

## Home Service for June 23, 2024

### Welcome and Announcements

You may also find listening to some of your favorite hymns helpful in worship.

*You're not what we expect, O Lord. Victory without a sword, windstorms calmed with simple words, sleepless nights rewarded. Help us put our trust in you, unexpected God.*

### Call to Worship:

You're not what we expect, O Lord. Victory without a sword, windstorms calmed with simple words, sleepless nights rewarded. Help us put our trust in you, unexpected God.

### Opening Prayer:

Lord, we have come this day, seeking your presence and healing love. Be with us as we hear the words of hope and compassion. Give us courage to learn and grow that we might serve you faithfully all of our days. AMEN.

### Prayer of Confession:

God of love and power, we listen to the stories of miracles and doubt that these things can happen today. We look at the waves of misfortune, distress, misery, distrust, and anger and wonder how we can still those waves. We feel the pressures of power and fear flooding into our lives, threatening to drown us and wonder where you are. Forgive us for the littleness of our faith. Forgive us for our doubts. Help us to place out trust in you, Lord Jesus. Help us to fix our eyes on you and on the ministries to which you have called us. For we ask these things in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

### Words of Assurance:

*Fear not! God is with us, stilling the storms and raging fears in our lives. Place your trust in God always. AMEN.*

Read Psalm 9:9-20

The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed,  
a stronghold in times of trouble.

<sup>10</sup> Those who know your name trust in you,  
for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.

<sup>11</sup> Sing the praises of the LORD, enthroned in Zion;  
proclaim among the nations what he has done.

<sup>12</sup> For he who avenges blood remembers;  
he does not ignore the cries of the afflicted.

<sup>13</sup> LORD, see how my enemies persecute me!  
Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death,

<sup>14</sup> that I may declare your praises  
in the gates of Daughter Zion,  
and there rejoice in your salvation.

<sup>15</sup> The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug;  
their feet are caught in the net they have hidden.

<sup>16</sup> The LORD is known by his acts of justice;  
the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The wicked go down to the realm of the dead,  
all the nations that forget God.

<sup>18</sup> But God will never forget the needy;  
the hope of the afflicted will never perish.

<sup>19</sup> Arise, LORD, do not let mortals triumph;  
let the nations be judged in your presence.

<sup>20</sup> Strike them with terror, LORD;  
let the nations know they are only mortal.

Prayers of the People:

*Lord of wind and water, of calmness and peace, be with us this day. Calm our fears as we face uncertain futures. Help us to relinquish control and to place our trust totally in you. Remind us to continue to faithfully work for good, with gratitude for the many blessings you have poured upon us. When the waves and torrents threaten us, let us again to turn to you, remembering your saving mercies and love. Give us courage to become disciples who can calm the seas of doubt and anger, bringing hope and peace. As we have brought before you situations that require help and healing mercies, remind us again that you are with each person and situation, offering your love and mercy. We thank you for the many ways in*

*which you have healed us. For all the goodness you have poured on us, we offer prayers of gratitude and love, as we ask these things in Jesus' Name. AMEN.*

## 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, and the power and the glory forever and ever. AMEN

Read the Old Testament Lesson: 1 Samuel 17:32-49

David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him."

<sup>33</sup> Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a young man, and he has been a warrior from his youth."

<sup>34</sup> But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. <sup>36</sup> Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. <sup>37</sup> The LORD who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine."

Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you."

<sup>38</sup> Then Saul dressed David in his own tunic. He put a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. <sup>39</sup> David fastened on his sword over the tunic and tried walking around, because he was not used to them.

"I cannot go in these," he said to Saul, "because I am not used to them." So he took them off. <sup>40</sup> Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine.

<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile, the Philistine, with his shield bearer in front of him, kept coming closer to David. <sup>42</sup> He looked David over and saw that he was little more than a boy, glowing with health and handsome, and he despised him. <sup>43</sup> He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. <sup>44</sup> "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds and the wild animals!"

<sup>45</sup> David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the

armies of Israel, whom you have defied. <sup>46</sup> This day the LORD will deliver you into my hands, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. This very day I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds and the wild animals, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel. <sup>47</sup> All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; for the battle is the LORD's, and he will give all of you into our hands."

<sup>48</sup> As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. <sup>49</sup> Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground.

Read the Epistle Lesson: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. <sup>2</sup> For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you."<sup>[a]</sup>

I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

<sup>3</sup> We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. <sup>4</sup> Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; <sup>5</sup> in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; <sup>6</sup> in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; <sup>7</sup> in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; <sup>8</sup> through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; <sup>9</sup> known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup> sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

<sup>11</sup> We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and opened wide our hearts to you. <sup>12</sup> We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. <sup>13</sup> As a fair exchange—I speak as to my children—open wide your hearts also.

Read the Gospel Lesson: Mark 4:35-41

That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> 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?"

<sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

<sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

<sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

## Message

Our Gospel story takes place on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus and the disciples had been in Capernaum, which is on the western side of the sea of Galilee. Jesus was preaching there, and so that He could preach to the large crowd, He got into a boat and put out a bit from the shore. It makes a type of natural amphitheater, so the crowd could hear Him. It is from this boat that He told the parables about the kingdom of God, for Christ was bringing in the reign and rule of God. Remember how He told about the seed, and how it grows automatically, even though the farmer does not know how. That the kingdom of God grows on its own, even though we don't understand it.

Jesus having put in a long day of speaking from a boat to a large crowd of listeners gathered along the hillside and seashore of the Sea of Galilee. When He had finished, He asked his disciples, many of whom were experienced sailors to set a course to the other side of the sea. It would have been a short trip of a few land miles. Jesus left the sailing to His friends and He settled down for a nap in the back of the boat.

While they were on the sea a “furious squall” descended upon the small fishing boat. The boat would have been about 26 feet long, 7 feet wide with very low sides. Remember, first century fishing boats were made for throwing nets over the side and drawing them in. Now the sea of Galilee is prone to storms. Even to this day. They brew up fast, out of nowhere. And so the disciples find themselves in the middle of such a storm. The storm quickly reached an intensity where even the experienced fishermen were afraid they might go down. Using every skill, every trick of a lifetime of seamanship had taught them, the disciples fought against the storm. The winds were wild. The waves were high. The swells kept breaking over the low sides of the boat. In spite of their knowledge and skill, they were in a nasty situation. Their lives might soon come to an abrupt and unexpected end. They cry out: “Lord don't you care....We are about to drown.” Jesus gets up. He speaks to the wind and the waves. "Peace. Be still." Instantly all is calm. Totally still. Now Jesus says to them, “Why were you so frightened. Don't you have any faith?”

In many ways we are like those disciples in that boat that day. Peace, tranquility, calmness, these are the emotions which each of us seek as we experience the storms of life. We long, we search for peace. We search for the quiet, the calm, the contentment as we experience the storms, the chaos, the uncertainties of life. As we live with all the brokenness of sin, with all the tension of this sinful world, we cry out, we long for some peace to somehow insulate, or protect us from all the fury around us. We are very much like so many people who are searching, dreaming, wanting peace in the middle of the fury of life. We search, we long, for that peace. We even call out as the disciples did to Jesus in that sinking boat, we call out to God for peace, for comfort. We call out to God, wondering if He is around, wondering if He is sleeping while we are searching. The question asked more often by human beings is always some variation on this theme, “Where are you, God?” Or “God, are you sleeping?” or “God, are you dead?” or “God, do you hear me?” or “God, why don’t you answer me?”

And God’s answer to each of us is this: “I am in the midst of you through the crucified Christ” or I think of it as God saying: “Yes, I am here, I am with you as I was with my Son on the cross of Calvary.” Our Gospel lesson focus for us this morning on that question, “Where is God in the tumult of life?” The disciples ask that question of Jesus as they are sinking with their boat into the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus had peace, he was not afraid because He had faith in the Father to protect and provide for Him. He wanted His disciples and us to have that same peace. A peace that knows that no matter what circumstances in life we may find ourselves, God is in control, so there is peace. Peace does come, peace is equal to faith in the power of God to control, to provide. The disciples saw the power of God in nature as Jesus calmed the storm. That same power is present in all circumstances of life. There is peace to life when we believe in and trust in the power of God to be with us, to guide us, to save us from all the storms of life.

The disciples were afraid because they could only see the storm, their eyes were fixed on that storm. It was difficult for them to have any peace when they were focused on the storm. The problem for the disciples and our problem is not the storms of life but where our attention is placed. It’s hard to see the Christ in the boat when our attention is riveted on the waves outside the boat. When our attention is so consumed by the storms of life so that we cannot see Christ, or turn to Him, or trust in Him, then there is no peace, no contentment, but only worry and despair.

I personally love the story about a sailing ship caught in a sudden and severe storm. The passengers became panicky, rushing here and there as the waves beat upon the ship. There was fear and dread on the faces of all the passengers except one little boy, who remained calm and cheerful. When asked why he was so calm, he said, "Why should I be afraid? My father is at the helm." In other words, he was not afraid, because his father was in control of the ship. So, too, with us, as we face the storms of life. We need not be afraid, or full of despair, because God through His Son Jesus Christ is in control. Our Heavenly Father is at the helm of our lives if we let Him. We need to believe and trust in His power to guide our lives.

So, as we face the unanswered questions, as we face the whys, the how comes, as we face suffering, as we face the tragedies of life. It is not that we disbelieve God's ability to do anything to save. We all too frequently fail to trust the power He has. We come to God with our human condition of sin. We come to God with our inability to really understand God, so we just give up. We question, we ask, we search, but we don't wait for an answer. It has been said that: "God calls us to faith, but we prefer to hope for miracles." We may say, "Our Creator, who supports the earth's foundations, can arrest the storm in a moment. He has before; perhaps he will again."

Our prayer of faith should include the faith that God will help us, may we hear his voice in the storm. His voice which says loud and clear, "I am with you." The disciples found out the only answer to the questions about life comes with a simple but powerful answer, "I am with you, period." That is all we need to know our God is with us as we face all the why questions of life. Amen.

Benediction:

*As the Lord has given to you such peace and healing, now go into the world offering God's love and hope to others. Go in peace and remember that God goes with you. AMEN*