

Bulletin for Sunday

9th August 2020

Good morning! I hope you are either enjoying the heatwave or managing to escape the worst of it by finding cool shady corners. This Sunday's reading follows directly on from last week's (the feeding of the five thousand) but, rather like our own situation, involves a drastic change in the weather.

Hymn: Awake, awake to love and work! (Rejoice & Sing 608)

Prayer: Amazing God, we praise you for the wonder
of the world around us and of the infinite skies beyond us.
We come to worship you today because
we have heard your call within us;
because you have loved us;
because you are our God.
Help us as we worship to be aware of your presence,
to hear your word for us, and to prepare to act upon it.
We ask your blessing on everything we do,
and everything we bring to you or give in your service,
today and every day. In Jesus' name, Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Readings: Matthew chapter 14: verses 22-33

Reflection: Just as he did at the start of last week's reading, Jesus wants a chance to retreat... to reflect... to pray. He couldn't absorb the news of John the Baptist's death without space to grieve, and time to consider the implications.

He manages to get a few hours alone before he is once again needed by people in trouble, this time his disciples who are suffering and fearful in a small boat, tossed around by a contrary wind. It is probably worth remembering that although some of the disciples were fishermen, others certainly were not; and while the 'Sea' of Galilee is in fact a lake, it is wide enough that you can't always see the far side, and weather conditions there are notoriously unpredictable and (for sailors) dangerous.

When the crowd followed Jesus in last week's reading, he turned aside from his own plans to teach and to heal and to tend to their needs; later he took pity on their hunger and fed them. In this reading he comes on the scene when the weather is making life really difficult for those in the boat; and above all when Peter is sinking and needs him

desperately, Jesus not only is there, but reaches out to save him. Notice that Peter, who has already been called to follow Jesus, and, indeed, started doing so, is here called again. His transformation from fisherman to evangelist is a matter of multiple steps - multiple calls - but Jesus is there with a helping hand.

We may (we do!) have needs, we may even have doubts, but we are never alone. God is always aware and always reaching out to hold, to reassure, and to rescue.

Hymn: Will your anchor hold (R&S 598)

Prayer: Living God, creator of the quiet hills and the wild waves,
we pray for this beautiful but troubled world.
We hold before you those who live with danger -
the emergency services, and all those they help;
those working to bring humanitarian aid where it is needed,
and the desperate people waiting for aid,
thinking especially today of the people of Beirut
who have lost homes and loved ones.
Show us how to hold our hands out to them in their great need.
We pray for those closest to us... and for our wider communities.
In Jesus' name, Amen

Hymn: Will you come and follow me (R&S 558)

May we hear God's call...
and find the courage to follow - again and again.
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love
this week and every week. Amen

There will again be an evening service - Sunday at Six - on Zoom this evening; contact me for an invitation - all very welcome as this week we hear of Joseph being sold into slavery by his brothers.

Please let me know of any news or prayer requests to be shared.

Anne Lewitt