

Simple Prayer, Simple Praise: A Worship Service for Sunday, August 9, 2020

A Meditation on Matthew 14: 22-33 (by *The Rev. Adam Trambley, St. John's, Sharon*)

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat while he went off to pray.
The story should be straightforward from there.

Jesus once again gives the disciples
an example of prayer.

Here and elsewhere Jesus prays.

Often.

By the way, the boat is safe.

Jesus doesn't sink his friends.

Night falls,

as wind and wave

drive the boat far from shore.

A figure

walking across the water

fills Jesus' friends with fear,

until the not-ghost Jesus declares himself.

Peter asks Jesus

to order him out onto the undulating lake.

Not content in the boat,

or to disembark on his own,

he cries to his Lord for permission to follow,

even across the most difficult obstacles.

The water is cold,

the wind is fierce.

Sinking, Peter's his fear resurfaces.

"Lord! Save me!"

Jesus does.

The wind calms.

The waves subside.

Safely back in the boat,

the disciples worship Jesus.

Today

Jesus has ascended to be with the Father.

COVID has sent away the crowds;

we are sent out in a boat

battered by disease, racism, climate change,

and all manner of menace.

What shall we do?

We pray.

Powerfully and effectively.

The prayers of the faithful

stuck in hospital rooms and prison cells,

have changed the world

far beyond the actions of the illustrious.
Prayer is not easy.
We expect distraction and discouragement.
But even faltering prayers are
faithful and fruitful.

We trust Jesus
and the boat he put us in.
Jesus wants good for us.
and for the whole world.
We bring peace and patience
and the fruits of the Spirit
in the midst of fear, anguish, and exasperation.

We trust
that even
THIS {waves hands about wildly}
works for good for those who love God.

We ask Jesus to order us out
onto treacherous waters.

We dare not go it alone –
too many sink into the depths
of fear and anger,
never to return.

Since the tumultuous seas that engulf us
are only a shortcut for Jesus,
we beg to be with him
as he goes about God's saving work.

We long to walk out on the water
and be with Jesus
as he calms storms,
certain we will never sink
when he calls
and
with him

we will learn
to worship more deeply.

Jesus makes us get into the boat while he goes off to pray.
The story should be straightforward from here.



Prayer:

*Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to invite us to take a great leap of faith. We are called to leave the safety of the boat; and to sink or swim. We know that without your assistance, we can do neither in a hostile sea. We know that our faith isn't always the strength under our feet that causes us to stand on undulating waves; you know that we will need the hand of Christ to reach out for our own. Remind us Heavenly Father that without our own weaknesses we cannot understand the fear and weaknesses of our neighbor; grant us the grace to understand the plight of the needy among us, and the compassion to work tirelessly and fearlessly for the oppressed, the poor, and all who reach out for your saving hand in times of trouble; this we ask in Jesus' name, **Amen.***

Take a moment now for silent reflection. Think of the people and things that cause you worry or concern; think of the things for which you are grateful. Raise them up in prayer using the words our Savior Christ taught us:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by 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, and the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Each Sunday at 10 a.m., Bishop Sean and other leaders from WNY and NWPA will lead worship via the Zoom platform. Anyone can join the service via phone by calling **646-876-9923** use **code 127336938#**. Those wishing to join by instead of video can use this link: <https://zoom.us/j/127336938> If you are asked for a password, use **lakeerie**.

Simple Prayer, Simple Praise is produced for The Episcopal Dioceses of NWPA and WNY by the Rev. Steve Lane and the Rev. Claudia Scheda, and guest contributors as noted. August 2020.