

September 6, 2015

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Date: 06 September 2015

Preacher: Pastor Sherry Mahar

[0 : 0 0] ...hours. Any of the kids want to come up and sing? This is the day.

This is the day. That the Lord has made. That the Lord has made. Let us rejoice. Let us rejoice.

And be glad in it. And be glad in it. This is the day. That the Lord has made. Let us rejoice.

And be glad in it. This is the day. This is the day. That the Lord has made.

Good morning. Welcome to our church. We have a gift for our visitors at the connection site. Please fill out your friendship card for any prayers or concern. Or just so we can get to know you.

[1 : 0 2] It's fun to be part of the welcoming committee here at Hamilton Center. You welcome to worship this morning. You probably have already noticed.

Those friendship cards are really, really important. They let us know. They do let us know that you're here. But they also let us know other things about you. How we can contact you if you're interested in any information about what's going on in the church.

To get a newsletter and those kinds of things. If we have that info, we can do that. And the regular, you know, in addition to the regular worship schedule resuming next week, we also have breakfast starting up.

Breakfast is awesome here. Breakfast happens all morning long. And you want to be able to join us for that. And we need old tennis balls. We've had the preschool wing and the office wing as well.

But especially the preschool wing, the floor is re-waxed and completely refinished. And we want to put tennis balls on the bottom of the chairs so that when the kids are sliding them around and moving them around, they're not damaging the finish on the floor.

[2 : 0 5] So if you've got old tennis balls, please bring them into the office. That would be great. Will you pray with me? Heavenly Father, we give you thanks and praise for this day.

For the opportunity to gather together here to worship you. We know, Lord, that when we come expecting to meet with you, that you do meet us.

Be with us, Lord. Bless our worship and make it be a blessing to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. If you would stand as you're able and join with us in singing, My Hope is Built.

My Hope is Built on Nothing Less Than Jesus' Blood and Righteousness.

I dare not trust the sweetest praise, But wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ the solid ground I stand, All other ground is sinking sand.

[3 : 3 0] All other ground is sinking sand. When darkness fails his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace.

In every high and stormy gale, My anchor holds within the veil. On Christ the solid rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand.

All other ground is sinking sand. His hope is covered and his blood, So pour me in a whelming flood.

When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay. On Christ the solid rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand.

All other ground is sinking sand. The Lord be with you. Also with you. Will you greet one another with the peace of the Spirit?

[4 : 45] God's peace be with you. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

I'd like to invite any kids to come on up. Any kids want to come on up? Any kids want to come up? Come on guys.

No kids want to come up this morning? Come on. Oh, you're they calm. Come on, guys. Come on. Good morning. So it's the last weekend of summer.

How many of you are going to school next week? How many of you have never been to school before? Yeah.

[5 : 44] Yeah. So do you think when you were, before you had gone to school, were you ever kind of scared about it? Yeah, in between?

Have you ever been scared of anything? Like what are some things you're scared of? The dark? Yeah. That could be very scary. What else are you scared of? Spiders.

Yeah. I don't like crazy about them either. Yeah. Yeah. So if you, if you who've been through, is there anything to be scared of with school and going to school?

You think? You think it would be something you'd say, yes, you're right to be afraid to go to school the first time. You're going to meet new friends.

Yeah. It's going to be a good experience, isn't it? So, yeah. There's new friends. Right. You're going to have a great time. You don't really know what to expect too much because you're not in charge of the whole thing.

[6 : 42] But when you get there, you know it's going to be a good time. But if somebody was really nervous and scared about it, you think you could really safely say, don't be afraid. It's going to be okay.

You think you could tell them that? Yeah? Why do you think that is? Why do you think you can tell them that? Because you're not scared because you've done it. You've been there, right?

So if you can imagine, Jesus, God of the universe, created all things, and he's been there, and he knows, he knows how it's going to go, and he tells us, don't be afraid.

And so because he's been there, and because he created it, we can trust in him. And whenever we're starting to feel a little anxious, we can reach out, and we can hold his hand, and God is right there with us whenever we start to feel afraid.

So if any of you start feeling nervous, even like with spiders and things, just know God's with you no matter what. Okay? Any of you thankful for anything? So raise your hand if you want to share.

[7 : 42] No one? Yeah, you want to share? Okay. What would you like to share? My dinosaurs. Your dinosaurs. That's a great thing to be thankful for. Anyone else? Well, yeah.

My cat. Your cat? Right. Let's pray. Thanks. Lord, we thank you for dinosaurs, for cats, for our families, for school, and all the new opportunities and friends that everyone's going to make.

We thank you, especially for being with us no matter what. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. And then you guys can go off to church school. Amen. Actually, no.

Thank you. Amen. Amen. Amen. It is a wonderful blessing to gather together this morning in worship, and I'm just thankful.

You know, the children are thankful for their families and for their friends, and we all are thankful for those things, aren't we? For those people in our lives who love us and that we can love. It is such a blessing.

[8 : 53] and we come together receiving the blessings that God has given us knowing that nobody blesses us like God. Let's give back to the work of the Lord out of thanksgiving for what God has done in our lives as we bring our gifts, tithes, and offerings to the Lord.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise.

We come before you with grateful hearts, grateful for all of the blessings you pour out into our lives, grateful that we have a God who cares, who loves us, and who makes a way for us to be in relationship.

[12 : 11] Lord God, we just ask in Jesus' name that you bless this offering. Give us wisdom to know how to best use it for the furtherance of your kingdom. and pray that through the work that you have given us to do, the ministry of this church, many will come to faith in Jesus Christ and be saved.

It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Please be seated. We have the joys of the seasons, and the joys of the seasons changing, coming up, and getting back into that, the routine, you know, the routine that goes along with school being back in session and vacations kind of being over, and we feel like we can fall into a different kind of a rhythm of life.

And it's time to do that, as the times and the seasons do continue to change throughout the year. And we're blessed by that. And we have all those joys in our hearts that we bring before the Lord, knowing that God rejoices with us.

We do want to call to your attention a few concerns, though, that we want to make sure that folks are in prayer about. And please let us know in the church office if there are any concerns that you have that you'd like lifted up in prayer as well.

At Gemeinder's sister, Mary Lou Gelfaller, we need to keep their family in prayer on the death of her husband, Rudy. That's a sad thing for that family and that loss.

[13 : 53] And there are a number of people in the church in the next couple of weeks, the next month or so, who are going to be having various kinds of surgeries, some that are more serious than others, but all surgeries are serious, and we want to be keeping our brothers and sisters in prayer.

We have folks who are recovering from surgeries who are with us right now, recovering from all different kinds of things. I know you have those in your hearts as well. And so we want to lift all those things up.

And we have received word, and I'm guessing you probably heard on the news, that one of the churches in our area that does wonderful work for the Lord and has many people coming to the Lord, the chapel at Crosspoint, was vandalized yesterday morning.

Early there was a Molotov cocktail thrown through their front doors, and we understand that there was about \$10,000 worth of damage done. They are having worship this morning.

Praise God. And we will keep them in our prayers, and the staff is going to be discussing this week what this church may be able to do to give them some assistance with their needs and keep them in prayer.

[15 : 14] And all of our churches. We are living in a very difficult time where people are not treating each other very well and are causing harm to one another.

So let's take these concerns and the joys in our hearts and those that are in your hearts and turn to the Lord in prayer. Amen. Amen. Gracious Heavenly Father, you know what we need before we even ask.

We are so grateful to be able to join together in prayer, to participate with your creative power in this world, knowing that you hear us and you answer our prayers according to your perfect will in your perfect time.

Lord God, we lift up all of those who are sick and infirm in need of recovery of all different kinds of physical and spiritual and emotional problems and illnesses that we have.

Lord, we pray in Jesus' name that you touch them with your healing power. Give wisdom to their doctors and their nurses and all of the other folks who are caring for them.

[16 : 40] Give them strength of all kinds.

We just pray in Jesus' name for comfort. We pray that when each of us encounters those who are in need of a comforting word or just a hug, Lord, or a word of encouragement, we pray that you would give us words, words that are helpful.

We pray by your Holy Spirit that you send them comfort. Lord God, we pray for our children and all of those who are going to be returning to school.

Some have already, Lord. We pray for all of them that you would open their hearts and their minds to receive the learning and the instruction that you have for them.

We ask that you would guard them from those things that are not coming from you. We pray in Jesus' name for their teachers.

[17 : 54] We pray for the bus drivers and the folks who work in the cafeteria and the custodial staffs of all of our schools, Lord. We just ask that everyone, everyone who is involved with our children, that they would be blessed, that they would have wisdom that comes from you in dealing with each and every child.

Father, we pray in Jesus' name. for Christians who are enduring persecutions of all kinds, whether in this country or elsewhere in the world, Lord, we pray in Jesus' name that your assurance would be with them, that you would help them to know by your Holy Spirit that they are doing what you have called them to do.

If any of them is not, Lord, that you would call them to repent. And come into line with your will. But Lord, we pray for those who are being harmed unjustly.

We ask that you would send comfort. Make them able to be good and faithful witnesses for who you are and what you have done in the world, what you offer to the people of this world.

Father, we pray for all of those who don't know you and most especially for those who seek to do harm.

[19 : 38] We just ask in Jesus' name that you would draw them by your Spirit, that you would give each of us in our churches hearts of forgiveness, forgiveness, that you would draw them to repentance, Lord, and help them to see who you are and to come to salvation.

Now, Lord, we pray in Jesus' name that as we hear your word, as we continue in our worship through listening and through singing and through hearing the message, Lord God, that it would be a blessing to us, that we would be transformed in some way, called and drawn to be more like Jesus.

We pray that the word would wash over us. We pray for Pastor Sherry as well as she brings the message that you have put on her heart for us this day.

We pray that you would anoint her and empower her to deliver it as you have called. We pray that all of our worship would be a blessing to you and that we would leave this place empowered and encouraged to be a light in this dark world.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[21 : 14] Amen. Amen.

I never get to read the word around here. Yay! I get to preach and I get to pray. I get to do all kinds of things, but reading the word, that doesn't happen too often.

Praise God. This morning's reading is from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 14, verses 22 through 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. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from the land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

During the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified.

[22 : 52] 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 do you doubt? And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.

Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, Truly, you are the Son of God. this is the gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. President is secure, Tony, I'm clearing the area.

[24 : 16] Nice work. Ready, sir? What do you mean, ready? I got you.

Relax. I got you. Just look at me. I can't reach any further, and you can't stay there, all right? You gotta let go. You gotta let go.

I'll catch you, I promise. I promise. I'll catch you, I promise.

And he missed. Let us pray. Lord, there are areas in our lives where we are afraid and are not fully trusting you.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit and reveal to us the areas in our lives where we need to step out in faith, trusting in you. Lord, give us your power, your courage, and your strength to do so so we may experience the many miracles you have planned for our lives.

[25 : 26] Amen. It was about three years ago, a little longer than three years ago, and I just, we were on the mission trip with the youth, and at the end of each week with the mission trip, we do a fun activity, and we decided we were gonna do whitewater rafting.

Now, I had whitewater rafting years before at Letchworth, and that was really fun, and it's not scary at all because, you know, if you get into trouble, you can actually step out. It's about this deep, and you just move the boat. It's no big deal. The year before, we whitewater rafted, and it was a lot of fun.

Woo-hoo! Rat in the waves. Woo-hoo! And it's great. So I'm almost thinking, hey, whitewater rafting, this is like it can be an every year thing. No big, yeah, this is great. So we're getting in the boat. We're all strapped up with our life observers.

We've got our helmets. We've got our paddles, and we're in the bus heading up there, and you know how, like in an airplane, they get up and they give you all the rules and how to do it, and nobody really pays attention. But for some reason, there was something in the look in this guy's eye and the way he was speaking that made me go, I need to listen to this guy.

And thankfully, I did. Pull your knees up. Make sure, because otherwise, your legs will get caught in the rocks and you could drown. When you get trapped underneath, you've got to make sure you get to the edge of the boat.

[26 : 41] Okay, all right. It's still going to be fun. Yeah. So we get in the boat, and we're all divided up into separate boats. My son is actually on a separate boat with all the rest of the boys and a guide. I'm on a boat with a bunch of youth and a couple of adults.

And we're getting out there and we're paddling. Now, the thing is, you have to follow your guide because they said that if the boat goes the wrong way, you could get trapped and you could get sucked down in. So your guide is saying, you have to paddle, right?

Okay, now you've got to paddle left. Okay, right, and you've got to, and they're screaming, go, go. So we're getting to the first one and it's, and we're going and I'm thinking, oh yeah, all right, here it comes, here it comes.

And we're paddling, and we're like, go, go, go. See, the thing is, that year, the rains had been extreme and the waters that were normally just a lot of fun were super high and the waves were violently strong and our boat flipped over and we all fell out and I got trapped underneath and I'm underneath and I've got this much space for any air and I'm not a swimmer, I'm honestly afraid of water and I'm trying to get out to the side of the boat and I'm tucking my legs up while I'm trying to swim at the same time thinking there's rocks under there and every time I get to the side of the boat the waves would take the raft and I'm in the middle again and I'm trying to get off and I'm trying to get off and finally, three different times this happens and I finally get to the side of the boat and the boat flips over and I'm grabbing onto the side and Carissa,

God bless her, she swims up and she grabs on the side and she goes, don't worry Mrs. Mahar, God's got us and bam, I get hit by a wave again and I'm like, ah, God's got us yeah, yeah he does, yeah he does in the meantime, up underneath the raft I see this material floating up underneath there and I'm, I started thinking, it's one of my kids, one of my kids is strapped under there and I'm starting, we got it, get it, who's under there, who's under there and it ends up being that it was the guide's bag that had been strapped on there and it was just a, but in the meantime, I couldn't, as the waves were so high, I couldn't see everybody and this was the first rapid, the first one, it was level three, the rest were fours and fives, like what's a five, a waterfall, are you serious, I went through the rest of the thing knowing my son was on a totally different raft, I had no control over that and not having any trust in my guide whatsoever, feeling completely unsafe, terrified for me, even more terrified for the youth that I was responsible for and we had to go through what I considered not on experience and they just say whitewater rafting off my bucket list and I say, have you, have you ever been afraid?

[29 : 47] Have you ever really been afraid? I mean, yeah, I'm not crazy about spiders, that sort of thing, you know, I'm afraid of certain things but really afraid. There are times in our lives when we're just afraid.

This story in the scripture we heard today is about Peter and we get a little taste of fear but I wanted to put it all in perspective of the background leading into this.

You see, the disciples before this even happened had already been in a boat with Jesus and they were in this huge storm and Jesus made the storm stop.

So they knew he could do that. They experienced his power and then Jesus took his 12 apostles and he said, I am giving you the authority. You're going to go out and you're going to cast out demons and you're going to heal the sick and sure enough they were filled with his power and they went out and they were casting out demons and they were healing the sick and they were filled with the power of God.

They were doing miraculous things and then right before this story Jesus fed the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish. Miracles they're experiencing firsthand and it says that immediately after feeding the 5,000 Jesus made the disciples get into the boat while he dismissed the crowd.

[31 : 10] I thought it was a little weird honestly. Why would Jesus by himself want to be the one dismissing everybody and send them out alone? I thought, aha. Because right after you experience all these powerful things you're going to head into some testing because God wants you to come stronger in your faith and I believe Jesus knew this was going to happen and sent them out to strengthen their faith.

So Jesus sends them out in the boat knowing that a test is happening. Now I personally don't like to be tested but in Romans 5, 3 through 4 you know whenever I'm thinking why is this test coming I'm reminded of this and it says we glory in our sufferings which is hard because we know that suffering this is true produces perseverance perseverance character and character hope.

So if everything was always light and easy we wouldn't have a strength of character we wouldn't have strong hope we'd be very shallow. So the disciples are heading out to sea and it's dark and it's just like the waters for the white water rafting it says buffeted the words in the original Greek it means violent torrential tormented horrendous these waves they're going over it they're paddling and paddling and it's the middle of the night it's dark they're miles out they're too far to go back they're too far they're not getting anywhere this way and they're trying and they're trying and they're not getting anywhere so it's dark and they're tired and they're really discouraged.

Now Jesus in the meantime says you know I want to get to the other side I'm going to take the fastest way I'm just going to go walking across he decides to go walking across the sea of Galilee and the disciples are paddling paddling paddling they see something it's like ah it's a ghost and they cried out in fear now immediately Jesus calmed their spirits but why didn't they recognize him?

well let's see it was dark they were tired more importantly it was unexpected I mean who would expect to see Jesus out in the middle of the sea who would expect Jesus right there at that time when we start realizing that we're in the dark and we're paddling the winds and the waves of life and we're tired are we expecting to see God?

[33 : 40] we need to be because Jesus is there but we gotta watch gotta watch immediately Jesus responds to their fear take courage it is I don't be afraid now courage in the original Greek is very interesting it's not just like be courageous it's actually be bolded be bolstered within because you are warmed up kind of like the heat of the Holy Spirit warming you up and giving you the power to be bold that is a great word so Peter hears this take courage it's I don't be afraid and Peter's like I think I'm gonna test this because again it's unexpected I'm not really sure it's really Jesus which is really a wise thing to do I mean if you're going through a struggle of some kind and you suddenly get this thing and you think it's God speaking to you it's wise to test that is it it doesn't match up with scripture does it do you have Christians saying yes that's I feel that's the way it's going is it match up with the Holy Spirit revealing things to you in prayer he's testing it and now Peter could have asked him any sort of questions he could have said so Jesus bunch of people were just fed recently how did that happen if you're really

Jesus you'll know the answer or he could have said yeah so where's your favorite place to pray or what's your favorite color you could have asked him any sort of thing but instead Jesus or Peter asked Jesus to give him his power fill him with his miraculous power so that he could have the miraculous ability to be where Jesus was and do what Jesus was doing which was walking on water and Jesus said come now Peter's possible responses could have been yeah I hear you saying that and I don't think it's you I'm not going to go to know or he could have said oh it is you but you know I was just joking about that whole walking on water thing I just really don't need to be doing that I'm just perfectly fine in the boat how many times in our lives have we been called by God to come and we choose not to but Peter because he knew Jesus because he believed it really was

Jesus and he had a faith built through relationship and experience believed that if Jesus told him he could do something that he really could do it remember he had the authority to cast out demons to heal the sick he'd just seen this miracle with the 5,000 he knew Jesus had power and so Peter takes the leap of faith and got out of the boat that is huge if you can imagine if you can imagine you're in the boat you're in the boat and you've got these waves and the waves are going and the waves are going and you find out it's Jesus and you're like okay I'm gonna do it I don't know about you but I'm gonna be like oh no no but he got stuck right out into the water and he went toward Jesus and he was walking on the water but it says that when he saw the wind and the waves he began to sink and he called out

Jesus save me now immediately Jesus reached down and saved him and he said oh you of little faith why did you doubt I put myself in Peter's position and I seriously a little faith I'm sorry I I got out of the boat I stepped onto the water I was walking on water I was doing it I had faith I had great faith but you know what Jesus I was walking on faith and I could feel my feet being wet my waves were still crashing over me the wind was still hitting me the storm was still circling around me and frankly it felt like you were going to drop me and I started to question whether or not you were going to really be there for me at all so yeah that's when

I doubted that's when I doubted Peter had great faith but doubt comes and when does doubt come for Peter and when does doubt come for us it comes when God doesn't do what we want or expect see when Jesus came the very first part of the story in verse 27 he says take courage be emboldened by my spirit be warned by my spirit it is I it is I is actually translated I am it's the same way that God refers to himself all the way through the Old Testament it's not just hey don't worry guys it's just me it's Jesus don't be afraid it's be emboldened by my spirit I am I am the creator of the universe I got this thing don't be afraid don't be afraid you know we start to question though does he really have me is he really in control we expect

[39 : 23] God to do what we want the way we want it as opposed to what God wants when we're praying and we say the prayer the Lord's prayer that we do every week how much do we really feel and how much in our personal lives we really feel it when we say thy kingdom come thy will be done because really most likely more than often we're coming to God we say listen God did the research figured the whole thing out got a plan so I need you to bless that one make that one change their job that one's going to heal that and this one's going to get better and this is the way it's going to work right it's very hard to say God I'm placing everything in your hands and whatever happens I know you got this thing because we want to be in control but God is in control and not us and God is not our magic genie that we cast our demands on when things are not as expected we need to trust in knowing

God's love and God's promise for us in Jeremiah 29 11 it says for I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord plans to prosper you and not to harm you plans to give you a hope and a future but I gotta tell you I come to God with plans all the time I got everything laid out and not once has it ever worked out the way I had it planned if I were to actually say that when I was little and I laid out my life it was gonna go this way no it didn't at all but I can see God through it looking back the time there were really really scary times and at times you know I said I'm not a swimmer and this this past summer we're on vacation and I was talking to some people I said I said you know I'm not a swimmer I mean I just seem to have a body that doesn't even float

I can't get the hang of this thing of course everybody floats it's like no I'm telling you I don't even float and they're like okay let's see so we're in the pool but I go in the pool but I mainly just walk around in a circle so I can get the dirt in the middle so I can vacuum it you know every once in a while grab a floaty and you know I'm not a swimmer so I'm in the pool and I'm 50 years old trying to do this right I'm in the pool and I'm like and I go and it's like see I start to sink and they're like well you gotta lean back it's like okay so then I start to lean back and they're like well you gotta get your head wet it's like I don't want to get my head wet I should be able to float without getting my head wet no you gotta be able to lean back and you gotta get your head wet now relax okay I'm relaxed now breathe oh okay I'm floating I don't know this is

I fully expect I should be able to float without without having to get my head wet but you know we're not able to float without getting our head wet we're not able to get through this thing without getting wet the rest of the disciples they stayed in the boat now we are all in many areas of our lives in metaphorical boats it's an area of our life where it may be dark maybe that we're not going anywhere maybe that we're fighting the winds and waves of life and the boats come in many forms it could be that you know you're struggling with your job with where you're studying or the way you're leading your family your finances your relationships the way you're maybe navigating some painful experience how you treat yourself or how you treat others or it may even be a sin that you've become really comfortable with and you're in a boat and you're being rocked around you're not getting anywhere and you're paddling and you're paddling and you're paddling and God's saying

I'm here come get out of that boat now as I was mentioning any of those things if throughout this you start thinking yeah that is there it may just very well be the Holy Spirit saying to you come we gotta be courageous in that 2 Timothy 1 7 says for God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind but how do we get the courage to get out of the boat in Romans 4 20 through 21 we're talking about Abraham and his strong faith and it's in the Amplified Bible dispersion because it has the fullness of the word English language doesn't do it justice it says no belief or distrust made him waver or doubtingly question concerning the promises of God but he grew strong and was empowered by faith as yes he gave praise and glory to God fully satisfied and assured that God was able and mighty to keep his word and do what he promised as we praise and glory

[45 : 06] God but how big is our God our God if made in our image which is what we really do a lot is weak is small and has limitations the great I am is greater is stronger and more awesome in power than we can even imagine it's like the kids song our God is a great big God and holds us in his hands how big is our God the other disciples when Jesus grabbed Peter and they got back in the boat they it says that they were they they were amazed and astounded said truly you are the son of God but in Mark 6 it said something a little different it added to this and it said they were utterly astounded that they did not understand the loaves but their hearts were hardened their hearts were hardened there may be some of you here today who have started on a journey of faith but in the process the winds and the waves of life never stopped and your hearts were hardened you may be having a really hard time trusting in

God and you may be afraid to get out of whatever boat God is calling you out of there have been times in my life when I've stepped out of the boat I've stepped out in faith and I experienced God great power do a miraculous thing it was you know you know you're doing the right thing and actually it goes right and there are other times when I stepped out of the boat in faith and the winds and the waves didn't stop and I was tossed around and I began to sink because I started to be afraid and my heart was hardened I didn't understand why God wouldn't have made those things stop I couldn't comprehend why he would have ever allowed us to go through some of these things I was disappointed with what

God was doing in my life and it really put a big block in my life it took a long time sometimes I still struggle because there's so much pain in the world but as I look back I see God so as I look back and I see God then I praise my glory God because I know that if God was there then God is here with me now and God will be there and each time I go through this I grow stronger in my faith I will never once say that I got it all together I'm on a faith journey just like everybody else and sometimes I'm heading in the right direction and sometimes I'm sinking but Proverbs 3 5-6 says trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding in all your ways submit to him and he will make your path straight there are times I've actually even stayed in the boat you know I was called to be a pastor 10 years ago 10 years ago and I looked up and said no

I don't think so that's kind of crazy no I'm not doing that and God kept saying come come come and I get to the side no I'm not doing that but you know after that whitewater rafting trip when I experienced saying God where are you in all this why are we why it was at that time that my faith was strengthened and I said alright I got it I felt like God was saying really why aren't you trusting me come and I said okay I'm gonna do that I'm gonna do this thing and I trying to walk on water and then now actually God has called me to go to seminary and when I first heard that I was like okay I'm gonna test this thing you really got really God say this yeah okay so you know

I have a family right you know I work over 50 hours a week right you know I haven't taken a test in over 25 years right this is terrifying but I'm going I'm signed up for seminary prayers please yeah because God throughout the entire process is saying trust me but the thing is going forward yes I'm trusting in God but I know I'm gonna get wet I'm ready for it because I know God is there with me through it so you the thing is when we're stuck in a boat we're facing the winds and waves of life and they will come they will come we have a couple choices we can stay in the boat and struggle our whole lives and never experience the miracles God has planned for us or we can step out of the boat but we step out of the boat with our own expectations placing what we want and what we desire on God and when that doesn't happen because it never does have our hearts become hardened and sink or we can respond to God's call to step out in faith and trust

[51 : 00] God because we have a relationship with the great I am and allow that experience to not get sinking but instead strengthen us help us to grow more in our faith in our perseverance in our courage so we have more hope Philippians 4 13 says I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me and if I didn't have Christ in my life I would have been sunk and never coming up it's not a Pollyannic version where we're going to pretend the storm is not there got to fix our eyes on Jesus yes but we know the storm is there and we walk through it in spite of it filled with the power of Christ because if we really believe that God does love us we need to trust that God will get us through even when we don't understand at all Romans 8 28 says and we know that in all things

God works for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purpose we live in a broken world we ourselves are broken and it will often feel as if we're in the middle of a sea stuck in a boat fighting the winds and waves and going nowhere keep your eyes and hearts open for Jesus you may not recognize him at first because life has become dark and you've become tired but Jesus is there and he is calling you he is calling me he is calling all of us to do something miraculous something wonderful that he has planned for our lives and it's going to take a lot of faith it's going to take a lot of courage but he's calling us out upon the waters he's calling us out to step out in faith and trust that God is great God is in control God does love you and that he has you in the palm of his hand no matter how strong the winds get let our faith be without borders that hold us back so we can experience the miracle of walking on water with Jesus

I'd like to invite you all to stand at your able as we sing together oceans you call me out upon the waters the great unknown where feet may fail and there I find you in the mystery in oceans deep my faith will stand and I will call upon your name and keep my eyes above the waves when oceans rise my soul will rest in your embrace when I am yours you are mine raise the bounds and deepest waters the sovereign hand will be my guide where feet may fail and fear surround me you never fail and you won't start now and I will call upon your name keep my eyes above the waves when oceans rise my soul will rest your embrace for I have yours you are mine spirit lead me me where my trust is without borders let me walk upon the waters wherever you would call me take me deeper than my need could ever wander and my faith will be made stronger in the presence of my savior and I will call upon your name keep my eyes above the waves when oceans rise my soul

will rest in your embrace for I am yours and you are mine we are gods he holds us in the palm of our hand is walking besides us carrying us through our whole lives are placing in his hands hands on knees in worship giving all I am to see in your face Lord all I am is yours my whole life I praise in your hands

God of mercy humble I bow down in your presence and your throne I called you answered and you came to my rescue and I want to be where you are my my whole life I place in your hands God of mercy humbled I bow down in your presence at your home throne

[59 : 28] I loved you and saw and you came to my rescue and I want to be where you are in my life be lifted high in our world be lifted high in our love be lifted high in my life be lifted high in our world be lifted high in our love be lifted high

I call you and saw and you came to my rescue and I want to be where you are God will rescue us and he will lead us into some miracles that we can't even fathom because our God is greater our God is stronger our God is more powerful he is the great I am and he's got this thing he is in control he is doing amazing things when we get out of the boat water you turned into wine open the eyes of the light there's no one like you into the darkness you shine out of the ashes we rise there's no one like you not like you our

God is stronger our God is stronger God you are higher than any other our God is healer awesome in power our God our God is stronger into the darkness you shine out of the ashes we rise there's no one like you none like you our God is greater our God is stronger God you are higher than any other our God is healer awesome and power our God our God our God is greater our

God is stronger God you are higher than any other our God is greater awesome in power our God our God and if our God is for us and who would ever stop us and if our God is with us let walk and stand and dance and if our God is for us and who would ever stop us and if our God is with us then what can stand against what can stand against I'm not a trigger I'm not a summer I'm not higher than any time love

God God is awesome and power our God our God our God is favor our God is stronger I do all like you than any other our God is healer awesome and power our God our God God praise God please be seated no I'm really thankful for this story because it gives me hope and it gives me strength.

[65 : 21] But I'm also thankful for this story because I, like Peter, have sunk at times. And I praise God that Jesus is there when it happens.

Let us confess to the Lord. Lord, we are sorry for not trusting you, for not giving you everything, and for wanting to be in control.

Forgive us for our sins. Forgive us for our doubt. Fill us with your strength. Fill us with your power.

Fill us with your courage. As we hope in you, we thank you for your forgiveness and for your mercy.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. When Peter began to sink, he cried out, Lord, save me!

[66 : 27] And it says immediately, immediately, Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. So hear the good news. Christ died for us while we were yet sinners.

And this proves God's love for you and for me. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Glory to God. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

E'er a few visions■ Amen.

[67 : 29] Amen. Amen. See you shall not drown If you walk amid the burning flames You shall not be hung If you stand before the power of love And death is at your side Know that I am with you through it all Be not afraid I go before you always Come, follow me And I will give you rest

Amen And it doesn't matter who we are or what we've done Or what's happened in our lives God welcomes us God welcomes us To come to the table To come and receive from God All that God has for us To partake In the salvation That God has granted And made possible Everyone is welcome If you love God Earnestly repent of your sin And seek to live in peace As a disciple of Jesus Christ You are welcome to come to the table This morning In the United Methodist Church There are no barriers It's all about Where your heart is With God If you want to receive The grace of God

Come this morning and receive Come expect in Because God will need you You are welcome The Lord be with you Lift up your hearts Let us give thanks To the Lord our God Thanks and praise Glory and honor Are rightly yours Our Lord and God For you alone are worthy In time beyond our dreaming You brought forth life Out of darkness And in the love of Christ Your son You set man and woman At the heart of your creation You loved the world so much That you sent your only son To bring us life eternal Dying He destroyed our death Alleluia Rising he restored our life

Alleluia And so we praise you God With the faith of every time and place Joining with the choirs of angels And the whole creation In their eternal hymn Holy Holy Holy Lord God of power and might Heaven and earth Are full of your glory Hosanna in the highest Blessed is he who comes In the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest We thank you That you called a covenant people To be a light to the nations Through Moses you taught us To love your law And in the prophets You cried out for justice In the fullness of your mercy You became one with us In Jesus Christ Who gave himself up for us On the cross You made us alive together with him That we may rejoice in his presence

And share in his peace Always On the night in which he gave himself up for us He took bread And he gave thanks to you He broke the bread And gave it to his disciples Saying take Eat This is my body Which is given for you Do this in remembrance of me And when the supper was over He took the cup And he gave you thanks and praise And he gave it to his disciples And he said Drink from this all of you This is the cup of my blood The blood of the new covenant Poured out for you Poured out for many For the forgiveness of sin Do this as often as you drink it In remembrance of me And so in remembrance of these

[72 : 48] Your mighty acts in Jesus Christ We offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving As a holy and living sacrifice In union with Christ's offering for us As we proclaim the mystery of faith Christ has died Christ is risen Christ will come again Pour out your Holy Spirit On us gathered here And on these gifts of bread and wine Make them be for us The body and blood of Christ That we may be for the world The body of Christ Redeemed by his blood By your spirit Make us one with Christ One with each other And one in ministry to all the world Until Christ comes And final victory And we feast at his heavenly banquet Through your son Jesus Christ With the Holy Spirit In your holy church

All honor and glory Is yours almighty Father Now and forever Amen Shall we pray together With the consonants of disciples Of Jesus Christ The prayer he taught us 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 Will those serving this morning Please come forward Amen Amen Amen

Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[76 : 41] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[79 : 41] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[83 : 11] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. And ride those waves.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Thank you.