



Tenth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, August 9th, 2020



THE MAIN SUSPECT WAS
A DOUBTING THOMAS

Today, from Matthew's Gospel, we will hear a story that is equally familiar and unbelievable. Jesus walks on the water as the disciples, battered by heavy waves, strain to make progress against a strong wind. Not only did Jesus tell parables to make a point about the kingdom of God and the nature of his contemporary society, but the gospel writers too wrote parables with a similar purpose in mind. While this story seems to be rather fanciful, and clearly a work of fiction, it contains a deep truth. Our task is to dig for the truth!!

OUR GATHERING

Announcements

Greeting

We gather in worship in unusual times
that keep getting stranger and more difficult.
It may feel as if a strong wind is blowing against us.
We might draw comfort from today's gospel reading
in which Jesus' disciples struggled against a strong wind.
The circumstances might be new for us,
but we are not the first among humanity
to feel the impact of forces beyond our control.
I greet you this morning:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
The Lord be with you
And also with you

We light the Paschal Candle

Call to Worship

In the light of all that is happening, what with Covid 19,
growing conflict between China and the USA,
and in the background human impact on earth's climate;
we turn to the Christ within us and among us
for courage, strength and refuge.
We worship together the one God:
Creator, Christ and Comforting Spirit.

"God is our strength and refuge"

Words by Joe Tyrpak; Music by Samuel Wesley (AURELIA) Copyright © 2009 Church Works Media. All rights reserved

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cfv1NFz4e6U>

A Prayer of Adoration and Confession

As our small orb, planet Earth, orbits the Sun,
 we marvel at human accomplishment
 sending probes to other planets and beyond the solar system.
 Even so, we are confronted by the immensity of all that is,
 of the forces beyond our control,
 of the complexities far deeper than human understanding.
 And yet, the heart of all creation we can experience as love,
 as a source of courage and strength,
as a place of refuge in the storms of life.

In his vulnerability, in his dependence upon the creator God,
 Jesus was truly human
 and yet so close to God, we know him as the Son of God.
In his way is our peace.

Help us dear God, to know our human frailty
 and to know your love for each of us.
 Help us to discover the peace that alludes us
 when we are distracted by our past regrets
 and our fears for the future.
***Calm the storms of our hearts,
 and bring us to a deeper knowledge of your love. Amen.***

The Peace

God makes peace within us.
 God makes peace among us.
 The peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Let us greet one another as a sign of God's peace.

LET'S HEAR THE WORD

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 (NRSV)

Geoff Dornan

We hear the beginning of the Joseph saga – the final 14 chapters of the book of Genesis. This narrative is markedly different from the earlier chapters in literary style and in its extended concentration on one particular character, Joseph. The Joseph saga sets the scene for the Exodus from Egypt to the promised land of Canaan [Palestine/Israel]. Throughout the saga, we see human machinations and malign actions working in mysterious ways to further the purposes of God.

Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. ²This is the story of the family of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. ³Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he had made him a long robe with sleeves. ⁴But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him.

¹² Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. ¹³And Israel said to Joseph, 'Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them.' He answered, 'Here I am.' ¹⁴So he said to him, 'Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock; and bring word back to me.' So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

He came to Shechem, ¹⁵and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, 'What are you seeking?' ¹⁶'I am seeking my brothers,' he said; 'tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock.' ¹⁷The man said, 'They have gone away, for I heard them say, "Let us go to Dothan." ' So Joseph went after his brothers, and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them, they conspired to kill him. ¹⁹They said to one another, 'Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams.' ²¹But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, 'Let us not take his life.' ²²Reuben said to them, 'Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him'—that he

might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. ²³So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the long robe with sleeves that he wore; ²⁴and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

²⁵ Then they sat down to eat; and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶Then Judah said to his brothers, 'What profit is there if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh.' And his brothers agreed. ²⁸When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

The word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Psalm 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b (NRSV)

Kyungtae Lee (Tay)

Psalm 105 is a song of praise. It praises God by remembering the stories of life in Egypt and how God led them to the promised land. Today's section repeats poetically the beginning of the Joseph saga, omitting the negative role of Joseph's brothers, instead attributing all that happens to the hand of God.

- O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.
- ² Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works.
- ³ Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
- ⁴ Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually.
- ⁵ Remember the wonderful works he has done,
his miracles, and the judgements he has uttered,
- ⁶ O offspring of his servant Abraham,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

¹⁶ When he summoned famine against the land,
 and broke every staff of bread,

¹⁷ he had sent a man ahead of them,
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.
¹⁸ His feet were hurt with fetters,
his neck was put in a collar of iron;
¹⁹ until what he had said came to pass,
 the word of the LORD kept testing him.
²⁰ The king sent and released him;
the ruler of the peoples set him free.
²¹ He made him lord of his house,
and ruler of all his possessions,
²² to instruct his officials at his pleasure,
 and to teach his elders wisdom.

^{45b} **Praise the Lord!**

Reflection on the story of Joseph

Kyungtae Lee (Tay)

Matthew 14:22-33(NRSV)

Colin Bradford

Last Sunday, we heard the story of Jesus feeding more than five thousand. Today, we hear of Jesus' need to be in prayer. Meanwhile the disciples, some of whom have worked on fishing boats for most of their lives, are floundering on the lake, failing to make progress against an opposing wind. What is this story saying to us about the need for prayer, the nature of discipleship, and how to deal with tough times?

²² Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake. ²⁶But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear. ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'

²⁸ Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' ²⁹He said, 'Come.' So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. ³⁰But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!' ³¹Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'You of little faith, why did you

doubt?' ³²When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Christ

Reflection

Colin Bradford

“Shoulders” by Naomi Shihab Nye, noted in The Writer’s Almanac, July 30, 2020

A man crosses the street in rain,
stepping gently, looking two times north and south,
because his son is asleep on his shoulder.
No car must splash him.
No car drive too near to his shadow.
This man carries the world’s most sensitive cargo
but he’s not marked.
Nowhere does his jacket say FRAGILE,
HANDLE WITH CARE.

His ear fills up with breathing.
He hears the hum of a boy’s dream
deep inside him.

We’re not going to be able
to live in this world
if we’re not willing to do what he’s doing
with one another.

The road will only be wide.
The rain will never stop falling.

Taizé Chant: “Jesus le Christ”

*Jesus, your light is shining within us,
Let not my doubts and my darkness speak to me.
Jesus, your light is shining within us.
Let my heart always welcome your love.*

<https://globalworship.tumblr.com/post/162767874225/taiz%C3%A9-jesus-le-christ-french-english-spanish>

Let's Give: Our Offerings

Geoff Dornan

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

Kyungtae Lee (Tay)

*When the one who prays says, "Lord, reach out your hands to us"
We are invited to respond, "**Lord, save us**".*

Closing Hymn: 560 "All my hope on God is founded"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3LCGh02Vew>

Blessing and Sending Out

In these strange times,
when isolation, loneliness and fear bear down upon us,
may you, in times of silence, hear the one true voice:
your deepest self,
the Christ within,
the love of God revealed to you.
And the blessing of the eternal one:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit is with you,
and remains with you always.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ

"Shalom, my friends" Words and music by Tarris Rosell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwgjV6ljuXQ>

Shalom, my friends, the Lord be with you,
God's peace go with you wherever you go.
Shalom my friends, in a world dark in difference,
let us make the difference, shalom my friends.