



Worship at Home – 2nd Sunday before Lent – 7th February

Father God help us to come to you this morning with open and thankful hearts. Fill us with the joy and peace that comes with knowing you. Be with us as we walk in your light, rejoice in your love and reflect your glory.

Amen

Hymn 684: Thou whose almighty word

Welcome

The Lord be with you,
and also with you

Prayer of Preparation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord.
Amen

Prayer of Confession

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: The first commandment is this: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this: "Love your neighbour as yourself". There is no other commandment greater than these. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of your son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen

Lord have mercy

Lord have mercy

Christ have mercy

Christ have mercy

Lord have mercy

Lord have mercy

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in life eternal through Jesus Christ our lord. **Amen**

Collect

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever. **Amen**

Old Testament Reading: Proverbs 8: 1, 22-31

Does not wisdom call, and does not understanding raise her voice? The LORD created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth—when he had not yet made earth and fields, or the world's first bits of soil. When he established the heavens, I was there, when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master worker; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the human race.

New Testament Reading: Colossians 1: 15 – 20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Hymn 84: Breathe on me

Gospel Reading: Mark 4:35-41

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark

Glory to you, O Lord

That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side." Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, "Why are

you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?" They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon: Revd Petra Shakeshaft

Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

This Passage from Mark opens when Jesus has been teaching around Lake Galilee and needs to find somewhere away from the thronging crowds and the busyness of the day to rest with his disciples.

Let's cross the lake he says.

So they get into a boat and cross the Lake.

Lake Galilee can be eerily calm at times, the water can be so still, so flat.

But there is a strange microclimate to do with the air coming off the hills which means that wild storms can suddenly and, even to the most proficient fishermen, surprisingly, whip up in the middle of the Lake.

So it wouldn't be unusual for a group of men who know the climate well to get onto a boat and sail across the Lake and to be surprised by a storm.

As Jesus and the disciples cross the Lake the gentle rocking of the boat sends Jesus to sleep.

Notice he falls asleep on the pillow or cushion –

Notice, it's *the* cushion.

And in the original Greek we discover

that this is actually the seat reserved for the helmsman or rower, but it's where Jesus rests his head.

As the storm becomes more violent, the disciples become more and more afraid, convinced they will drown.

How could Jesus sleep through all this?

Well, in Biblical terms the ability to sleep peacefully is seen as a sign of perfect trust in the power of God.

Psalms 4 says

I will both lie down and sleep in peace;

for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety.

At the same time, it was felt that if there was some kind of disaster, personal or national, that God was not awake and watching over his people.

God had lost interest. He was asleep.

We might hear echoes of the Psalms

Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep, O Lord?

Awake, do not cast us off for ever!

The disciples assume that Jesus's slumbers are a sign that he is indifferent to their situation; they don't have his confidence, aren't able to share his faith.

And so, as the Psalmist called on God centuries before, they call to rouse Jesus.

Jesus awakens, goes to the front of the boat, and rebukes the wind. *'Peace! Be still!'*

The wind stills and there is a calm.

Now if the disciples were perplexed about Jesus' behaviour while asleep, this action completely stuns them.

Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him? Who then, indeed?

I expect most of us have had the experience, for some of us, frequently, where you drop off to sleep easily after a busy day and then, in the middle of the night suddenly find yourself awake, tossing and turning.

We may spend most of the night wrestling with inner turmoils, fears and anxieties, real or imagined storms that send us off course, away from that calm and peaceful place that is deep sleep.

We spend much of the night struggling not to be overcome by thoughts that undermine our sense of security and challenge who we think we are. In the boat, the disciples find that they are not the strong, confident fishermen they thought they might be, the self-assured tax man – they are in a situation which they cannot control and they are afraid. there is nothing *they* can do.

They are affronted by Jesus' ability to sleep through the storm in the same way perhaps that we might be fed up when we can't sleep and we can hear the person beside us, or in the next room sleeping – loudly. So they wake him.

Like children who wake their parents if they're having a bad dream they awaken the person who they know will listen to their fears and calm them.

When we go through a time of turmoil, not just a bad night, maybe a loss, a death, a broken relationship, a lost job, fear for someone we love, when we're finding the isolation and uncertainty of this pandemic too much to bear,

we need to do just that –we need to awaken Jesus into our fears – night-time and daytime.

And allow him to calm us, to still us.

As we awaken the Jesus in us, so he awakens in us the deeper, calmer self –

the person we are called to be - the person he has called us to be.

Remember, he invites the disciples to go with him.

Let's go across the lake. that is, to the other side.

And just so, he has invited us to accompany him across the lake of life.

There will be stormy times, difficult, tempestuous times.

And if in them, we can awaken Jesus in us, we discover,

not only that calmer self we are called to be but something about the person of Jesus who calls us.

Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

This is he who laid down the foundations of the earth,

who rouses from his sleep to calm the storm.

This is God.

Julian of Norwich says this:

He did not say 'You shall not be tempest-tossed,

you shall not be work-weary, you shall not be discomforted'.

But he did say, 'You shall not be overcome.'

And all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well.

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers

The Peace

Take a moment and offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for each other and our church family church community. Maybe call or text someone who would enjoy sharing the peace with you.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy, that you may be kept safe and blameless in spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Hymn 463: My song is love unknown

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours.
Now and for ever.
Amen.**

Hymn 161: Father hear the prayer

Remembering the Lord's Supper

Take a moment to remember the final meal that Jesus shared with his disciples. As we think about this meal - with the washing of feet and bread and wine shared with friends - we remember Jesus' offering of himself on the cross. We rejoice in his resurrection from the dead and look forward to the coming of God's Kingdom. While we cannot receive Christ in the sacraments in the usual way, we can be the presence of Christ in our homes and communities and we can be a praying presence wherever we are.

Hymn 54: At the name of Jesus

Closing Prayer

Lord God, we thank you for this time of worship; may your love and peace remain with us in the coming days. Be with us in all that we will think, say and do so that our lives may reflect your glory. We ask this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

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