



Ninth Sunday After Pentecost

July 25, 2021

*“About three o’clock in the morning, he came to them, walking on the water. He started to go past them, but when they saw him walking on the water, they screamed in terror, thinking he was a ghost. They were all terrified when they saw him. But Jesus spoke to them at once. **“It’s alright.”** He said. **“I am here! Don’t be afraid.”** (Mark 6:45- 56)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Earlier in the afternoon, the disciples witnessed one of Jesus’ greatest miracles . . . the feeding of the 5,000. The gospel writer Mark tells us immediately, Jesus gets his disciples to get into a boat to go to Bethsaida. He went off by himself to pray. Normally this would be a short trip. But on the way they encounter a storm, unlike any storm they had ever encountered. And where was Jesus when they needed him. It felt as if he were a million miles away. They were running out of strength, struggling hard against the wind and waves, and hope was evaporating quickly. Have you ever been blown off course by the storms of life? Desperate? Losing ground? Waves crashing over your boat? Doing everything you can think of just to survive? Storms of life have a way of making us helpless and even hopeless and all alone. But Mark tells us Jesus saw them. And he came to them. Reassured them. Told them he was with them, and because of his presence not to be afraid.



What does Jesus do when you are at your moment of desperation? Notice he didn’t tell the disciples to come to him. He knew they couldn’t go to him. He went to them. Jesus came to them and in our time of need and desperation, he comes to us.

I love the fact that Jesus didn’t just stand on the shore and shout instructions. When you’re in a storm, you don’t need advice. You need a miracle. You need somebody to show up, and this is Jesus specialty. He intervened in the disciples’ storm.

This is the heart of the Gospel. He sees. He cares. He comes. He calms. He quiets the storm outside, but more importantly he quiets the storm inside of us. He comes out and meets us in our pain, in our fear, in our depression, in our discouragement, in our sorrow, in our greatest hurts. He sees us. And then he is on the move coming into our greatest struggles and battles.

You may feel you are in this storm all alone. But you are not. Christ is coming to you. He has command of the wind and the waves. He is with you. He has the word of life. It’s all right. I am here. Don’t be afraid. I will never leave you or abandon you. Count on it. Trust me. Storms come. But I have power over even the greatest storms of life.

- **Join us this Sunday, Worship Service 9:30 A.M. Joe Rudy**

- **Scripture Readings**

Genesis 9:8-17
Ephesians 3:14-21
Mark 6:45-56

- **Happening Around St. James**

Children's Sunday School is recessed til August

No Adult Forum this week. Resume in August

- **Coffee with Council** will be this Sunday following worship. Come listen to the goals and things our council are working on now. We hope this is an open line of communications to keep everyone abreast with the workings and ministry of the church.
- **St James Website is Up and Running.** Let me encourage everyone to visit our new and updated website. We think it is attractive and informative and we hope it will be used fully. We are keeping it current and fresh and there will be links added for the bulletin, newsletter and this weekend update. Please check it out.
- **Vacation Bible School is Coming at the End of July. . . . The title is Rocky Railway . . .** Jesus Power Pulls us through. July 25th-July 27th 5:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Sign up in the narthex or also register online [here](#). I need someone(s) to come up to Bethel to help me load and bring decorations and scenery for our VBS. If you can help please contact me.
- **Request** I have been asked by several people if they could have a copy of my funeral message from Jeff Stearns celebration of life service. I have made copies and placed them in the office by the copier. Please feel free to take one. Thank you.
- **Sunday School Volunteers are Needed this fall.** It looks like we will have a preschool through 2nd grade class, a 3rd through 6th grade class and a confirmation class. We are now looking for someone(s) to teach the 3rd through 6th grade class and someone to help me lead the confirmation group. If interested contact me for more information. What an opportunity to help make a difference in the spiritual formation of our young disciples.
- **Mission Opportunity. Thank you! Thank you!** Because of your generosity we have received \$850. With matching funds from our BMO account, we will be sending \$1,450 to our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia. They will be able to purchase the computer that will be used for the seminary now and in the future. This comes at a particularly critical time, in that there is a great deal of conflict throughout the country as well as a devastating famine
- **Bible Studies**
 - **Women's Bible Study** Mondays at 11 A.M.
 - **Men's Bible Study Gathers . . .**at 9 A.M. on Tuesdays.
 - **Additional Bible Study Opportunity.** . . . included with this weekly update is a bible study for you to use in the comfort of your home.
- **Continue to Hold our Church in Prayer** as we await someone who can be a pastoral candidate. May the Holy Spirit move strong in our midst & in the heart of the person who will take the reins of pastoral leadership of St James. In the near future we will be sharing in a Bible Study on the Biblical understanding on the blessing and use of times of waiting.
- **Greetings from the HMD Council** for the month of July 2021. Include in your prayers
 - There is so much pain and conflict across the Middle East. We pray for leaders throughout the region to turn their hearts towards peace.
 - Pray for blessings for the Heartland Mission District (HMD) congregation of Antioch Lutheran Church in Hoagland Indiana and Pastor David Taylor.
 - Pray for the Life-to-Life Discipleship Team's effort in developing disciple-making congregations and cultures as part of the NALC's 2020 Vision.
 - Continue to pray for guidance, support and strength from the Holy Spirit for HMD seminarian Ben Black.Thank you all for your prayers.

I can be contacted at pastorstjamesnalc@gmail.com, or by phone 317 727-0612, or calling the St James office.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Doug