**20th June 2021** WORSHIP AT HOME **GOSPEL Mark 4.35-41**

Welcome to our act of Worship

A moment of reflection as we prepare

for this act of worship.

A Gathering Prayer

Loving and sometimes silent God,
we come into your presence,
thankful to quieten our hearts and to wait for you to speak.
We bring our joys, our challenges, and our questions.
We open our hearts honestly to you,
and we wait in that space beyond questions
to feel you hold us in compassion and love. **Amen.**

Call to worship *based on Psalm 107*

Praise God who made the earth and the sea.
**We give thanks to God, whose love endures for ever.**
Praise God who calms the storm and quietens our fears,
**We give thanks to God, whose love endures for ever.**
Praise God who gathers us all in love.
**We give thanks to God, whose love endures for ever.**

HYMN

**Ye holy angels bright,**
who wait at God's right hand,
or through the realms of light
fly at your Lord's command,
assist our song,
for else the theme
too high doth seem
for mortal tongue.

Ye blessed souls at rest,
who ran this earthly race
and now, from sin released,
behold your Saviour's face,
his praises sound,
as in his sight
with sweet delight
ye do abound.

Ye saints, who toil below,
adore your heavenly King,
and onward as ye go
some joyful anthem sing;
take what he gives
and praise him still,
through good or ill,
who ever lives!

My soul, bear thou thy part,
triumph in God above:
and with a well-tuned heart
sing thou the songs of love!
Let all thy days
till life shall end,
whate'er he send,
be filled with praise!

HP20, MP783, RS125, STF69

(Some of the hymn books widely used in the Wiltshire United Area)

*Prayers of Praise*

Mighty God, transcending your world yet dwelling within it, we worship you.

Caring Father, showing us in Jesus your face of love, we worship you.

We have not words which to praise your great and glorious Name.

Lift our hearts, minds and wills, into the joy of your divine presence, that seeing you as you are, we may worship you as we ought;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Prayer of Confession*

God of our questions and our struggles,
when we too quickly mistake silence for indifference:
**forgive and help us.**When the voice of our own needs silences the voices of others:
**forgive and help us.**When we abandon others in their storm and watch safely from the shore:
**forgive and help us.**When we lose faith because things get tough:
**forgive and help us.**In Jesus’ name we pray. **Amen.**
**Amen.**

HYMN

**He's got the whole world in His hands**

He's got the whole wide world in His hands

He's got the whole world in His hands

He's got the whole world in His hands

He's got the little tiny baby in His hands

He's got the little tiny baby in His hands

He's got the little tiny baby in His hands

He's got the whole world in His hands

He's got you and me brother in His hands

He's got you and me sister in His hands

He's got you and me brother in His hands

He's got the whole world in His hands

He's got everybody here in His hands

He's got everybody here in His hands

He's got everybody here in His hands

He's got the whole world in His hands

HP25, MP225, RS , STF

Ministry of the Word of God

Lectionary Bible readings for RCL Proper 7

Job 38.1-11; Psalm 107.1-3,23-32; 2 Corinthians 6.1-13; **Mark 4.35-41**

**Jesus Stills a Storm**

**35 On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, ‘Let us go across to the other side.’ 36And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. 37A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. 38But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, ‘Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?’ 39He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, ‘Peace! Be still!’ Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. 40He said to them, ‘Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?’ 41And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, ‘Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’**

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

Reflection

During the winter of 2014 the UK experienced six weeks of severe storms, separated by intervals of just 2 to 3 days. There were major flooding problems, locally the Somerset Levels was deeply underwater. Strong winds and huge waves made exposed coastlines extremely dangerous - particularly in the south and west, remember the boiling sea images relentlessly pounding the clock tower at Porthleven in Cornwall? Then on the night of February 4th around 130 feet of the sea wall at Dawlish was washed away severing the south west main line railway for weeks.

That rail line is one of my favourites with the train snaking its way between coast and tunnel from Dawlish to Teignmouth. Travel along it today and there are new sea wall defences in the process of construction costing £80million.

The power of a storm can be incredible as todays Gospel recites. Lake Galilee remains notorious for its storms. The skies can be perfectly clear and then literally out of the blue with shattering and terrifying suddenness a storm explodes. Such was the ferocity that people of the time truly believed they were a manifestation of evil. It literally could be considered “boat ride from hell.” As if to underline this fact, Jesus faces down the storm not with personal bromides (‘You have to face your fears, friends’), but silences the storm and rebukes it (verse 39).

All the disciples were together in a boat, that is a beautiful symbol of the church that stands to this day. Look at your church ceiling, many resemble the bottom of a boat. Churches often even call their main sections a nave, a reminder of a shared maritime context. Thinking of these past 15 months it is not just the disciples on Lake Galilee it is all of us that have been, and are still on the boat ride from hell!

When we were in the storm of Lockdown One a very devout Christian with Covid was in Intensive Care. He was completely sedated but each time of visiting I would take a Biblical passage which would after reading aloud I would stick to the wall by the side of his bed. One of those readings was todays Gospel. I added a note, *“God not only stills the storm but is with us in it.”* A few days later on returning one of the nursing staff said how they were reading the passages to the patient, then looking me in the eye the nurse said, “I have no time for religion, but like the idea of God being with us in the storm.” Covid has and is the boat ride from hell, but we remember also God is with us in the storm!

Hold this in your mind - in the midst of the tossing waves of the storm, the disciples refer to Jesus as “Teacher” (v38). After witnessing the stilling of the storm, all the disciples have is deep awe (*feared a great fear*, to use the Greek in v 41) with deep questions. Who is this? Who is the one whom even wind and sea obey?

Whatever terrors and revelations await us in this boat ride from hell, or if your own personal storm is so great that you are clinging on by your fingernails remember God is with us and is greater than anything that can be thrown at us!

Prayer of Response

Lord Jesus,
you do not let us sink when our faith is going under.
You do not let our boats overturn when the seas of our life get rough.
You do not let our questions swamp us or our failures destroy us.
Rather, you forgive us, you embrace us, you save us, you encourage, challenge and calm us –
and for this we give you praise and thanks. **Amen.**

HYMN

**O God, you search me and you know me**.
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.
When I walk or lie down, you are before me,
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.

You know my resting and my rising.
You discern my purpose from afar,
and with love everlasting you besiege me:
In every moment of life or death, you are.

Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,
you have known its meaning through and through.
You are with me beyond my understanding:
God of my present, my past and future too.

Although your Spirit is upon me,
still I search for shelter from your light.
There is nowhere on earth I can escape you:
Even the darkness is radiant in your sight.

For you created me and shaped me,
gave me life within my mother's womb.
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you:
Safe in your hands, all creation is made new.

HP, MP, RS, STF728

Our Prayers

In the light of the extension of restrictions,
we remember in prayer today:
those whose businesses are sinking...
those drowning in debt...
those going under with stress...

Faithful God, **may they know you care.**
Loving God, **may they trust you're there.**
Saving God, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those embroiled in stormy and violent relationships,
among and within nations, communities, and families...
those played out on the world's stage...
those hidden behind closed doors…

Faithful God, **may they know you care.**
Loving God, **may they trust you're there.**
Saving God, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those whose cries go unheard,
especially those tortured and executed by brutal regimes…
for those whose questions go unanswered,
especially those searching for justice…
for those whose pleas go unheeded,
especially those on the edge unable to access mental health services...
for those whose needs go unmet,
especially in the Yemen, in Tigray, and in all places of poverty where the resources available are inadequate to feed the hungry and starving...

Faithful God, **may they know you care.**
Loving God, **may they trust you're there.**
Saving God, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the church as it seeks to address and answer big questions,
questions about life and death,
about gender and sexuality,
about faith and finance,
about race and responsibilities,
about integrity and healing…

Faithful God, **may they know you care.**
Loving God, **may they trust you're there.**
Saving God, **hear our prayer.**

**In Jesus’ name. Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

**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.**

HYMN

**Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah/Redeemer**
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more;
Feed me till I want no more.

Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through.
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield;
Be Thou still my Strength and Shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death and hell’s destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan’s side.
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee;
I will ever give to Thee.

HP437, MP201, RS345, STF465

Blessing *from Numbers 6v24-26*

May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord cause His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; may the Lord lift up His countenance toward you and give you peace. **Amen**

For Little People

**To the tune:***Row, row, row your boat*

Row, row, row your boat,
through the scary storm.
Jesus told the waves, ‘Be still!’
and it was quiet once more.

Pray with water

Make ripples in a tray of water and then watch as the water stills again, just as God can calm us when things are stormy for us. Invite your child/ren to take it in turns to make the ripples.

**To the tune:***Row, row, row your boat*

Go, go, go with God,
as you leave today.
Jesus hears you when you cry
and helps you every day.

Into the future

God of power and peace,
when the storm is raging:
**You are there.**When our boats are sinking:
**You are there.**When faith slips through our fingers:
**You are there.**When our hearts sink and our courage fails:
**You are there.**In the roar of the waves,
in the sound of the wind,
and in the silence:
**You are there.**So, we praise you.
We thank you.
We worship you.

And in you we trust!
In Jesus’ name. **Amen.**

Rev David Coppard MTh (Wales)

Superintendent @ Wiltshire United Area

Team Chaplain @ Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton

*Since March 2020 this weekly service has been offered to any and all, with love and prayers. With all four churches in the section now opening, its ministry is complete and today marks its ending.*

CCL LICENCE

Steeple Ashton Methodist CCL 291605

Warminster United CCL 1221052

Westbury Methodist CCL 781988

Westbury URC CCL 293641