

Hornsea URC – Sunday Worship

Journeying with John : Chapter 6 18th April 2021



Welcome:

Good morning and welcome, whether you are joining us live or catching up later in the week, you are welcome, we are glad that you could join us.

HYMN:

Our first hymn is Lead us heavenly Father, lead us [CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Opening prayer:

Lord, we are here today with open hands and open hearts, ready to depend on you to help us through this day and all it will bring our way.

Help us to be like Nehemiah, help us to come to you for guidance, strength, provision and protection.

Help us to remember that we are your children and you representatives to the world around us.

Help us to live each day in a way that brings honour to your Holy name,

In Jesus name Amen.

We will say together the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father who art in heaven

Hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come; your 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.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory.
For ever and ever Amen.

Hymn:

Our second hymn is Do Not Be Afraid 591 [CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Reading:

John Chapter 6 verses 16-21

Jesus Walks on the Water

¹⁶ When evening came, Jesus' disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷ got into a boat, and went back across the lake toward Capernaum. Night came on, and Jesus still had not come to them. ¹⁸ By then a strong wind was blowing and stirring up the water. ¹⁹ The disciples had rowed about three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the water, coming near the boat, and they were terrified. ²⁰ "Don't be afraid," Jesus told them, "it is I!" ²¹ Then they willingly took him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached land at the place they were heading for.

Do Not be afraid!

As Lord of all creation Jesus won't let anything stop His plan to redeem sinners. So, there is nothing more powerful than these words 'It is I'. His words overcome all our fears as He says, 'I am Jesus, do not be afraid'.

As the disciples in their boat head out into the darkness there is in fact looming danger for them.

Bible commentators tell us that the sea of Galilee has always been notorious for being whipped into a frenzy by sudden storms.

This is because it is about 200 metres below sea level and at its southern end is a deep valley lined by cliffs and this creates something like a funnel. The warm air from the higher hills of the desert can rush down into the valley and clash with the colder air over the water which quickly cooks up a storm. Without warning the sea becomes furious with wind and waves.

The sea was probably calm and the weather fair when they put out but suddenly there was a dramatic change.

Verse 18 tells us 'the seas arose because a great wind was blowing'.

Think about the word 'arose'. Its as if the water suddenly has a life of its own. The gentle swells arise to become angry white topped waves pushing and pounding the boat.

Keep in mind that at least a third of the men in the boat are fishermen from Galilee. They are seasoned sailors who have navigated this body of water many times. They knew how to pilot the boat through the waves yet because of the storms power their forward movement is very slow just about 3 or 4 mile (6 kilometres) all night.

And the disciples fear was surely made worse by how they regarded storms like this. For them it wasn't just a weather event but something they regarded as cosmic, often something evil.

The sea was an unknown and dangerous place and for this reason the sea came to symbolise the almost untameable powers of wickedness. The Israelites knew that it is only God who can have dominion over the surging waves.

As the disciples flounder all night in the middle of the storm-tossed sea they have just one question "Where is Jesus?"

They have been with Jesus for more than a year now so they know that Jesus can do great things. They have seen for themselves. The signs are all about Jesus revealing himself as the son of God. The Holy One of Israel.

The disciples know that Jesus can help people and that He has a deep compassion. He's got the ability to save those in distress and He is willing, so, where is He?

The disciples will be weary and soaked to the skin because of the storm they have been struggling with for hours and suddenly, they see Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat!

They had left Him on the Eastern shore remember, but now here He is walking across the surging sea stepping firmly and steadily towards them.

Hymn:

Our 3rd hymn is Will your anchor hold [CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Fear is the opposite of Faith

Many things can contribute to our fears, a sudden and overwhelming event, uncertainty about the future, a sense of powerlessness and inability to control what will happen.

Sometimes fear is a useful safeguard, teaching us prudence, keeping us from sticking our hands into fires or boiling water. Perhaps this sort of constructive fear should be called 'caution'.

But destructive fears can include a pervasive sense of dread and foreboding, a sickening sense of horror, or a sense of utter panic. Our Lord Jesus is commanding us not to be afraid.

In fact, the words 'do not be afraid' occur 70 times in the Bible. The New Testament records 14 times when the reassuring command not to be afraid was on Jesus lips.

To obey this command, we must fill our hearts with Jesus. We must focus our minds on Him at all times. Then as the old hymn says, 'the things on earth will go strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.'

In our reading Jesus asked the disciples why they were so afraid of the storm, where was their faith in Him?

As followers of Christ, we are not meant to live in the grip of fear, for His perfect love casts out our fear.

What is this faith that Jesus speaks of – the faith that would have kept them from fear?

It is fundamental trust in the Divine and in His purposes, knowing that we are held in His hands and that God is in control of every aspect of life. This trust is founded on Jesus.

But how do we obey this command? Especially when life is difficult, when we face persecution or other daunting situations?

How do we learn to rest in His perfect love so that our hearts are fearless and untroubled?

Jesus is the answer. We must fill our hearts with Jesus. We must focus our minds on Him.

Then the things of the earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.

Amen.

Hymn:

Our 4th hymn is O God our help in ages past [CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Prayers of intercession:

Let us pray:

We pray for all people in all parts of the world
and in all kinds of need.

For those who live in danger of violence, persecution, oppression,
displacement and injustice because of race, belief, gender or who they are.

We pray for all the countries struggling because of coronavirus.

For the leaders as they make difficult decisions

For doctors and medical staff caring for the sick and dying

For those who are grieving.

We hold before you Lord.

All who are feeling the effects of the virus.

The isolated

The lonely

Those missing family and friends

Teachers and children finding new ways of doing 'school'

We pray for our church family and for those in our prayer book this week

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer. **Amen**

Hymn:

Our final hymn is In Heavenly Love Abiding [CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

Blessing:

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.