

## Sermon followed by Service

June 30, 2024

Matthew 14:22-33

Row, row, row your boat,  
Gently down the stream.  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,  
Life is but a dream.

But life isn't always a dream and the stream isn't always gentle. What about when life is a nightmare and you're stuck out in the storm? That's where the disciples were - stuck in a storm, getting blasted and bounced, wishing it were just a nightmare. So what can we learn from the disciples ... what can we learn from Jesus for those times we're **STUCK IN A STORM?**

Let's look at our lesson: **Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.**

The first thing we might wonder is: "What were the disciples doing in a boat on the Sea of Galilee, not just in the middle of the night, but all night long?" For as many as 6, 8, 12 hours the disciples had been trying to get back home ... and now in the last part of the night, before sunrise, they were rowing, rowing, rowing with all their might against the wind, and getting

nowhere. We might imagine the disciples had the same question: “What are we doing out here? Where’s Jesus? Whose bright idea was it that got us stuck out here blasted by the wind, bounced by the waves, going nowhere?”

Whose bright idea was it? Jesus’. Jesus made the disciples get in the boat and head out across the water. It seems the disciples weren’t too fired up on the idea. Maybe they didn’t like the look of the sky or the water ... maybe they didn’t like the idea of leaving Jesus behind. But Jesus made them get into the boat and head back across the sea. That’s right. The disciples were stuck in the wind, bounced by the waves, because Jesus wanted them there.

Why? It seems Jesus didn’t want his disciples stuck with the crowd. The crowd of 5000 that Jesus and the disciples had just fed, that crowd wanted to make Jesus their king. That doesn’t sound so bad, does it? Jesus came to be our king, right? Add the words “by force” ... the crowds wanted to make Jesus their king by force and we see something wasn’t right. The crowds wanted to make Jesus their bread king, their miracle king, their easy-button king - the king who would make life easy for them. They didn’t want Jesus to be their king so they could follow him and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. No, they wanted Jesus to be their king so that he could follow them and serve them with food and miracles and whatever else they wanted. They weren’t on the “Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to thee” plan. They were on the “it’s all about me” plan.

Jesus knew just how much that plan appealed to the disciples. He knew how they wanted power and prestige. So “immediately” after the feeding of the 5000, before and because they could get sucked up into the crowd, **“Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him.”** And now they’re stuck in the storm getting blasted and bounced by wind and wave.

What does that mean for us? There could be times we feel stuck in a storm, blasted and bounced, or stuck going nowhere - why? ... because we listen to Jesus. At times doing things Jesus’ way - with love and patience - seems to get us nowhere. At times doing things Jesus’ way - perhaps in dating and marriage - doesn’t get us what we want. At times doing things Jesus’ way - maybe at work - just seems to get us into trouble. At those times that listening to Jesus makes for hard rowing and a hard life, here’s something for us to think about -

- Jesus is at work to save us - we might not know what he’s saving us from, but we can know that Jesus is at work to save us, just as he was looking out for his disciples ...
- perhaps - like the disciples - Jesus has us rowing hard, making our life hard, to keep us out of some trouble we don’t know about;
- perhaps - like the disciples - Jesus has us stuck because he knows how success goes to our heads;
- perhaps - like the disciples - Jesus has us not getting what we want, because he knows we’re better off not getting what we want, when we want;

- perhaps - like the disciples - Jesus is setting us up for something better.

When doing things Jesus' way has us feeling stuck and going nowhere ... when doing things Jesus' way seems to mean hard rowing, when it seems that Jesus' way just makes life harder - instead of thinking that Jesus' way must be wrong, we get to see Jesus looking out for the good of his people.

That's what we see in our lesson. It's still night, dark and blowing. The disciples are struggling and getting nowhere. Jesus sees how the disciples are struggling. So what does Jesus do? He doesn't stop the winds and calm the waters. That's not what the disciples needed. He was what the disciples needed. So Jesus goes out to the disciples' boat, walking on the water. Seeing Jesus walk on the water the disciples cry out in fear, in terror: "it's a ghost." So how does Jesus answer their fear and terror? Not with a miracle to calm the wind and the waves; but with his word he calms his disciples: "**Take courage! It is I! Don't be afraid.**"

With that word, the wind doesn't stop; the waves don't calm; but his disciples' hearts are made strong. Peter wants to join Jesus: "**Lord, if it's you, tell me to come out to you on the water.**" And at Jesus' invitation Peter does just that. He gets out of the boat and walks on the water toward Jesus, until he gets distracted. Peter takes his eyes off Jesus; he gets distracted by the wind and the waves: "What am I doing? I can't ..." And Peter begins to sink. "**Lord, save me.**"

Do we remember that call for help? When the wind and the waves have us sinking ... when guilt and accusations are crushing ... when fear and worry - over our bills and broken bodies and our broken jobs and broken homes - when fear and worry give us that sinking feeling ... do we remember that call for help? **“Lord, save me! God, have mercy on me a sinner! Jesus, I need you!”**

In our lesson we see Jesus reach out his hand and save Peter. At the cross we see Jesus stretch out both hands around our sin and guilt; he takes it; he makes it his own; he pays for it - he’s dead; your sin is gone. But on Easter, Jesus is alive and reaching out his hands again - “Peace. It might not seem possible, but I’m really here for you.” Every day we get to hear Jesus call to us: **“Take courage; I’m here for you; don’t be afraid.”** And some day, we will get to hear Jesus: “I’m here to take you home, home to heaven.”

When life isn’t just a gentle float down the stream and it seems more nightmare than dream ... when you seem stuck in the storm and sinking ... remember Jesus walking on the water to save his disciples. Hear the promise of Jesus: **“Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid!”** Even if you don’t see him walking on water, Jesus has come to save you, too. Amen.

June 29 & 30, 2024

NEW MORNING PRAISE

IN OUR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL THIS PAST WEEK (SCUBA) ... we have seen our God work with water to show his power and love –

*Monday* – even though water was poured on the altar, God proved himself through Elijah at Mount Caramel

*Tuesday* – Jonah and the whale

*Wednesday* – Jesus calms the storm

*Thursday* – Jesus rose again on the third day and all of our sins are washed away

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... we see Jesus walk on water as he shows his power and love!

OPENING HYMN

*“How Great Thou Art”*

Hymn 612

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder  
consider all the works thy hand hath made,  
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,  
thy pow’r throughout the universe displayed;

*Refrain*

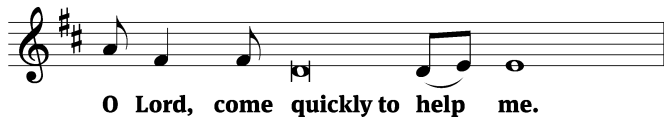
Then sings my soul, my Savior-God, to thee,  
How great thou art! How great thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior-God to thee,  
How great thou art! How great thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander  
and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur  
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; *Refrain*

And when I think that God, his Son not sparing,  
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,  
that on the cross my burden gladly bearing  
he bled and died to take away my sin; *Refrain*

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation  
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration  
and there proclaim: "My God, how great thou art!" *Refrain*

#### OPENING SENTENCES



#### CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION OF SINS

- M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.
- C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**
- M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will. **Amen.**



Give glory to God, our light and our life.



**Come, O come, let us wor - ship.**

### COME, O COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD



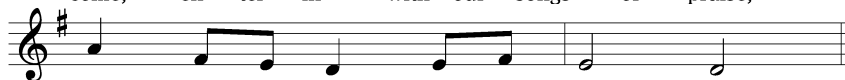
Come, O come, let us sing to the Lord,



let us shout with joy to our sav - ing Rock;



come, en - ter in with our songs of praise,

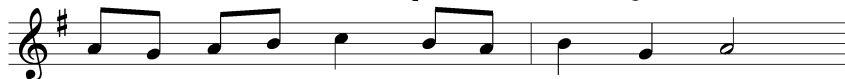


come, en - ter in with thanks - giv - ing.



1 You are a great and a won - drous God,

2 Come, let us wor - ship and, bow - ing low,



cup - ping in your hands all the depths of earth.

kneel be - fore the One who has made us all.



You made the hills and the moun - tains high,

You are the God whom we call our own,



*Refrain*

you made the seas and the dry land.

we are the flock that you shep - herd.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and most merciful God, preserve us from all harm and danger that we, being ready in both body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish what you want done; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## FIRST READING

*Genesis 1 (Select verses)*

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ... And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation ...." And it was so. ... And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to ... give light on the earth." And it was so. ... And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day. ...

Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” ...

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.  
And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**VBS CHILDREN SING (SUNDAY)**

*“Thanks, God”*

*Thanks, God, for all the good things you do.  
Thanks, God, you’re my light and my truth. Ooh.*

*Thanks, God, for the good things you’ve made.  
Thanks, God, for this heart that was saved. Ooh.*

*Thanks, God.*

*All the waves when they crash, when they roar,  
so fun to ride one up to the shore. Thanks, God.  
All the wonders under the deep, down to the bottom where I’ll never reach.*

*Thanks, God.*

*Oh, that you love me, I'm so amazed.*

*Makes me want to say*

*Thanks, God, for all the good things you do.*

*Thanks, God, You're my light and my truth. Ooh.*

*Thanks, God for the good things you've made.*

*Thanks, God, for this heart that was saved. Ooh.*

*I'm diving into your love. Watch me, here I, I come.*

*I'm diving into your love. Watch me, here I, I come.*

*Thanks, God, for all the good things you do.*

*Thanks, God, you're my light and my truth. Ooh.*

*Thanks, God for the good things you've made.*

*Thanks, God, for this heart that was saved. Ooh.*

*Thanks, God.*

### ***"One True God"***

#### ***Refrain***

*You are the one true God. There will never be another.*

*You are the faithful God. Forever we will praise your name.*

*Lord, your mercy is unending. You forgive our every sin.*

*You're the hope when we are hopeless. Lord, your love has drawn us in.*

*You brought us all together.*

*We are yours forever, and together we will sing. **Refrain***

*You are the one true God. You are the faithful God.*

*You are the one true God. You are the faithful God.*

## SECOND READING

*1 Peter 3:18–22*

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL

*Mark 4:35–41*

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!”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

## APOSTLES’ CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN

*"A Vicious Storm, A Raging Sea"*

Hymn 984



1 A vi - cious storm, a rag - ing sea, a Sav - ior sleep - ing  
2 A brief com - mand, all dan - gers pass—the lake be - comes a  
3 The one whom wind and waves o - bey could clear - ly see the  
4 Raised from the dead to end sin's curse, his pres - ence fills the



peace - ful - ly— their rac - ing hearts would not slow down: "Do  
sheet of glass! Who is this man from Gal - i - lee who  
com - ing day when he be - neath God's wrath would fall, when  
u - ni - verse. The pow'r which he once set a - side he



you not care if we should drown!" I know that feel - ing  
with a word can calm the sea? He is, by God's e -  
he would bleed and die for all. Dis - miss - ing all his  
now em - ploys, all - glo - ri - fied, to help his Church to



far too well— the fear of harm or death or hell.  
ter - nal plan, the one who is both God and man.  
pow'r di - vine, Christ Je - sus gave his life for mine.  
per - se - vere, to drive a - way my fool - ish fear.

5 A boat, a storm, a - drift a - gain, they mar-shaled all their  
 6 Lord Je - sus Christ, when storms a - rise on you a - lone I'll  
 strength in vain. They saw the Lord; "A ghost!" they cried, and,  
 fix my eyes. Through Word and wa - ter, bread and wine, I  
 sink - ing fast, one al - most died. But he who walked out  
 hear you say - ing, "You are mine!" Your prom - is - es are  
 on the sea saved them from great ca - tas - tro - phe.  
 strong to quell all fear of harm and death and hell.

SERMON

*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. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

"Come," he said.

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

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

**HYMN**

*"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"*

**Hymn 835**

Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,  
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.  
Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light.  
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

When my way grows drear, precious Lord, linger near,  
When my life is almost gone,  
Hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall.  
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

When the darkness appears and the night draws near  
And the day is almost gone,  
At the river I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand.  
Take my hand, precious Lord; lead me home.

**OFFERING**

*If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.*



**PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

- M:** O Lord, our God, you are wise and powerful, good and gracious. Your mercies are new every morning. Each day you open your hand and provide for the needs of your children on earth.
- C:** **We praise you for every grace and blessing.**

M: Strengthen your Church in all the world. Let your comforting message of salvation in Christ Jesus be proclaimed to troubled souls everywhere.

**C: Use our ministries and offerings to extend your healing and your hope.**

M: We bring you our requests for the various structures of our society. Bless our national, state (provincial), and local governments.

**C: Grant us civil servants who are worthy of honor and respect.**

M: Grant prosperity to our businesses and industries. Give employers a sense of fairness toward their workers, and employees a feeling of joy and pride in their workmanship.

**C: Help us find satisfaction in all work well done.**

M: Invigorate the schools of our land. Give success to every effort that helps students read, think, and communicate in ways that will promote an informed and responsible citizenry. Arouse curious minds to discover the wonders of your created order.

**C: Give us teachers and students who pursue excellence.**

M: Strengthen the families of our country. Give fathers and mothers a renewed commitment to be good parents. Give children and young people the wisdom to regard their parents as your representatives.

**C: Lead us to love one another as you have loved us.**

*Special prayers and intercessions may follow.*

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

*Silent prayer.*

M: Gracious Father, we pray boldly as Jesus taught, with the confidence that you will hear and with the faith that you will respond for our welfare.

**C: Amen.**



## PRAYER AND 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.**

**M:** O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. **Amen.**

## BLESSING



The Lord bless and keep you.



**A - men.**



The Lord's face ev - er shine up - on you.



**A - men.**



The Lord grant you peace for all your days.



**A - men.**

CLOSING HYMN

*“Children of the Heavenly Father”*

Hymn 502

Children of the heav’nly Father safely in his bosom gather;  
nestling bird nor star in heaven such a refuge e’er was given.

God his own doth tend and nourish; in his holy courts they flourish.  
From all evil things he spares them; in his mighty arms he bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever from the Lord his children sever;  
unto them his grace he showeth, and their sorrows all he knoweth.

Though he giveth or he taketh, God his children ne’er forsaketh;  
his the loving purpose solely to preserve them pure and holy.

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## **Enrollment Open for the 2024-2025 School Year!**

St. John Lutheran School - serving children in preschool (age 3) through grade 8 - is accepting enrollment applications for the 2024-25 school year.

We would love to discuss partnering together with you in the Christian education of your child. St. John emphasizes creating intellectual curiosity in a safe environment through experienced, caring teachers who truly get to know your child. St. John has achieved exemplary WELSSA and NCPA accreditation and our teaching proudly includes a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) transformative STEM curriculum. Our SEVP-certified international school program has extended our reach in teaching Jesus to students from across the world.

Do you know a family who you would love to see attend St. John? Recommendations and referrals from our families are our best source of meeting new families who value Christian education at St. John like we do. Please consider sharing the names and contact information of any friends and family with St. John, so that we may reach out to them.

For more information, please visit our website ([stjohnslib.com/school](https://stjohnslib.com/school)), call our office at [847-362-4424](tel:847-362-4424), or email [recruitment@stjohnslib.com](mailto:recruitment@stjohnslib.com).

We are excited to welcome our new Principal, David Retzlaff! David looks forward to working with and getting to know you. You can reach out to David at [david.retzlaff@stjohnslib.com](mailto:david.retzlaff@stjohnslib.com) with any questions or concerns.

We are eager to discuss with you how we can partner with you in your child's education!