

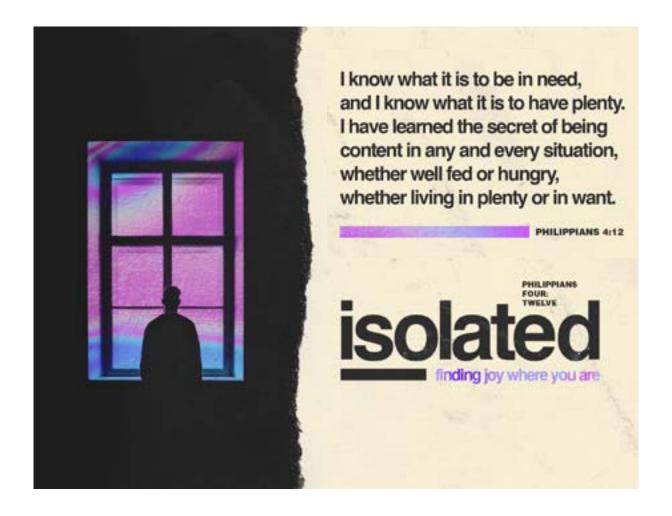
St John's Lutheran Church.

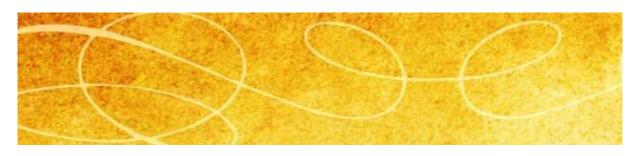
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Together in Christ: Caring - Sharing - Growing.





TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST - 9 AUGUST 2020.

Pastor Michael Jarick.

Title: FACING THE STORMS OF LIFE.

Text: Matthew 14: 22-33.

"22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. 23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, 24 and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

₂₅ Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ₂₆ When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear

₂₇ But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."
₂₈ "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."
₂₉ "Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"
31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

32 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. 33 Then those who were in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

When I was a young bloke, I remember diving into a swimming pool. Actually, I didn't dive, because it was too terrifying. I was standing on the ten metre platform at the time. The best I could manage was to step off the edge and remain upright (unfortunately I didn't remember to keep my legs closed). I remember thinking "That swimming pool looks very small. I'd better jump straight!" All my mates were suddenly very polite, too! "You first!" "No, after you!" "Oh, but I insist!"

I wonder how St Peter must have felt as he was about to take the plunge, not off the diving platform, but out of a perfectly good boat into the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus had spent the day with thousands of people. His friend and cousin John the Baptist had been executed, and Jesus had wanted some time on his own to pray. But the people had followed him, thousands of them. He healed the sick, and then fed them, too. Now he sends his disciples back in the boat, he dismisses the crowd, and he has another go at finding a guiet space by himself to pray.

While Jesus was praying late at night, the disciples are in strife when a fierce storm strikes. They're getting desperate when they see a figure on the water. Is it a ghost? A demon? They hear Jesus say "It's alright! It's me, don't be afraid!"

Peter is the bold one. When Jesus invites him to come to him, he puts his leg over the side. That must have taken a lot of trust and courage. It was like peeking over the edge of the 10 metre diving platform. He bravely clambers out of the boat and stands on the surface of the water, then walks towards Jesus.

And the reality hits him! What on earth was he thinking? Look at the size of those waves! Listen to the wind scream! He begins to sink.

My guess is that you can relate to Peter at this stage of the story. Sometimes reality hits us between the eyes. We feel like we are in the middle of a storm that threatens to drown us. Look at the size of those waves! Listen to that wind roar!

What storms have you faced? Maybe you're facing storms now – relationship difficulties that can't seem to be sorted out; or maybe you're bearing the scars of relationships that failed years ago, husband, wife, parent, child, mate. Maybe financial pressures are squeezing you. You've only just got your nose above water, and it's not going to take much to be swamped. There are lots of things you'd like to do, but you can't afford it. There's tension in your household over how money gets spent, and you wonder how you're going to survive.

Maybe the storms are ones inside you: loneliness, anger, depression, feelings of hopelessness and uselessness. Outside, most of the time, you look calm. Just occasionally a glimpse of the storm within is seen in the impatience, the sudden anger, the risky behaviour. But inside, storms rage.

Perhaps the storms for you are on the horizon. You're calm now, but you can see what lays ahead of you: finding a job, deciding what to do with your life, worry about how your children will manage without you, diminishing health of body or mind. It's calm at the moment, but the wind is picking up.

When Jesus called Peter to step out of the boat and come to him, he knew what was in store for Peter. It wasn't going to be a cakewalk! He knew Peter would have a crisis of faith. A crisis of faith is the feeling that the problems and obstacles of life are more powerful than the one who calls us to walk towards him. Peter's crisis of faith was when he took his eyes off Jesus, and looked at the size of the waves. He had listened to Jesus' words of invitation. Now he hears the wailing of the wind.

When we too, take our eyes off Jesus, then all we can see are the obstacles and problems of life. The difficulty is that we can't focus on Jesus if our attention is fixed on the storm. We can't hear his words of promise if we are listening to the wail of the world.

But Jesus is our lifeline! Jesus is the one who gave Peter the ability to walk on water. Jesus is the one who gives us the strength and courage to face the storms of life, and to respond to his call. When we take our eyes off him, we are taking our eyes off the one who stretches out his mighty arm to grab us and then, just like Peter, we begin to sink, as problems and crises overwhelm us.

Did you notice that although Peter takes his eyes off Jesus, although he stops listening, Jesus stays focussed. When we take our eyes off Jesus, he keeps his eyes on us. When we can no longer hear his voice, he can hear us. Even when we feel overwhelmed and about to drown! Even when we can't see him, he keeps his eye on us! Even when we doubt and have a crisis of faith, he keeps his eye on us! That's the way he is! He is quick to save, and quick to forgive.

And he continues to call us, each one of us, to step over the side of the boat, and to walk towards him. Storms? Yeah, but focus on the one who hears your cry, the one who has his eye on you. Amen.



BULLETIN FOR TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

BOOK NOOK

Contributions are always welcome. I'm reviewing another light-hearted book this week since some of us can do with some light relief.

Title: "Bacon Sandwiches and Salvation: An A – Z of the Christian Life" by Adrian Plass, 237 pages

Overview: You may be familiar with Plass, who wrote the "The Sacred Diary of Adrian Mole" books. If so, you will recognize the tone of this book, a humorous look at Christians and the Church which notices human foibles with a gentle and humble eye. Plass writes in his introduction "I hope that most of it will make you laugh, or at least smile, and I also hope that you will not hurt yourself too badly when you trip over the occasional serious or whimsical bits."

Some samples:

Oblivion: nothing to worry about.

Benjamite: 1) member of the tribe of Benjamin 2) early form of Israeli yeast extract that you either love or hate.

Doubt: more or less frequent visitor who should be allowed in when he knocks at the door and sat firmly in a corner. As long as he is neither fed nor entertained he will usually get bored after a while and go away.

Go in peace: 1) injunction to the congregation at the end of Communion 2) something that is only possible for those blessed with an en-suite.

Pillar of the church: big thick thing that holds up everything and restricts vision.

Verdict: As one who appreciates humour as a means of communication, and doesn't mind the occasional (Oh, alright! regular) 'Dad' joke, this book made me laugh and think, without feeling like I was being lectured.

ZOOM BIBLE STUDIES

These studies have run via Zoom since the end of April on Thursday nights and Saturday mornings. They are now in recess. I plan to run them in discrete blocks in the future, possibly with themes, rather than looking at one of the readings for the coming Sunday. More info to come later in the year.

FOR REFLECTION

Here are some thoughts for you to consider for the Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, based on the Gospel, Matthew 14:22-33 "Jesus walks on the water":

- Jesus is alone on the mountain praying. When do you need time alone?...
- How does prayer help you?...
- What causes you fear?...
- What situation do you face now that requires courage?...
- When do you have doubts?...
- From what has Jesus saved you?...
- Picture Jesus reaching out to you and grasping your hand...

- How can the Son of God help you today?...
- Prayer: Dear Jesus, we face the storms of life and sometimes we start to sink. Reach out to us and lift us up. Help us to keep our eyes fixed on you always. Amen.

May the Lord bless and keep you, Pastor Michael.

FORTNIGHTLY SERVICE – We are back to worship at the church again this Sunday. (August 9) Please note that the 11 am service this week will be especially prepared for families with children. That's not to say no one else is permitted, but families with children will receive priority.

As usual, you will need to email me (michael.jarick@lca.org.au) or phone (0402 597 451) your intention to attend, along with preferred service time and whether you are flexible. I will confirm with you late in the week your service time.

CHURCH OFFERINGS – We are grateful for your support during this time and would encourage you to continue with your offerings during the coming weeks that we are unable to have services.

Online banking accounts are:

LLL - BSB 704 942 Account Number 52648 Corinda St Johns REG Account

Westpac Banking Corporation BSB 034-087 Account Number 015 808 LCA St Johns.

Blessings to all, Sandra Murray, Treasurer.

BEESTING COFFEE MORNINGS – From Joy.

We are again having a coffee morning on Saturday, September 5, at 10am, and as we still have a maximum limit of about 14 attendees, you will need to contact me to book your place. Get in quickly - Contact Joy. Mobile 0418 725 894.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH ROSTER.

CHURCH CLEANING August 2020.

16 Aug – Karel B & Lyn G.

23 Aug - Meeri V, Ena B, Denise D. OUTSIDE - Stuart B.

CHURCH CLEANING September 2020.

6 Sept - Lance & Emily.

13 Sept – Smith Family.

20 Sept – Meeri V, Sue C, Hannelore.

27 Sept – Elspeth P, Fay T. OUTSIDE – Tom B.

Our labour here is but brief, but the reward is eternal. Do not be disturbed by the clamour of the world, which passes like a shadow. Do not let the false delights of a deceptive world deceive you." - Clare of Assisi -

(Awareness of eternal life can put many things in perspective. So let it be for you this day.) from A daily spiritual seed.



THE LABYRINTH — We have managed to obtain the Labyrinth for our church for Friday 18th and Saturday 19th September.

During these difficult times we pray that this will give some people and opportunity to reflect on our current crisis.

Come and walk the Labyrinth - This is a meditative walk with Jesus – a walk with refugees – a walk to think and come to terms with your problems.

It will operate from 10.00am to 8.30pm and in the evening the church will be lit by candle-light.

We ask you to come and walk with Jesus – to invite others to come and do this as well and generally spread the word.

It will be advertised on 96.5 FM and will be monitored for covid19 safety.

If you would like to volunteer to assist at church during these two days, please contact Stuart Betlem 3714 9111 or stuart@integritytravel.com.au

WALK MY WAY – We are planning to do a 13 km walk between St John's, Corinda and Forest Lake to raise funds for Walk My Way. This will take place on Saturday 22nd August, or in the case of inclement weather, the following Saturday August 29.

We will be mainly walking on back-roads and pathways and will have a break for a cuppa at the Manse in Durack. We will arrange car-pooling between the two points and if possible a sausage sizzle at the end of the walk.

Although this event is being organised by St John's Lutheran Church, it is open to anyone wishing to participate. Cost will be \$15.00 which will be donated to the Walk my Way charity.

To register, contact Stuart Betlem on 07 3714 9111 or stuart@integritytravel.com.au We do have an account at the Walk My Way website where you can register or donate.

https://doyourownthing.walkmyway.org.au/page/CorindaStJohns2020

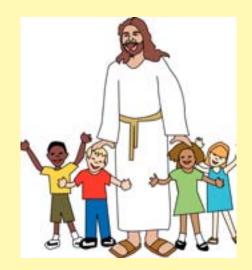
And if you would like to find out more information about where the funds go please go to: https://walkmyway.org.au/

Anyone can support this cause at any time via the above page or by deposits through our church treasurer.

Come on Corinda, what can we raise this year. We already have over \$700.00 in the account from cans & recycling.



Hi Sunday Schoolers.



Hi Sunnis, (Sunday Schoolers) Boys and Girls,
Here is a little prayer for you, you can pray before
you go to school in the morning.

Every Step along the way, please Lord Jesus be my guide, come with me wherever I go and bring me, healthy and safe, back home to my house. Amen

Brain Trainers:

Create as many words of four letters or more with these C,E,H,G,X,N,D,A.

Using letters once only but always including the letter A

Do not use proper names or plurals 13 good, 17 very good, 20+ excellent

J.... L.... Y...
(can you work this one out)

Till next time, stay safe and happy.
Cheers, your S. School Team.

Walk the Labyrinth

St John's Lutheran Church, Corinda is holding a two-day Labyrinth experience for all.

A time to slow down in this fast-paced world of ours.



When: Friday 18 and Saturday 19 September

Time: 10am to 8.30pm - evenings will be candlelit

Where: St John's Lutheran Church

Cnr Clewley Street and Oxley Road, Corinda

(opposite Coles)



