

5th Sunday after Pentecost  
Sunday, June 23, 2024

### **Introduction to the day**

Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation! Now we are in the storm, the boat almost swamped; but Jesus is here now, and when we call him, he will calm the storm. Even the wind and waves listen to him as they would to their creator. We also listen to him and are called to believe in the power of God's word in him, a power greater than all that we fear.

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. O God of creation, eternal majesty, you preside over land and sea, sunshine and storm. By your strength pilot us, by your power preserve us, by your wisdom instruct us, and by your hand protect us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

### **FIRST READING: 1 Samuel 17:[1a, 4-11, 19-23] 32-49**

A reading from 1 Samuel.

*In this passage, the description of the soldier Goliath vividly depicts the superiority of Philistine military might. In contrast, young David is armed with a slingshot and faith in God. David's victory witnesses to the whole earth that "there is a God in Israel."*

### **PSALM: Psalm 9:9-20**

You, O LORD, will be a refuge in time of trouble. (Ps. 9:9)

### **SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13**

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

*Paul and his fellow workers experience great hardships and even rejection while carrying out their missionary work. Nevertheless, Paul continuously proclaims that God has not rejected us but is graciously working for our salvation.*

### **GOSPEL: Mark 4:35-41**

*Jesus' calming of the storm on the sea reveals his power over evil, since the sea represents evil and chaos. The boat on the sea is a symbol of the church and invites us to trust God amid life's turbulence.*

### **GOSPEL MESSAGE**

#### **Why Are You Afraid?**

We often find ourselves swamped by the storms of life, wind and waves beating into our boat. Perhaps it's a literal storm like the disciples experienced in today's gospel reading. Natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, and even brutal blizzards have the power to upend our lives. So, too, do health crises, financial struggles, lost jobs, divorce or other relationship difficulties, the death of loved ones, and so many other situations.

Like the disciples, we may become overwhelmed by the storms and angry with God, who appears to be sleeping on the job. "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" is a common prayer in such moments. In response to that prayer, the disciples witnessed a miracle. Jesus stood up, rebuked the storm, and suddenly, all was calm.

But how often have you cried out to the Creator only to find that your personal storm rages on? The tests come back with bad news, the bank account remains overdrawn, the relationship ends, death still seems to have the last word. In these moments, it's easy to doubt: Why hasn't God stopped *my* storm? This side of heaven, we likely will never know why God stills some storms and not others. Yet, just as the disciples had Jesus with them in their boat, so do you. They were safe with their Teacher and the same is true for you.

The storms may beat against your boat with unimaginable force. But in your baptism, Jesus "climbed into your boat" and promised to be with you forever. You may be holding on for dear life. But truly Jesus is also holding onto *you*. Though your boat is rocking all over the stormy sea, he is with you, and you are safe. Do not be afraid.

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

We come before the triune God to pray for our communities, ourselves, and our world.

Equip your faithful people to approach this world with a sense of wonder. Make your church a safe place to explore big questions, troubling doubts, and honest laments. Humble our hearts to repent of the ways that communities of faith have inflicted pain or trauma. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You spoke creation into order from the chaos of the swirling deep. May your name be praised by rivers and seas, wetlands and waterfalls. Secure clean water for all people and protect water sources from contamination or exploitation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Amid whirlwinds of division, violence, and conflict, remind us again that you are as steadfast as the foundations of the earth. Rejuvenate peacemakers, advocates, and community organizers when they feel weary in their work. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Deliver your people from their distress, O God. We lift before you all who are sick or struggling especially Sandra Gagnon, Karen Weigold, Keith Weckwerth, Shirley Glickman, Marilyn Schneider, Denita Wolfgram, Stephanie Yourth, Christopher Yourth, Linda Boland, Glenda Panke, Debbie Thom, Donna L Hoffman, Walter Hobden, Harold Yourth and those in long term care facilities and senior residences. In this moment of silence we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts those who need your healing touch. Grant consolation and peace to all who live with chronic, terminal, or persistent illness. In times of affliction or hardship, sustain us in faith. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Enfold all travelers with your protection. Bless the comings and goings of this assembly as we travel for leisure or for work. Let all journeys be met with hospitality on the way, and let community members return to us with celebration. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation for all the redeemed of the Lord. Joined together with the great cloud of witnesses, we give thanks for your steadfast love and your wonderful works. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Receive our prayers, O God, and come quickly to our aid, through the power of the Spirit and the love of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

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