

Don't Miss the Boat – July 26th

Welcome to the first service of our Summer Worship series.

We had planned - well before Covid and the lock-down - to do things a little differently in August little did we realise!

Worship and prayers will be centred around a bible story. The services are planned to be interactive – which do not fit well with this format of presentation - but we hope you will feel the presence of God as you explore what is to follow



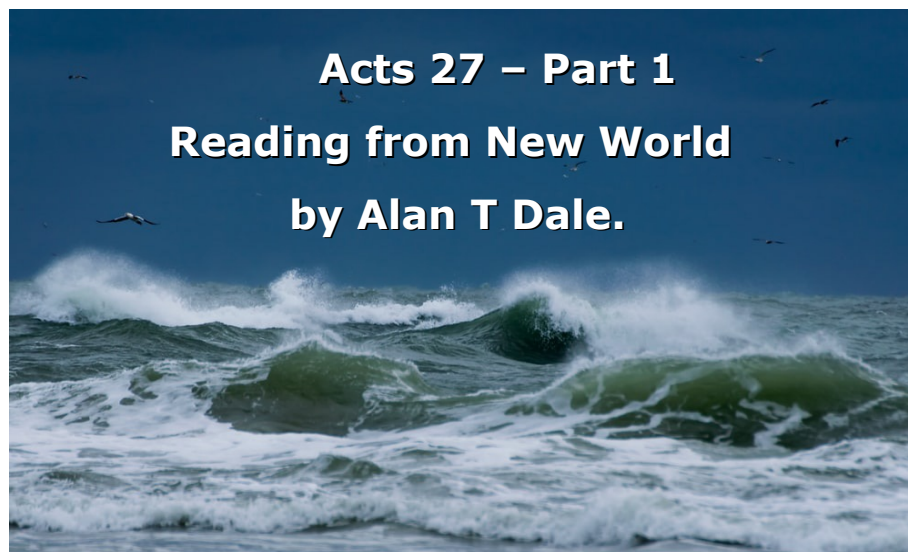
Listen to this piece of music for just a minute or two and as you do – concentrate on the picture it paints.

https://youtu.be/JAxd_caebXc

If you can - listen to it without watching the video.

I would imagine that we will all have painted different pictures – because we are different people, with different experiences and different imaginations.

As you read this story – what are the stand out features for you?



The Great Storm

One day the wind blew gently from the southwest. Now was their chance. They weighed anchor and sailed close along the coast of Crete. Suddenly a gale, called 'The Northeaster' blew down from the land. The ship was caught and could not face the wind.

So we ran before it and were driven out so sea. We ran under the shelter of a small island of Cauda, and even then had a hard job to get the ship'd boat safely tied on deck. The sailors fastened ropes over and under the ship to stop her from breaking up. They were frightened that they might be driven southward on to the African quicksands; they put out a sea anchor, but were still swept along.

We were tossed so violently about by the storm that next day the sailors began to throw the cargo overboard. On the third day, they threw away with their own hands everything they could. For many days we saw neither sun nor stars; we were at the mercy of the storm. At last we gave up hope of ever being saved. All this time the crew and passengers hadn't bothered to eat. So Paul stood up and spoke to them all.

"Gentlemen,"he said, "you should have listened to me. You shouldn't have sailed from Crete; you wouldn't, then, have had such damage and lost so much. But now I am going to tell you something to cheer you up."

"You'll loose the ship, but none of you will loose your lives. I had a dream last night. A messenger of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood by me. 'Don't be frightened, Paul' he said. 'You must stand before the Emperor. God has saved the lives of all those who are sailing with you.' So cheer up, my friends. I trust God that it will all happen just as I've been told. But we shall be ship-wrecked on some island.

Reflection/activity Time

For this you have a choice – we have just read the story of the storm that Paul and his fellow prisoners found themselves in.

If you would like to reflect quietly on this you may want to listen to the words of

the following hymn/watch the video or join in and sing.

If you would like to be a bit more active you may like to doodle a picture or write down your thoughts.

Eternal Father Strong to Save

<https://youtu.be/bDjwUzUnNpU>

Prayer – For our Prayer time you will need some rough paper and a pen or pencil – don't worry if you have not got these – you can just as easily use your imagination.



What do we put in here?

Paper that we have made mistakes on.

Paper that is stained or grubby.

Paper that is torn or damaged.

Paper that is full and can't be used any more or cardboard that is no longer useful for the job it was made.

We would screw this "rubbish" up and throw it in the bin – only for it to be taken away and changed into something useful.

Lets now turn to God in prayer

Take a piece of the scrap paper and write on it a time when you have made a mistake in your life.

Take another sheet and write down something that you regret and has made you feel grubby.

On the next sheet of paper write down a time when you have been hurt or torn.

And on the final sheet of paper write down a time when you have felt spent and not able to do what you think you should.



Like the sailors in the story - their 'cargo' weighed them down in the storm and threatened to sink them.

What we have written down is our 'cargo' which will sink us eventually if we do not let it go.

And like the wheelie bin there is somewhere we can throw our troubles – at the foot of the cross - and know that they will be changed – allowing us to become the people God created us to be.



The Shipwreck

A fortnight passed, and all that time we were drifting across the sea.

One night – it was about midnight – the sailors guessed that we were getting nearer land. They dropped the lead overboard and found we were in 20 fathoms of water. When we had sailed a little further, they dropped the lead again – this time it was 15 fathoms. They were now frightened that we might run onto the rocks; so they threw out 4 anchors, from the stern, and prayed for daylight.

The sailors wanted to abandon ship, and lowered the small boat into the sea.

“we only wast to let the anchors down from the bow,” they lied.

“If the men do not stay on-board,” he said, “none of you will get ashore.”

The sailors cut the boat's ropes and let it fall into the sea.

Just before dawn, Paul told them to get a good meal.

“For a fortnight you've been so scared you haven't bothered to eat anything.

You're starving. If you'll listen to me, you'll get something inside you – you'll need it if you are going to get ashore safely. I've told you – you will not lose a hair on your head.”

With these words, he picked up a loaf, said Grace over it while they all watched, broke it and began to eat it. They all cheered up and had a good breakfast.

When everybody had eaten enough, they threw the cargo of wheat into the sea to

make the ship ride lighter.

Day came, but they couldn't tell where they were; they could see a small bay with a sandy beach – just the place, if they could get to it, to run the ship ashore. They let the anchors go and left them in the sea; and loosed the ropes that held the rudders fast. A breeze was blowing. They set the foresail, and made for the shore.

They ran into rough water where two strong currents met and drove the ship aground. The bow stuck fast and nothing could move it; while the stern, beaten by the great sea, began to break up.

The sailors were for killing the prisoners – they thought they might swim off and escape – Captain Julius stopped that; Paul was an important prisoner and he didn't want him killed. He told those who could swim to jump into the sea first and get ashore, and the others, on cargo boards or bits of wreckage, to get there as best they could. So it was that everybody got safely to the beach.

What was the standout thing for you this time?

Try to imagine that you are down at the sea front – listening to the waves – picture the place as the spot where all the 276 people, including Paul, were washed ashore

Reflect and Prayers of intercession – take a few minutes to

- Thank God for the things you have been able to cling on to when times have been difficult?
- Spend some time thinking about people who are finding things difficult – those we know personally, in our country and abroad - and ask God to help them find a safe landing.
- *From our Prayer Diary this week* – Margot; Audrey; Jason and family; Muriel; Mark and Kate; Doreen; Zara; Dave; Eileen; David and Vivienne; Pearl and Lauren's family.
 - We thank you Lord, that Jesus came to seek and save the lost –

Amen

During the week – as you think about this story and you might like to:-

- read the story for yourself in Acts 27,
- go down to the beach and think about the story,
- draw a picture,
- write a poem or a prayer,
- make something that reflects the story for you,
- OR make a Lighthouse.



Why a Lighthouse?

Well, 'My Lighthouse' will be our feature song for August and we will conclude this morning by – listening to and/or join in with

My Lighthouse https://youtu.be/OaW_4MWSE6I

In my wrestling and in my doubts
In my failures You won't walk out
Your great love will lead me through
You are the peace in my troubled sea
You are the peace in my troubled sea

Amen

