



## **Fifth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

### **Dangerous Faith Facing Up to the Powers! Reading the Signs of the Times**



**The Calming of the Storm**

**These last three weeks, the Gospel readings have focused our energies upon the significance of the Sabbath, not as simply a holy day in the week but more importantly, a key metaphor for biblical understanding of social dynamics, where the sabbath year was a reform measure every seven years, to maintain the values of the Exodus in place: fairness, equality and freedom. Today, we move beyond the idea of Sabbath, to the story of Jesus' action of the Calming of the Sea. On the face of it, this is a recasting of the old Hebrew story of Jonah, but with a difference: Jonah failed, Jesus succeeded, in calling the elements to abate. But this is less a story about nature for Mark's Gospel, as it is about Christian salvation as liberation from the destructive: the demons within us, our personal, existential tendency to destruction, and the damage that social and political forces may cause.**

## GATHERING

### Announcements

#### Welcome

In the name of God,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

The Lord be with you

**And with you**

#### Invitation to Worship

You are the God of the complex:  
galaxies, nebulas and quantum physics.

***You are the God of the simple:  
bread made from grain, wine made from grapes.***

You are the God of the extraordinary:  
DNA, cells and subatomic material.

***You are the God of the ordinary:  
daisies, dirt, and dandelions.***

You are the God who blesses us with the richness of the earth,  
and you are the God who chose to live in poverty.

**You are the God that searches for the lost  
and you are the God who loses his life so that we might be found.**

**Hymn: Sing All Creation (TiS 61, Iste Confessor, James Quinn)**

#### Introduction to the Theme

#### **Our Community Prayer: Faith – Union of Opposites**

God of all,  
faith is a union of opposites;

knowing you is like struggling with an enigma,  
and knowing you is as easy as breathing.

We seek you in the straightforward and in the complicated.

We desire to see clearly and be open to mystery.  
to be child-like in our faith and adult in its application,  
to love without attachment, and attached in our love,  
to be strong in our weakness and astute in our 'foolishness'

***Be with us today as we find our way through;  
knowing the magnetic power of biblical stories in our lives,  
and the danger they represent.  
Amen.***

## **Our Confession and Reconciliation**

Let us be still and listen to the voice of God

*Silence*

Leader: Let us confess

***My judgmental words that may have  
caused another pain.  
My compromises made that may have  
fragmented truth.***

***My complacency that may have  
permitted hopelessness to replace  
hope in the heart of another.***

***My apathy that may have stilled  
words and actions for justice in the  
lives of another.***

***O God, forgive us and create in  
us a new heart to build  
communities founded on  
acceptance.***

## **The Peace**

This week let us share the peace in an indigenous language: that of the Mapuche people of Southern Chile, who still struggle for recognition (Gilda is part Mapuche)

***Peace be with you – “Paihuen”  
And also with you***

## **Children leave for SMG**

### **LET’S HEAR THE WORD**

#### **Some Anecdotal Thoughts**

The goal is not to read the book,  
but to hear the story, taking place all around us

**Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme**

The progression of the crossing stories, demonstrates a much greater message than what we tend to pick up. Although Jesus continued to use his power to still storms, in each crossing, Mark recounts that Jesus grew impatient with the presumption of his disciples that he would simply perform a divine act, and in every instance relieve them of their fear. They seemed to completely ignore that they also had responsibilities, to respond in new ways. It was not just a question of repeating old attitudes and behaviours.

**Alexander J Shaia, The Hidden Power of the Gospels**

At all times, the Church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel, if it is to carry out its task. In language intelligible to every generation, she should be able to answer the ever-recurring questions which people ask, about the meaning of this present life, and the life to come, and how one is related to the other. We must be aware of and understand the aspirations, the yearnings and the often-dramatic features of the world in which we live.

**Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World  
(Gaudium et Spes, Second Vatican Council, 1965)**

## Readings

### 1 Samuel 17: 33-37, 40-54 (The Message)

Jeanette Steer

Last week we heard that David was secretly anointed as future king of Israel. That however has still not happened: Saul continues as king for the time being. There is in today's story of David and Goliath, reflecting the conflict between Israel and Canaan who were Phoenicians, a complex history of story-telling. Apparently, several stories introducing David or telling how he came into Saul's court, have been combined into one tale. The repetition indicates that we are not dealing with historical narratives alone, but traditions that make strong theological and literary points. One such point is seen in the fact that in each account, David is the least likely candidate for the task, or at least unknown to the main characters (16:11, 19; 17:33). Moreover, he is not one to put himself forward. Others recognise the gifts he has (16:12, 18; 17:31). Each 'introduction' to David underlines the point that 'success' in Israel's struggle with the Philistines, as in all its struggles, is not guaranteed by power, might, technology, or other clever strategies, as measured in human terms.

<sup>33</sup> Saul answered David, "You can't go and fight this Philistine. You're too young and inexperienced—and he's been at this fighting business since before you were born."

<sup>34-37</sup> David said, "I've been a shepherd, tending sheep for my father. Whenever a lion or bear came and took a lamb from the flock, I'd go after it, knock it down, and rescue the lamb. If it turned on me, I'd grab it by the throat, wring its neck, and kill it. Lion or bear, it made no difference—I killed it. And I'll do the same to this Philistine pig who is taunting the troops of God-Alive. GOD, who delivered me from the teeth of the lion and the claws of the bear, will deliver me from this Philistine."

Saul said, "Go. And GOD help you!"

<sup>40</sup> Then David took his shepherd's staff, selected five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in the pocket of his shepherd's pack, and with his sling in his hand approached Goliath.

<sup>41-42</sup> As the Philistine paced back and forth, his shield bearer in front of him, he noticed David. He took one look down on him and sneered—a mere youngster, apple-cheeked and peach-fuzzed.

<sup>43</sup> The Philistine ridiculed David. "Am I a dog that you come after me with a stick?" And he cursed him by his gods.

44 “Come on,” said the Philistine. “I’ll make roadkill of you for the buzzards. I’ll turn you into a tasty morsel for the field mice.”

45-47 David answered, “You come at me with sword and spear and battle-ax. I come at you in the name of GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies, the God of Israel’s troops, whom you curse and mock. This very day GOD is handing you over to me. I’m about to kill you, cut off your head, and serve up your body and the bodies of your Philistine buddies to the crows and coyotes. The whole earth will know that there’s an extraordinary God in Israel. And everyone gathered here will learn that GOD doesn’t save by means of sword or spear. The battle belongs to GOD—he’s handing you to us on a platter!”

48-49 That roused the Philistine, and he started toward David. David took off from the front line, running toward the Philistine. David reached into his pocket for a stone, slung it, and hit the Philistine hard in the forehead, embedding the stone deeply. The Philistine crashed, face-down in the dirt.

50 That’s how David beat the Philistine—with a sling and a stone. He hit him and killed him. No sword for David!

51 Then David ran up to the Philistine and stood over him, pulled the giant’s sword from its sheath, and finished the job by cutting off his head. When the Philistines saw that their great champion was dead, they scattered, running for their lives.

52-54 The men of Israel and Judah were up on their feet, shouting! They chased the Philistines all the way to the outskirts of Gath and the gates of Ekron. Wounded Philistines were strewn along the Shaaraim road all the way to Gath and Ekron. After chasing the Philistines, the Israelites came back and looted their camp. David took the Philistine’s head and brought it to Jerusalem. But the giant’s weapons he placed in his own tent.

The word of the Lord

***Thanks be to God***

**Gospel: Mark 4:35–41 (The Message)**

Gilda Dornan

The stilling of the storm is a story full of rich imagery. It follows on from Jesus’ parables of the sower (4:3-9, 13-20), the seed growing secretly (4:26-29), and the mustard seed (4:30-32). The focus is upon inviting a response to Jesus’ teaching and to the gospel. The extraordinary image of Jesus commanding the elements has less to do with

managing nature than it has to do with portraying the gospel as struggle against demonic and destructive powers. The gospel, according to Mark, is about Jesus coming to liberate people from such forces. Mark's world seems remote, its demonology foreign, until we recognise that Mark is giving us a structure of thought which we can connect strikingly to our own times. Its pattern is to identify the powers that destroy and distort and endanger and then to see salvation as the overcoming, the liberation from such powers. This has both personal and social/political dimensions

<sup>35-38</sup> Late that day he said to them, "Let's go across to the other side." They took him in the boat as he was. Other boats came along. A huge storm came up. Waves poured into the boat, threatening to sink it. And Jesus was in the stern, head on a pillow, sleeping! They roused him, saying, "Teacher, is it nothing to you that we're going down?"

<sup>39-40</sup> Awake now, he told the wind to pipe down and said to the sea, "Quiet! Settle down!" The wind ran out of breath; the sea became smooth as glass. Jesus reprimanded the disciples: "Why are you such cowards? Don't you have any faith at all?"

<sup>41</sup> They were in absolute awe, staggered. "Who is this, anyway?" they asked. "Wind and sea at his beck and call!"

The Gospel of the Lord

***Praise to you Lord Christ***

**Hymn: Community of Christ (TiS 473, Leoni, Shirley Erena Murray)**

## **Some Thoughts**

### **Let's Give**

#### **Doxology**

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
praise him, all creatures here below,  
praise him above, ye heavenly host,  
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

## **Prayer of Dedication**

### **Prayers of the People**

Rob Mayrick

The one who prays ends each petition with the words, "***help us to see***", and the congregational response, "***and to read the signs of the times***".

**Closing Hymn: The Lord is My Shepherd (TiS 659, My Shepherd, Brian Boniwell, arr Kevin Hunt)**

**Blessing and Sending Out**

Christ is life!

Through Christ  
we seek to read the signs of the times  
with perception and discernment,  
without fear, with imagination and courage

Our service has ended

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

*In the name of Christ*

**Going Out: Father bless us as we go (TiS 781, Kookaburra, Robin Mann)**

**Musical Postlude**

**Organist:**

Jeanette Steer



Asian Christian interpretation of the Calming of the Storm; Anon