

Church of the Divine Love

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – PROPER 14

AUGUST 13, 2023 9:00 AM

HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Prayer before worship – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn **#637 – How firm a foundation**

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **1 Kings 19:9-18**

Psalm 85:8-13

Second Lesson: **Romans 10:5-15**

Gradual Hymn **#693, vs. 1-4 – Just as I am**

Gospel: **Matthew 14:22-33**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn **#671 – Amazing grace! how sweet the sound**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

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| Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal) | page 367 |
| Hymn during Consecration – on insert | |
| The Lord’s Prayer | page 364 |
| The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer | page 337 |
| The Communion of the People | |
| Communion Hymn #304 – I come with joy to meet my Lord | |
| Post Communion Prayer | page 365 |
| Prayer for Peace – on insert | |
| Prayer of St. Francis | page 833 |
| Dismissal Hymn – Days of Elijah (on insert) | |

Sermon Sunday August 13, 2023

1 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 85:8-13; Romans 10:5-15; Matthew 14:22-33.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

It is not hard to imagine what it was like for the disciples that night as they crossed the Sea of Galilee. We need only think about the storms that have blown through our own lives. Think of a time when your life was drenched in darkness, that three or four in the morning kind of darkness. It’s so dark you cannot even see your own hand. You do not know what is ahead or when you will arrive at the new shore. Think of a time when it felt as if you were drowning in fear. You began to see ghosts. Something was there. Something was going to get you. Ghosts may not be real but fear is. Recall those days when the winds of change were blowing against you and no matter what you did, how hard you rowed, you got nowhere. Maybe there was a time when the events of life battered you over and over like ocean waves.

Storms come in all sorts of different ways striking individuals, families, churches, nations, and the world. Cancer, divorce, schism, famine, war. We can all tell stories about how life was blown off course, the structures of life were washed away, plans and hopes damaged or destroyed. Whenever the storms of life arise so does the question of faith. Do we have faith? Do we have the right kind of faith? Do we have enough faith? Jesus’ question to Peter is one that often haunts us as we cross the sea of life. “You of little faith; why did you doubt?” There’s something about that question that makes quick, trite answers and assumptions much too easy. You just need faith. If you had more faith, you would get what you prayed

for. A different kind of faith and your life would be better, easy. If your faith was stronger you wouldn't doubt, struggle, or question. So, I wonder what would have happened if Peter had more faith, enough faith, a different kind of faith. The usual answer is that Peter's fear would have disappeared, the wind and waves would have been of no consequence. He would have continued walking on water.

There is a real danger in this kind of theology and understanding of faith. It says that if we have enough faith, we will overcome the storms of life in some spectacular way. Somehow, we will transcend the laws of nature, physics, biology. We will defy gravity. In extreme cases some will forego medical care for faith. That is not the kind of faith to which we are called. That is not what faith is about. That is more about magic than faith. It seeks proof or evidence to support belief. We fear our own death and the deaths of our loved ones. We fear the loss of health, security, success, and reputation. We fear failure and what others will think about us. We fear being out of control and powerless. We fear the unknown, what will happen, and what might not happen. We fear others; those who look, act, and believe differently than us. We fear not being enough and being found out. And the list goes on and on. Each one of you could add to the list. What would you put on it? What do you fear? I've come to believe that fear is a primary driver and controller of our lives. I've experienced that in my own life and I've seen it in the lives of others. I've seen how it can take hold of us, distort our vision, and drown our lives. Fear often determines the choices we make, the words we say, the actions we take, and the prayers we offer.

That kind of faith will not carry us through the storms of life. We will eventually sink like a rock in water. That's what happened to Peter. Perhaps it is no coincidence that his name in Greek means stone or rock. Regardless of how much faith we have disease takes a toll on our body, accidents happen, loved ones die. Despite our faith life is difficult, relationships break up, we don't always get what we want. No matter how strong our faith the sea of life gets rough and stormy. Maybe the usual answer is simply wrong. Maybe faith is not about walking on water through the storms of life but about staying in the boat. With a different kind of faith Peter would have stayed in the boat. "You of little faith; why did you doubt?" Maybe Jesus is asking why Peter got out of the boat. After all Jesus is the one who "made the disciples get into the boat." Jesus is the one who told them to "go on ahead to the other side." Jesus is the one who prayed during their night voyage. Jesus is the one who came to them in the midst of the storm. Jesus is the one who reassured them saying, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." "Sometimes we feel like we are afraid of everything. We are afraid of ourselves. We are afraid of people. We are afraid of the future. We are afraid of the past. We are afraid of life. We are afraid of death.

It was Peter's idea to get out of the boat. Peter is the one who wanted to defy gravity, the one who sought some spectacular proof of Jesus' identity, presence, and power. "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." Peter's words are reminiscent of an earlier time and place. Satan. The wilderness. "If you are the Son of God." Peter's faith has taken him out of the boat and put God to the test. I don't say this in judgment or criticism of Peter. I say this as one who recognizes himself in Peter, as one who wants to walk on water and escape the storms of my own life. I say this as one who has seen and heard others express that same desire. At some level we have probably all lived with Peter's faith. To the extent we have we need to go on ahead to a different kind of faith. The disciples' voyage across the

sea is a passage from one kind of faith to another. It is the journey from faith used to escape life's storms to a faith that carries us through them; from an external faith of physical presence and proof to an interior faith of spiritual presence; from a faith dependent on the circumstance of our life to one that experiences Christ present regardless of what is going on around us.

Jesus physically separated himself from the disciples and sent them on ahead but he never left them. Their faith and our faith must now be experienced as larger than Jesus' physical presence; not limited by the boundaries of what can be seen, heard, touched, or understood; independent of miracles that overcome the laws of nature. Jesus is taking us from a get-out-of-the-boat kind of faith to a stay-in-the-boat kind of faith. This transition of faith happens in the dark night of our life, in the midst of life's storms. In every storm of life, we must decide whether to get out or stay in. Faith is not a way to escape the winds and waves of life. It is the way through the storms of life. Sometimes faithfulness means staying in the boat and simply rowing.

A stay-in-the-boat-faith knows that Christ is always coming to us. We are never abandoned. There is no storm we go through in which Christ is not with us. A stay-in-the-boat-faith never gives up because Christ never gives up on us. With every storm through which we sail Jesus comes to us saying "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." He gets in the boat with us and the winds cease. Our walking on water is not the miracle. The miracle is that Christ is stronger than any storm that comes our way. The miracle is that with Christ in the boat we pass through the storms of life to a new shore and a new life. **Amen!**

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| 11 PENTECOST | 9:00 AM | HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II | (also on zoom) |
| MONDAY | 8:30 PM | AA MEETING | |
| WEDNESDAY | 7:00 PM | AL-ANON MEETING | |
| THURSDAY | 10AM-2PM | THRIFT SHOP | |
| | 8:30 PM | AA MEETING | |
| SATURDAY | 10AM-2PM | THRIFT SHOP | |
| 12 PENTECOST | 9:00 AM | HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II | (also on zoom) |

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| | Today | Next Week |
| Eucharistic Minister | Jess Berbeck | Roe Prosser |

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

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|----------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Grace Schinella | Lourdes S. | Kaylee |
| Bob Curley | Arlene Goodenough | Art |
| Chris Dickson | Kate Jones | Deb P. |
| Michael Echevarria | John Rocco | Bethany |
| Michael & Family | Warren | Dennis |
| Charlotte H. | Bernie Walther | Anthony |
| Mo (Rachael) | Phil Ryder | Carolyn |
| Anthony Paribello | Barbara Curran | Del |
| Robert Hosey | Robert Sweat | Aidan |
| Sally & Roger | Sophia | Carol K. |
| Mary & Family | Christopher | Amy |
| Nathan Treadwell | Vincent | Judy |
| Joan Blan | Celeste | Ciara |
| Margaret G. and Baby | | |

All people and countries suffering from violence and hatred.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them. Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

(Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus and third verse starting with Spirit.)

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions and glory, now and for ever. Amen

