query too, was that really an answer to prayer or was it just an act of my imagination? It didn't really get answered did it? God doesn't really answer prayer does he?

In today's story, Jesus – post-storm and post-crisis – asks his disciples, "Do you still have no faith?" This question is an invitation from Jesus to the disciples – and us – to invite him into the ordinary moments of our lives too, not just the moments of crisis, but the God-given mundane norms of life too. Real faith is trusting God in the norms of life, not only in the crises. Bishop Tom Wright puts it: "Mark invites us to: Go on, wake Jesus up, pray to him in your fear and anger. But don't be surprised when he turns to you, as your storms subside, and asks you when you're going to get some real faith!"

Closing Prayers

Heavenly Father, when we face storms and difficult times in life, please bring your peace and calm into them. Then remind us please that you are always with us, in the ordinary times as well as the hard times. Help us to trust that you control the waters, when they are rough, but also when they are calm. In Jesus Name. **Amen.**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

We hope you are safe and well. Please get in touch if we can help (Adam 01978 760439, Gareth 07731 827988). This Sunday (20 June) we have Holy Communion services at 9:30am in Penyffordd and 11am in Hope. You are very welcome to join us – there is no need to reserve your seat.