

Grace Devotion

Week of June 23, 2024

Pastor Fred Young

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And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. ³⁷A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. ³⁸But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" ³⁹He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!"

Mark 4:36-39

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Every time I come across the story of Jesus calming the sea, whether in Matthew, Luke or as we read today, Mark's Gospel, I think about the many people I have met over the years who have had their lives swept away by storms. Mark tells his story of Jesus with an urgency that surpasses what is found in the other Gospels. Everything seems to happen very quickly for this writer, just like a raging storm.

Another prominent theme in the Gospel of Mark is the relentlessly negative portrayal of the disciples. For Mark, the only thing they seem to have done right is to leave their nets to follow Jesus. The rest of the Gospel they disappoint Jesus at every turn, mostly by failing to grasp who he is and what he is asking of them. In a boat, tossed about by the sea, they fall short yet again. In her book, *Hallelujah Anyway*, Anne Lamont says:

"Thank God I am in charge of next to nothing. Mostly I take care of the garden and pets these days. The good news is that God has such low standards and reaches out to those of us who are often not lovable and offers us a chance to come back in from the storm of drama and toxic thoughts."

Augustine wrote, "Late have I loved you, o beauty ever ancient. You were within me, but I was outside." The storm outside is just so much more enlivening, and for a writer, much better material. Plus, I can be a hero in my own storm, which is where I found a sense of value as a kid, playing the EMT in a damaged family system. Crisis, self-centered fear, and saving people were home to me. The quiet, tranquil room of just being was boarded up. But love reaches out and reaches out and reaches out and reaches out. It is staggering that LOVE is always giving me another chance, another day, over and over and over."

After many chances, Peter does recognize that Jesus is the Messiah, but he seems to draw the wrong conclusions. The followers of Christ never quite understand the significance of a suffering messiah. But a deeper concern is their lack of trust in God and what Jesus can do with his divinity. The disciples miss the signs and still do not trust in God's abundant gifts. How do you appreciate what God has done for you?

PRAYER: Calm the storms that surround me God and give me peace. Amen.

Blessings! Pastor Fred



June 23, 2024—Town Hall #2

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WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

WESTMINISTER CHIMES and PRELUDE: Medley of Hymns

** SONG: “Old Church Choir” ~Zach Williams

**CALL TO WORSHIP

Lector: Gather in awe before God, who laid the foundations of the earth. Open your hearts to the steadfast love God offers.

Congregation: The deeds of God are beyond our knowing. Yet we catch glimpses of God’s mercy and care.

Lector: God does not forsake us when we are dismayed and afraid. Our Creator is with us in all times and places.

Congregation: God is a stronghold for the oppressed and troubled.

The needy and the poor are not forgotten.

Lector: God is ready to listen to us in these moments together. See, now is the acceptable time, the day of salvation.

Congregation: Surely God will meet us here in our faith community! How good it is when we sense our unity in Christ!

**HYMN: “Be Thou My Vision”

#382

**PRAYER OF INVOCATION

We sing praises to you, O God, for you have been gracious to us amid the storms of life. We do battle with many enemies within and among us, but you give us confidence and courage to face them. Out of the whirlwind, you answer when we call. We have gathered to listen to the voice we sometimes cannot hear in our daily lives. Help us to discard the excess baggage and unnecessary armor that keeps us from the fullness of life you intend for us. Amen.

**SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

SCRIPTURE-Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32

JOYS AND CONCERNS
PRAYING FOR OTHERS/LORD’S PRAYER (DEBTS)

TOWN HALL DISCUSSION
(*Our Changing Church*)

**SONG: “Raise a Hallelujah” ~Helser

PRAYER OF CONFESSION
MOMENT FOR SILENT PRAYER
ASSURANCE OF GRACE

SCRIPTURE- Mark 4:35-41

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH
A New Creed

Thank you for sharing your tithes and offerings

**DOXOLOGY

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION

#625

HOLY COMMUNION (*All are welcome at the Table of Remembrance! We use Gluten Free bread and grape juice.*)

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of love, let us remember this community that is being formed around your table today. Let us take this act of communion into the world with us as we spread the love and the message of Christ. May it strengthen our faith, increase our generosity to neighbors, and unite us with others around the world. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**HYMN: “It Is Well with My Soul”

#493

**FINAL BLESSING

** A CHORAL BENEDICTION

**POSTLUDE: “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”

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Today's Worship Elements have been adapted from the following resource:

Leb By Lover: Worship Resources For Year B, Lavon Bayler. United Church Press. Cleveland. 1996.

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Announcements
Join us after worship for the Potluck and Crooner Show!

- We will collect for the Deacon's Fund during the month of June.
- Consider donating to the CWS School Kits. Information by the elevator.
- Worship and Music Committee will meet on June 24th at 6:30pm in the Gathering Place

Upcoming Events

Old Fashioned Hymn Sing Aug 11th at 4pm @ St. Matthews (with sponsorship from Grace UCC)

Car Show: September 7th (rain date September 14th)

Volunteer Opportunities—Sign ups in Gathering

Place

- Volunteer counters after church
- Lectors
- Snack providers

OUR CHANGING CHURCH

Grace United Church of Christ

100 Fourth Street

Hanover, Pennsylvania 17331

717-632-1146

Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32

V F O J S S R R L O R D C B R X Q N V O
W O R K S U J X Z I S B O L G V W Z O A
S M V K W E Y T F D T W M T Y R Z P Z K
X P H C V B W Y X J E W M N T G R W Q Z
Q B E N D U R E S T A M A G H O Q S C C
U H D K X V V H Z T D O N K S E M I J Z
H V R H O J H K R A F U D V H T A Q X V
M C E X W A T E R S A N E T Y G O V O W
O G O R W N J P F H S T D K D S C R E I
C Q B U Y P Y Q P B T E F D E N Z H M N
G O O D R W T B D C O D W S E P G U F Y
E H E V S A O G A T H E R E D V N U M H
T A B Z V D G N W Z Z B K B S M S K T S
R J M M N N G E D G V I Y E X M F J F B
V P G U B A X B A R Y H V W N W M B O L
J U T H A N K S Z M O E C R W H L H R A
T R O U B L E S M D O U G Z B V B L E N
Z A B U S I N E S S M G S I K U R F V D
Y N F Q N E C K X F R E D E E M E D E S
R J L R P O Y D S D J O O T O Z Q L R U

STEADFAST

COMMANDED

REDEEMED

GATHERED

WONDROUS

ENDURES

FOREVER

BUSINESS

TROUBLE

THANKS

WATERS

COURAGE

HEAVEN

LANDS

WORKS

STORMY

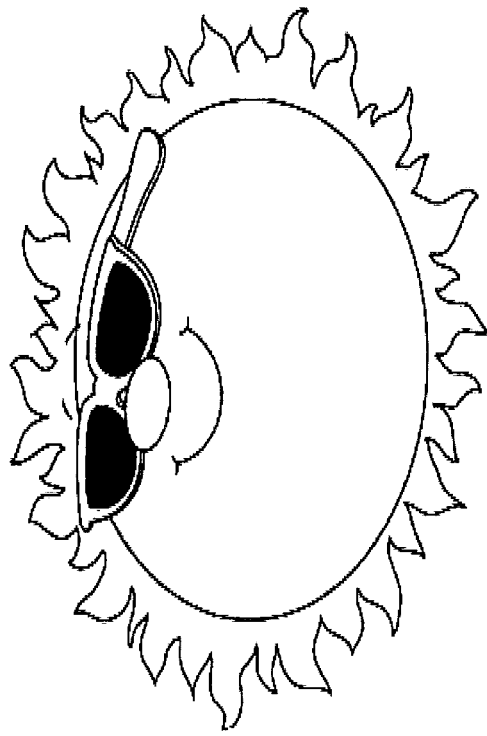
LORD

GOOD

MOUNTED

DEEDS

Summer Word Search



How many of these words
can YOU find?

A M H N B L R Y M
 L S T D G T S G O M Z L V S W
 E S X P S M O P N Q F A A U H
 U A L O Y P T P O O U Y L N C
 Y N D P A C I I I J P I C F A
 N D A S D Q U C T B I N S L E
 E A X I I V Q N A O F G E O B
 N L F C L B S I C Z H Q D W Y
 I S X L O G O C A G O Q R E Y
 H C I E H Z M U V B P T E R D
 S W A T E R M E L O N W M I F
 N G A K L A I Q T T M V M C O
 U A T K H T M R A W F T U E J
 S G N I M M I W S U B O S A U
 W M A E R C M T N I L H L V J

BEACH
 CREAM
 HOLIDAYS
 HOT
 ICE
 MOSQUITOS
 PICNIC
 PLAYING
 POPSICLE
 SANDALS
 SUMMER
 SUNFLOWER
 SUNSHINE
 SWIMMING
 VACATION

WARMTH
 WATERMELON