

Worship At Home August 9, 2020

Centering Prayer:

God of understanding, be with us today as we prepare to worship.
Centre our thoughts on you and the life you want for us.
Focus our being on your Word.
Amen

Music

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee –Keith Scott, musician

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PemNIgreTug>

Opening Prayer:

Emboldening God,
Show us the way to tread fearlessly,
where you have gone before.
We call upon your Spirit,
to sustain our faith,
as we journey through rough waters, rough times.
We ask this in Jesus name. Amen

Scripture Reading

Matthew 14: 22-33

Jesus Walks on the Water

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."

Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" When they got

into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Reflection: Water and Faith

From Jesus' baptism to changing water to wine, from the stormy seas to a pierced side at his crucifixion, water has played an important part in the life, miracles and ministry of Jesus.

Water plays a starring role in the Hebrew Gospels as well. Whether it is Noah and the flood, or Moses parting the sea, water and the danger it can pose, is highlighted. Yet, in these two accounts, God saves Noah and Moses from danger.

Many faiths have traditions that revolve around water. Some have sacred washing and cleansing practices while others have a reverence and respect for water.

Historically, the danger of sea travel has been ever-present in the minds of those who explore. When early cartographers drew maps of unexplored areas of oceans, their default description was "Here be Monsters".

It is not difficult to understand the fear that Peter and the rest of the disciples felt, when during an uneasy sea, a figure approached walking upon the water. When Jesus lets them know it is Him, their fear changed to relief. Peter excitedly proclaimed that he wanted to walk to Jesus, if Jesus wanted him to. And Jesus said, "Come". Peter did alright for a while, but, the gospel recounts, he started to have doubts and began to sink. Jesus upheld him and delivered him to the boat.

Peter's failure to walk on water was down to his doubts. We all have doubts. We are not so different from Peter in that our doubts sometimes prevent us from doing what we set out to accomplish.

But we learn from our doubts each time we master something we thought we could never do. I imagine that we have all had our doubts during the time we have been at home. I, myself had doubts the first time I cut my own hair! Maybe you are one of those who tried making bread for the first time. I'm sure many of you are doing things with your computer, you had never done before!

Like Peter, it is important to remember that we can call on Jesus to help us. If we have doubts, if we feel like we are overwhelmed, if we despair, we can ask Jesus to help us see a way forward. While Peter was told he had little faith, we also know that faith as small as a mustard seed can grow to be many, many times larger than it started out.

As for water, it is still sacred, and water still holds danger. In 2020 the most danger there is in water is that it is becoming scarce and polluted. The only increase in water seems to come from the damage we do to the environment, as illustrated by the melting

of ice caps and glaciers. Maybe you think there is nothing we can do about that. O you of little faith.

Our faith can make us brave. Let us think of the many things we would like to do that take bravery to accomplish, and let our faith guide us in doing them.

Music

Will Your Anchor Hold – Sing along!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQQO8v-0VBo>

Prayers of the People

There are many times when we feel cast down, in deep places, abandoned.

Come to us, O God, when fear overtakes us.

Companion us with your love and presence.

There are times when we lash out in anger, seeking revenge.

Come to us, O God, when fear controls us.

Companion us with your forgiveness and mercy.

There are times when we come to our wits end, not knowing where to turn.

Come to us, O God, when fear disorients us.

Companion us with your plans for good.

In this time, let us open our selves and our fears to God,
in the hope of transformation and a way forward.

Come to us, O God, and hear what our hearts fear to speak:

(silent prayer)

We ask all this in the name of our fearless champion, Jesus Christ,

Amen

From Prayers for All Seasons, Year A, page 165

Closing Music

Ron Klusmeier & Walter Farquarson's "Would You Bless Our Homes and Families"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fht7NqipkQY&t=2s>

Blessing

As we go forward into the week ahead:

May the love of God uphold us,

May the love of Christ Jesus surround us,

May the love of the Holy Spirit sustain us,

Amen

Music

Israeli Folk Dance: Dancing on Water

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRahMHBjw4M>