



# 44B - PENTECOST 4 - ONLINE LITURGY

Big questions

## Abstract

40 He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"  
41 They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves  
obey him!"  
Mark 4:40-41

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## OLD TESTAMENT

*Job 38:1–11*

**38** Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. He said:

<sup>2</sup> “Who is this that obscures my plans  
with words without knowledge?

<sup>3</sup> Brace yourself like a man;  
I will question you,  
and you shall answer me.

<sup>4</sup> “Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation?  
Tell me, if you understand.

<sup>5</sup> Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know!  
Who stretched a measuring line across it?

<sup>6</sup> On what were its footings set,  
or who laid its cornerstone—

<sup>7</sup> while the morning stars sang together  
and all the angels shouted for joy?

<sup>8</sup> “Who shut up the sea behind doors  
when it burst forth from the womb,

<sup>9</sup> when I made the clouds its garment  
and wrapped it in thick darkness,

<sup>10</sup> when I fixed limits for it  
and set its doors and bars in place,

<sup>11</sup> when I said, ‘This far you may come and no farther;  
here is where your proud waves halt’? <sup>i</sup>

## GOSPEL

### *Mark 4:35–41*

<sup>35</sup> That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> 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?”

<sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

<sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

<sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!” <sup>ii</sup>

*respond*

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God**

## 44B - Pentecost 4 - Online Liturgy

### Big questions

SUNDAY, JUNE 20, 2021 | AFTER PENTECOST PROPER 7 YEAR B

*Old Testament & Psalm, Option I*

*Old Testament* (1 Samuel 17:1a, 4–11, 19–23) 32–49

*Psalm* Psalm 9:9–20

*or*

*Old Testament & Psalm, Option II*

*Old Testament* 1 Samuel 17:57–18:5, 18:10–16

*Psalm* Psalm 133

*or*

*Old Testament & Psalm, Option III*

*Old Testament* Job 38:1–11

*Psalm* Psalm 107:1–3, 23–32

*New Testament* 2 Corinthians 6:1–13

*Gospel* Mark 4:35–41<sup>iii</sup>

Jesus leaves the crowds after a full day of teaching to get some rest. Jesus sleeps in the boat while the boat becomes engulfed in a storm. Because of the location of the Sea of Galilee, storms occur quickly and violently. The disciples are astonished that he is not alert to the circumstances and their fear. When they eventually wake him, he calms the storm and questions their lack of trust in God.

Perhaps the biggest faith question there is the one that the disciples ask of Jesus when he is asleep: ‘do you not care that we are perishing?’ Our big questions may be different, but it is important to feel heard as we wrestle with challenges of life in general and in following Jesus.

This week we explore being heard in the storms of our lives.<sup>iv</sup>

	<b>Pre-Service</b>
	<b>Introit</b> P&W #428 – “Fear Not” Pringle (I have the video)
	<b>Greeting</b>  May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all  <b>and also with us</b>

## We Gather

### Call to Worship

Jesus on the boat in the storm said:

‘Peace! Be still!’...and there was a great calm.

We come to God, just as we are.

Sometimes at ease.

Sometimes confused by life’s storms.

Let us trust God with our big questions,  
and listen for God’s still small word  
to restore us to a sense of peace.

### Acknowledgements

This is God’s land.

Many have gone before who have honoured God  
by caring for this land,  
in the ways they have lived and  
the stories they have shared.

We give thanks for the Wathawurrung people  
who have held as sacred  
the duty of protecting the land  
and living in harmony with it.

May God honour and bless them  
now and to eternity.

### Prayer of Approach

We gather here as the people of God  
having willingly stepped into the boat to follow Jesus.

Along the way, we find ourselves battered by the storms of life  
and our nerves sometimes fail us.

We come here to remind ourselves  
to fix our eyes on God who is our shelter and our strength,  
who remembers those in need,  
comforts the afflicted,  
and is known for acts of justice.

Come let us worship God together.

Amen

### Prayer of Confession

Gracious God,

Forgive us for believing that the storms of life  
are more powerful than you.

Forgive us for trusting in our own strength  
and leaning on our own understanding.

Forgive our when we think you’ve fallen asleep  
and abandoned us.

Forgive us for turning on one another when things go wrong.

[Silent Prayer]

Forgive us, O God.

Amen

	<p><b>Words of Assurance</b></p> <p>Lord Jesus,                          you do not let us sink when our faith is going under.        You do not let our boats overturn when the seas of our life get rough.        You do not let our questions swamp us or our failures destroy us.</p> <p>Rather, you forgive us, you save us,                          you encourage, challenge and calm us –        and for this we are thankful.</p> <p>Our sins are forgiven  <b>Thanks be to God</b>        Amen.</p>
	<p><b>Hymn/song</b>        TIS #217 – “Love Divine, all loves excelling”</p>
	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Jesus leaves the crowds after a full day of teaching to get some rest. Jesus sleeps in the boat while the boat becomes engulfed in a storm. Because of the location of the Sea of Galilee, storms occurs quickly and violently. The disciples are astonished that he is not alert to the circumstances and their fear. When they eventually wake him, he calms the storm and questions their lack of trust in God.</p> <p>Perhaps the biggest faith question there is the one that the disciples ask of Jesus when he is asleep: ‘do you not care that we are perishing?’ Our big questions may be different, but it is important to feel heard as we wrestle with challenges of life in general and in following Jesus.</p> <p>This week we explore being heard in the storms of our lives.</p> <p><i>Let us pray</i></p> <p>God of our ups and downs,                          we come together in your name                                          with concerns in our hearts and questions in our minds,                                          with troubles in our lives and fears for our world.</p> <p>We come trusting that you                          share our concerns and hear our questions,                          embrace our troubles and know our fears.</p> <p>We come trusting that you never give up on us,                          that you never abandon us, never dismiss us.</p> <p>For you are a God of love, of peace, of power –                          you are our God.</p> <p><b>Amen.</b></p>
	<p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Old Testament    Job 38:1–11        Gospel             Mark 4:35–41</p> <p><i>respond</i>        For the word of the Lord  <b>Thanks be to God</b></p>

	<b>Hymn/Song</b>
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	TIS #59 (AHB #10) – “All people that on earth do dwell”
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**Explore the Word**

Calming Of The Tempest

Mark 4:35-41

Victor Hugo, who is famous for his novel the Hunchback of Notre Dame,  
also wrote a story called "Ninety-Three."

It tells of a ship caught in a dangerous storm.

At the height of the storm,  
the frightened sailors heard a terrible crashing noise below deck.

They knew at once that this new noise came from a cannon,  
that had broken loose.

It was crashing into the side of the ship with terrible impact.

Knowing that it could cause the ship to sink,  
two brave sailors volunteered to retie the loose cannon.

They knew the danger of a shipwreck from the cannon  
was greater than the fury of the storm.

That is like human life.

Storms of life may blow about us,  
but it is not these exterior storms that pose the gravest danger.

The furious storm outside may be overwhelming  
but what is going on inside can pose the greater threat to our lives.

Our only hope lies in conquering that wild enemy.

Unfortunately storms that rage within us are difficult to cure ourselves.

It takes the power of God's love, as revealed in Jesus Christ.

He is our only hope of stilling the tempest that can harm our souls and cripple our lives.

That's what the disciples learned this day on the Sea of Galilee.

They thought the danger lie outside the boat.

They would soon learn the real danger lie within the boat,  
within their own hearts.

In a word, they lacked faith.

And without faith

their lives were at risk to the storms which would inevitably come.

And come they did and come they will.

So what can we learn from this boat ride in the storm?

We learn that storms can come suddenly.

It had been a memorable afternoon.

He told them that the kingdom was like a farmer who went out to sow seeds.

He compared the Kingdom to the small mustard seed.

He told many other stories,

but as the day ended it was time to depart

and Jesus told his disciples that they had to go to the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

Why leave now, the disciples must have asked?

They were right on the verge of success.

On the other side were only the pagan Gerasenes'.

As the late afternoon faded into dusk, trouble began to loom.  
The stilled waters began to churn  
and the large waves threatened to swamp the tiny boat.  
The disciples must have thought that by telling them to cross over,  
Jesus had led them to their destruction, not their salvation.

See, trouble can come just that fast in your life.  
Everything can be going beautifully  
then all of a sudden everything in your life can be turned upside down.  
It doesn't take long for the storms to come.

Amazingly, as this violent storm was taking place, Jesus was asleep.  
He doesn't even know that a storm is raging.  
He can't even hear the howl of the wind.  
He doesn't even feel the waves crashing into the side of the boat.  
Doesn't he care?  
Teacher, don't you care if we drown?  
or Doesn't God care about what I am going through?

The sudden furious storm outside may be overwhelming  
but what is going on inside can pose the greater threat to our lives.  
Who will calm the tempest?  
Who will the waves obey, "Quiet, be still!"

Storms can also come suddenly, and they can make you lose direction.  
Many of the disciples were experienced fisherman.  
They had been caught in storms before:  
so, why all the fear in this storm?  
One obvious answer is this was a storm unlike any other.  
Possibly, but I don't think so. I think this storm was like any other.  
It is possible they are chastising Jesus for not pulling his weight.  
The disciples find Jesus asleep and they say,  
"Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"  
In other words, are you just going to sleep there or you going to get up and help?  
Get up and grab an oar Jesus; we need all hands on deck.

It is at this moment that the unexpected happens.  
Jesus gets up. He doesn't grab an oar - He calms the storm.  
And this is why the disciples were terrified. Look at the story.  
The disciples are certainly frightened by the ferocity of the storm.  
They need everyone to pitch in but Jesus rebukes the storm, "Quiet! Be still!"  
The disciples are stunned.  
They were looking for human help. What they got was divine authority.  
They were looking for a hand. What they got was a God.  
They were terrified and asked each other,  
"Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

Which would you fear?  
The storm or the one who masters the storm?  
It is here that they lose direction.  
Jesus asks, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"



They don't know who it is that rides in the boat with them.  
They were frightened during the storm  
    but after the storm they were terrified.  
Why? Because of he who was in the boat.  
    Their real problem is not the storm outside but the storm of doubt and unbelief inside.

Where do you turn during the storm?  
    The answer will depend upon where you place your ultimate loyalty.  
When we find ourselves sinking in the midst of a storm,  
    where else are you going but God?

I do not believe that in the boat that day on the Sea of Galilee  
    that Jesus rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith in his ability to calm the storm.  
What I believe is that Jesus is disappointed  
    that they do not yet understand who he is.  
If they understood that, then they would not fear the sea.

When you find yourself in the midst of a storm and the boat is sinking  
    Only Jesus has the words of eternal life. Only God is the Holy One.  
    Only Jesus can calm the tempest. Only God delivers.

Storms can come suddenly.  
    They can make you lose direction.  
And if we do not understand who it is that is in the boat with us  
    then our fear of the storm has the power to paralyze.  
When Jesus woke up, he rebuked not only the storm but the disciples.  
    "Why are you afraid," he asked. "Have you no faith?"  
Now, let's be clear about this.  
    The promise that is made to us is that of God's presence,  
    no more, no less.  
In the midst of the storm, God will be in the boat with you.

No need to panic, even though the situation may appear bleak.  
    The Lord of the Church is in the boat with you.  
    You need not forsake your witness.  
    The Lord of History is in the boat with you.  
    You need not become immobilized.  
    The Lord of the storm is in the boat with you. That is the promise.

Will the clouds dissipate immediately? No guarantee.  
Will you no longer have to struggle with problems? It is never promised.  
Will you in future prosper, as the T.V. ministers assure you? Probably not.

Well, you say, it doesn't sound as though the promise that is given is all that great.  
    Perhaps not.  
But it got Noah through the storm.  
It got the Jews through the wilderness.  
It got Mary through her pregnancy.  
It got Jesus through the crucifixion,  
    and it will be sufficient to get you through the night.  
Amen.

	<p><b>Hymn/song</b>  <b>Comfort Comfort Mann</b></p>
	<p><b>Prayers for all people</b>  The response after each bidding is:  Lord, <b>hear our prayer.</b></p> <p>We open our hearts to the needs of the world  and cry with the tears of the sorrowful.  We mourn with the grieving souls of the world  and feel their loss and share their pain.  We share our love with the lonely and loveless  and feel the pulse of their life.  We offer our touch to the untouchable folk  who are shunned by a passing throng.  We catch the whisper of the unspoken truths  that burden the lives of so many.  We decipher the cries of a traumatised world  for whom peace is an impossible dream.  Hear our prayers, Lord, and let us be the servants  you would have us be.  Amen.</p> <p>In the light of the extension of restrictions,  we remember in prayer today:  those whose businesses are sinking...  those drowning in debt...  those going under with stress...</p> <p>Faithful God, may they know you care.  Loving God, may they trust you're there.  Saving God, hear our prayer.</p> <p>We pray for those embroiled in stormy and violent relationships,  among and within nations, communities, and families...  those played out on the world's stage...  those hidden behind closed doors...</p> <p>Faithful God, may they know you care.  Loving God, may they trust you're there.  Saving God, hear our prayer.</p> <p>We pray for those whose cries go unheard,  especially those tortured and executed by brutal regimes...  for those whose questions go unanswered,  especially those searching for justice...  for those whose pleas go unheeded,  especially those on the edge unable to access mental health services...  for those whose needs go unmet,  especially in the Yemen, in Tigray, and in all places of poverty</p>

	<p>where the resources available are inadequate to feed the hungry and starving...</p> <p>Faithful God, may they know you care. Loving God, may they trust you're there. Saving God, hear our prayer.</p> <p>We pray for the church as it seeks to address and answer big questions, questions about life and death, about gender and sexuality, about faith and finance, about race and responsibilities, about integrity and healing...</p> <p>Faithful God, may they know you care. Loving God, may they trust you're there. Saving God, hear our prayer.</p> <p>In Jesus' name. Amen.</p>
	<p><b>Hymn/song</b> TIS #595 (AHB #514) – "O Jesus, I have promised"</p>
	<p><b>We are sent out</b></p> <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace</p>
	<p><b>Benediction</b></p>
	<p><b>Thank you</b></p>

<sup>i</sup> Revised Common Lectionary. (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

<sup>ii</sup> Revised Common Lectionary. (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

<sup>iii</sup> Revised Common Lectionary. (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.

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