

Prayers of Reassurance

When the wind is strong and the waves are high,
remember the words of Jesus:

Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When our dreams come to nothing,
and we wonder what lies ahead,
remember the words of Jesus:

Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When those we love disappoint us, or hurt us deeply,
remember the words of Jesus:

Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When we begin to question God's call, or doubt God's love,
remember the words of Jesus:

Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When we've lost all hope,
and don't know where to turn,
remember the words of Jesus:

Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid.

When our faith is stretched to the breaking point,
remember the words of Jesus:

Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid.

***When you go through deep waters, I will be with you.
When you pass through rivers of difficulty,
you will not be overwhelmed.
For I am the Lord, your God, your saviour.
Amen.***

A Blessing

Let us travel on with courage, trusting in God's presence
and eager to do God's will.
And may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be among you and within you
wherever you find yourself this week.

Sunday August 9th, 2020

The Benefice of the Paxtons with Diddington and Southoe
"Keeping in Touch" Edition 20: The Ninth Sunday after Trinity.
Matthew 14 v 22-23: Jesus walks on water.



Little Paxton:

**Sunday: 9.15-9.45am Morning Service with readings and prayers.
Open for quiet time/private prayer: Wednesdays 2.00pm to 4.00pm.**

Great Paxton:

**Sunday: 10.30-11.00am: Morning Service with readings and prayers.
Then open for quiet time/private prayer from 11.00am to 4.00pm.**

Southoe:

**St Leonard's Church is now open daily.
Please observe social distancing and use hand sanitizer if visiting.
Follow us on Facebook @ ThePaxtonsBenefice.**

Annette writes:

Greetings to you all on a very hot Friday afternoon. Whether you are avoiding the heat or lapping up the warmth, I trust you are keeping well.

I was wondering what we would have thought twelve months ago if we turned on our TV's or laptops and read the news with daily updates about "the virus". Or looked at our church service list and saw the reduced "live" activity. Or saw people queueing outside shops or going to funerals or weddings where everyone is wearing a face covering.

Life is certainly different than it was 12 months ago and has and still can make us feel very anxious going about our daily business.

The story from the bible this Sunday tells us of the time when the disciples witnessed Jesus walking on water. Peter tried to join him, but very quickly sunk into the waves. I love images of Jesus reaching out to save him and restore his confidence and trust. "Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid".

I hope those words are of comfort to you as we continue to negotiate this new normal. With love and prayers, Annette.

01480 211048. canonannettereed@gmail.com

The Reading for The Ninth Sunday after Trinity.

Matthew 14: 22-33

Immediately after feeding the crowd with the five loaves and two fish, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them.

And early in the morning he came walking towards them on the lake. But when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'

Peter answered him, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' He said, 'Come.' So, Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came towards Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!'

Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?' When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'

The Collect for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity

Almighty God, who sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your Church: open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.



Rev Jimmy Bear.

Reflections on Matthew 14 and Jesus walking on water.

The disciples were on the Sea of Galilee at in the middle of the night when they looked up and saw Jesus walking on the water. Matthew wrote of the boisterous winds, yet Jesus kept walking on the waves. The disciples were afraid—who wouldn't be? Who would expect to see anyone walking on water, even under the best of conditions? Then Jesus cried out and told them, *take courage, it is I! Do not be afraid!* (v 27) This is the powerful moment in the story. What will happen now? Do they move over and give Jesus a place to sit in their boat? Should they get out and join Him on the waves? Do they huddle in fear, reminding themselves that human beings can't walk on water?

Peter was the only one who responded in true faith and for Peter to say, *Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water* (v 27) was a tremendous act of faith. He was the only one who spoke that way.

This was a defining moment that pointed out Peter's great belief in Jesus, the Anointed One of God. He was so convinced that Jesus truly was the Son of God that he was ready to get out of the boat and walk on water with Him. How many of us would have done the same? Of the twelve disciples, Peter was the only one who took that massive step of faith and started walking toward Jesus. At this point, some may become a bit cynical and say, well, he got out of the boat, started walking on water, got scared and began to sink.

Indeed, he seems to have received a rebuke from Jesus: '*O you of little faith, why did you doubt?*'" (v 31) But Jesus didn't say those words to the other disciples. He directed the words "you of little faith" to Peter. The implication is the others had no faith at that moment. We can think of these words not just as words of rebuke, but words of encouragement for Peter, the one who had enough faith to at least begin walking on the water. *But when he saw [the effects of] the wind, he was frightened, and he began to sink, and he cried out, "Lord, save me!"* (v 30)

What if we see this as Jesus' great encouragement, not just to Peter, but also to us? Imagine Jesus saying about our everyday challenges: you have started so well, you took a leap of faith, but then doubt took over and you began to sink. Imagine him reaching out his hands to us to save us when all can seem hopeless. Giving us another chance time and time again. For me, this is one of the most powerful stories of Jesus – a wonderful reminder that He is always with us, truly beside us, reaching out to us in deepest trouble and in times of celebration.