

## Home Service for August 9, 2020

### Welcome and Announcements

Although we cannot meet together in the church building we can share worship together in our individual homes. We will continue to work to stay connected and be there for each other during the difficult time. We are going through something never experience before. I hope this will help you worship God today with those who are in your home. Add hymns if possible, too.

### Gathering Prayer:

Holy and gracious God, sometimes we forget that you are here with each and every person we seek to reach. Sometimes we forget that no matter what one under goes in this life, through whatever trial or tribulation, you are there to redeem and reveal mercy and love and in that we hope. Right now. Right here. Amen.

*God can turn even our worst moments into possibilities for good. God can transform even our worst experiences into opportunities for grace.*

### Opening Prayer:

Eternal God, you visit us in dreams, offering us glimpses of new possibilities. Rescue us from life's storms, and lift us from the raging waters. Be with us now, as we call on your name. Reveal your purposes for our world, that we may be of use and service. Bless us with the courage to spread your word, that it may be said of us: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### Prayer of Confession:

God of infinite possibilities, we are like a boat that is beaten by the storm: without your aid we are powerless to get where we are going; we are like disciples who sit in fear for their lives: without your presence we are trapped within the prison of our feelings of helplessness; we are like those lost in wonder and disbelief: without your assurance we quickly drown in our hopeless and despair. Grant us the courage of Peter to believe that through your power anything is possible. Give us the confidence of Joseph to live as dreamers, even when the world turns against us, that we may always be found faithful. Amen.

Words of Assurance: *Christ's love is greater than our deepest failings. "The scripture says, 'No one who believes in him will be put to shame.' ... for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"* Amen.

Read Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22,45

Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name;  
make known among the nations what he has done.

<sup>2</sup> Sing to him, sing praise to him;  
tell of all his wonderful acts.

<sup>3</sup> Glory in his holy name;  
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

<sup>4</sup> Look to the LORD and his strength;  
seek his face always.

<sup>5</sup> Remember the wonders he has done,  
his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced,

<sup>6</sup> you his servants, the descendants of Abraham,  
his chosen ones, the children of Jacob.

He called down famine on the land  
and destroyed all their supplies of food;

<sup>17</sup> and he sent a man before them—  
Joseph, sold as a slave.

<sup>18</sup> They bruised his feet with shackles,  
his neck was put in irons,

<sup>19</sup> till what he foretold came to pass,  
till the word of the LORD proved him true.

<sup>20</sup> The king sent and released him,  
the ruler of peoples set him free.

<sup>21</sup> He made him master of his household,  
ruler over all he possessed,

<sup>22</sup> to instruct his princes as he pleased  
and teach his elders wisdom.

that they might keep his precepts  
and observe his laws.

Praise the LORD.

Prayers of the People:

Gracious and loving Creator, Sometimes the words just are not there. God, you are so amazing that our words and thoughts of how best to praise you pale in comparison to the splendors of your name. You are the Almighty, you are the Redeemer, you are grace never ending and the embodiment of love itself. And

when we come to you in prayer, sometimes words fail us in what to say. Yes, we lift up our concerns, and yet sometimes they seem so small in comparison to the tribulations encountered across your creation. How can our problems compare to disasters people face, or the fighting that surrounds people trying to escape, or the horrors that no child should ever experience? Lord God, sometimes when we come to you to pray, we are clueless as to what we should ask for. You know the thoughts in our minds and the desires of our hearts, and there are times when they conflict. Sometimes we want what is not always the best for us, and there are times that we long to hold on to the things we should let go of. There are times when really the best thing we can do is just pray thy will be done. In these moments, dear God, we are so very thankful for the lessons of your Son Jesus Christ for teaching us the words to pray when our own are insufficient, for our tradition is to pray the Lord's Prayer.

## 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 Lesson: Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28

Jacob lived in the land where his father had stayed, the land of Canaan.

<sup>2</sup>This is the account of Jacob's family line.

Joseph, a young man of seventeen, was tending the flocks with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives, and he brought their father a bad report about them.

<sup>3</sup>Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate<sup>[a]</sup> robe for him. <sup>4</sup>When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than any of them, they hated him and could not speak a kind word to him.

<sup>12</sup>Now his brothers had gone to graze their father's flocks near Shechem, <sup>13</sup>and Israel said to Joseph, "As you know, your brothers are grazing the flocks near Shechem. Come, I am going to send you to them."

"Very well," he replied.

<sup>14</sup>So he said to him, "Go and see if all is well with your brothers and with the flocks, and bring word back to me." Then he sent him off from the Valley of Hebron.

When Joseph arrived at Shechem, <sup>15</sup> a man found him wandering around in the fields and asked him, “What are you looking for?”

<sup>16</sup> He replied, “I’m looking for my brothers. Can you tell me where they are grazing their flocks?”

<sup>17</sup> “They have moved on from here,” the man answered. “I heard them say, ‘Let’s go to Dothan.’”

So Joseph went after his brothers and found them near Dothan. <sup>18</sup> But they saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.

<sup>19</sup> “Here comes that dreamer!” they said to each other. <sup>20</sup> “Come now, let’s kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns and say that a ferocious animal devoured him. Then we’ll see what comes of his dreams.”

<sup>21</sup> When Reuben heard this, he tried to rescue him from their hands. “Let’s not take his life,” he said. <sup>22</sup> “Don’t shed any blood. Throw him into this cistern here in the wilderness, but don’t lay a hand on him.” Reuben said this to rescue him from them and take him back to his father.

<sup>23</sup> So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe—the ornate robe he was wearing— <sup>24</sup> and they took him and threw him into the cistern. The cistern was empty; there was no water in it.

<sup>25</sup> As they sat down to eat their meal, they looked up and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead. Their camels were loaded with spices, balm and myrrh, and they were on their way to take them down to Egypt.

<sup>26</sup> Judah said to his brothers, “What will we gain if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? <sup>27</sup> Come, let’s sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood.” His brothers agreed.

<sup>28</sup> So when the Midianite merchants came by, his brothers pulled Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty shekels<sup>[a]</sup> of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt.

Read the Epistle Lesson: Romans 10:5-15

Moses writes this about the righteousness that is by the law: “The person who does these things will live by them.”<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness that is by faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’”<sup>[b]</sup> (that is, to bring Christ down) <sup>7</sup> “or ‘Who will descend into the deep?’”<sup>[c]</sup> (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). <sup>8</sup> But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,”<sup>[d]</sup> that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim: <sup>9</sup> If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. <sup>11</sup> As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to

shame.”<sup>[e]</sup> <sup>12</sup> For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, <sup>13</sup> for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”<sup>[f]</sup>

<sup>14</sup> How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? <sup>15</sup> And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Read the Gospel Lesson: 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. <sup>23</sup> After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, <sup>24</sup> and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

<sup>25</sup> Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. <sup>26</sup> When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

<sup>27</sup> But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

<sup>28</sup> “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.”

<sup>29</sup> “Come,” he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. <sup>30</sup> But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”

<sup>31</sup> Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?”

<sup>32</sup> And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. <sup>33</sup> Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

## Message

Have you heard the phrase, "I am only human" as a person is trying to explain why he/she has made some mistake, or did something wrong. The phrase says something very negative about the condition of a human being. We can speak about the negative side of a person by talking about them as being all too human. In the Bible, when a person’s humanity is talked about, it is describing a person when he/she is coming closest to what God intended for us to be. For God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him: male and female he

created them." To be human in the Biblical sense is to be like God, to be human in the Biblical sense is to be living in the full image of God.

This morning's Gospel applies both of these concepts of being human to Peter. Peter fits our worldly concept of being human, that is the negative side the selfish side, the lower side of His being, but also he fits very well the Biblical image of being human, being in the likeness, in the image of God, being that person who lives as God intended for human beings to live. Luther explains the two aspects of being human by saying we are both saint and sinner at the same time. Maybe that is the best way to describes Peter in our gospel lesson; he was both saint and sinner. Maybe that is the way we should describe ourselves as, both saint and sinner.

Let us look at this situation while remembering last week's Gospel, too. Jesus was tired. His disciples were tired. They had been grieving over John the Baptist's murder. And so they had tried to "get away" and "be alone." They had gotten into their boat and sailed to a deserted place, but it didn't work. The crowds had followed them and even though Jesus was consumed with grief, Jesus had "compassion for them and healed those who were sick." Then, when everyone was hungry--instead of sending the people away--Jesus blessed what the disciples had-- 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish... and everyone was fed. Now Jesus is really, really tired.

In verse 22 we heard, "Right then, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat again and go ahead to the other side of the lake again while he dismissed the crowds." Then Jesus went up a mountain by Himself to pray, regain strength, and I would imagine to grieve the loss of John. "Evening came and he was alone."

Sometime in the wee hours of the morning, Jesus goes to "catch up" with the twelve disciples, and the disciples are having a horrible time. A storm has whipped up, and they are being battered by the waves and the wind; they are far away from land. Jesus decided the quickest way to help the disciples was to walk across the water.

Here is the first evidence the disciples and Peter and their lack of trust, lack of faith, being all too human and not being in the image of God, for they cried out, "It is a ghost. They cried out in fear."

They had just been listening to Jesus preach concerning His love for them, they had just witnessed, had come from the meal where Jesus feed 5000 with a few fish and a few loaves of bread, but they could not believe that Jesus could walk on the water. They didn't recognize Him, they were afraid. Then Peter asks Jesus if he could come to Him walking on the water. Jesus says come! Peter gets out of the boat, but as he saw the wind and the waves, as he realized what he was doing, he

began to sink into the water. Peter forgot who was standing there, he forgot about being in the image of God and he sank into the water. The disciples and Peter in this instance were being less than human, or all too human in the negative sense. They were not being in the image of God, they were relying on themselves, they were in fact being sinner, turning away from God trusting in themselves.

Notice, Peter must have had some faith, some trust in Jesus in order to step out of the boat. Notice the final reply of the disciples saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." When Peter and the disciples focused all of their attention on Jesus rather on themselves and their own fears, then they could see who He was, then they could do marvelous things, like walking on water. When the disciples and Peter were living, and being in the image of God, being in God and not trying to be their own God, life was full and had great meaning.

This story about the wind and the storm, this story about walking on the water tells us something about our relationship with Jesus.

Christ will come to us in our darkest moments, during the storms of life, during those times we aren't thinking of Him, He might just come walking into our lives in some manner to bring us His mercy. Jesus wants us as the saint and sinner that we are. If we live in our own image, if we forget who made us, if we try to be our own god, our own boss, God doesn't throw us out, but He still comes to us showing us his concern.

So, if you feel you are in that sinner state, a state where you can't seem to find God in your life have no fear, because God is finding you. He is coming into the storms of your life in ways that you might not be aware of, in ways you might not expect, in ways that might overwhelm you, but God will be there.

And for those of you who are in a relationship with Jesus, who at this moment are living in the image that God intended for you to live, Jesus will be there to let you do those marvelous things.

For being in Jesus, being in Christ doesn't mean a stagnate life, but it means a life of action, a life of risk taking, a life of courage. It means a life that is willing to say to Jesus, bid me come walking on the water to you. Bid me Jesus to do what you would have me do with my life. Bid me Jesus to risk, to dare, to love and give as you have freely loved and have given. Bid me Jesus to keep my eyes focused on you and then you and I can overcome the storms of life. Bid me to stay in that relationship with you. Bid me to have courage of faith, that lets me explore the many varied and unique ways that I can serve you and serve my neighbor.

"A humble backwoods layman was once heard praying in church, "Lord, help me to remember, ain't nothin you and I can't do together." Isn't that true.

The key to faith and the fullness of life that Jesus offers is to follow Peter's example and be willing to step out of the comfort and security of the boat and head into the troubled waters of the world to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Getting out of the boat with Jesus is the most risky, most exciting, and most fulfilling way to live life to the fullest! And Jesus invites us to do just that. Amen.

Benediction:

*God blesses us with strength for the journey. Christ lifts us up from the raging waters of life. The Spirit guides us with dreams and visions of a glorious tomorrow. Go with God and enjoy His Presence as you serve Him. Amen.*