



'Worship at home' Sunday August 13th 2023

We come to worship God, who we find in the holy spaces and the ordinary places of our lives, and in whom we can always trust to hold us in love.

Opening

We come to worship God,
who comes to us
when we least expect it,
who calls us to
step out in faith to follow,
and gives courage and purpose
in the storms and chaos of our lives.



<https://www.pxfuel.com/en/desktop-walpaper-qwauf>

Have you ever been caught in a storm?

The wind howling around you, rain pelting down, lightning flashing and loud claps of thunder can be quite frightening, especially if you are outside with no shelter. Sometimes our lives feel stormy, and out of control. We feel there is nowhere to take shelter and find refuge and calm. We can feel like we are sinking.

Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the

wind was against it. Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on 1

the water.” “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!” Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and

caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?” And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”
New International Version



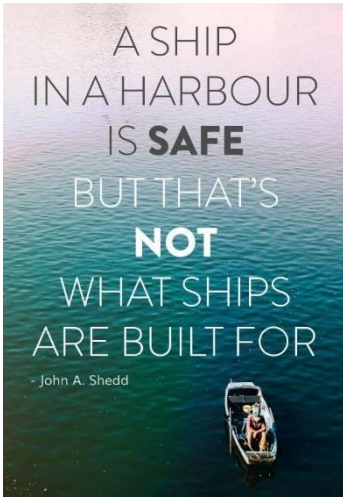
When Jesus appeared to the disciples in the middle of the lake, they were terrified – not of the storm, but of the figure of Jesus coming towards them. Peter sought reassurance that this really was Jesus – “Lord, if it’s you, tell me to come to you on the water.” Peter

launched off, full of confidence, and found himself sinking. “Lord, save me!”, he cries out.

**Have you ever cried “Lord, save me!”
when confronted with things beyond your control?**

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?” When we feel that things around us are stormy, when we feel like we are sinking, floundering, we can be reassured that Jesus is indeed with us, ready to reach out a strong hand and steady us, keeping us safe and bringing us calm. When we trust in God’s presence and power, we find ourselves being caught in arms of love. Eventually the storm will calm, and all will be well. Jesus makes it clear that following him will be risky. Our faith doesn’t always make for smooth sailing or protect us from storms.





When we walk by faith, we can be assured that in our stormy times, we can trust in the presence of Jesus to hold us safe.

What might God be asking of you at this time?

Will you focus on the storm, on the wind and the rain and the fear?

Or will you be courageous enough to keep your eyes on Jesus and trust as you step out in faith?

Litany of Reassurance

When the wind is strong and the waves are high, remember the words of Jesus:

Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When our dreams come to nothing, and we wonder what lies ahead, remember the words of Jesus:

Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When those we love disappoint us, or hurt us deeply, remember the words of Jesus:

Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When we begin to question God's call, or doubt God's love, remember the words of Jesus:

Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When we've lost all hope, and don't know where to turn, remember the words of Jesus:

Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid.



When our faith is stretched to the breaking point,
remember the words of Jesus:

**Take courage, it is I. Do not be afraid,
for I have redeemed you.**

I have called you by name; you are Mine.

When you go through deep waters, I will be with you.

**When you pass through
rivers of difficulty,**

you will not be overwhelmed.

**When you walk through the fire,
you shall not be burned,**

and the flame will not consume you.

For I am the Lord, your God,

the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.



- adapted from <https://re-worship.blogspot.com>

Closing

The will of God will never take you
where the grace of God cannot keep you,
where the arms of God cannot support you,
where the riches of God cannot supply your needs,
where the power of God cannot endow you.

The will of God will never take you
where the Spirit of God cannot work through you,
where the wisdom of God cannot teach you,
where the army of God cannot protect you,
where the hands of God cannot mould you.

The will of God will never take you
where the love of God cannot enfold you,
where the mercies of God cannot sustain you
where the peace of God cannot calm your fears,
where the authority of God cannot overrule for you.

The will of God can never take you
where the comfort of God cannot dry your tears,
where the Word of God cannot feed you,
where the miracles of God cannot be done for you,
where the omnipresence of God cannot find you. – anonymous 4