
Sunday 9 August 2020
SUNDAY WORSHIP
BUNYAN MEETING BEDFORD



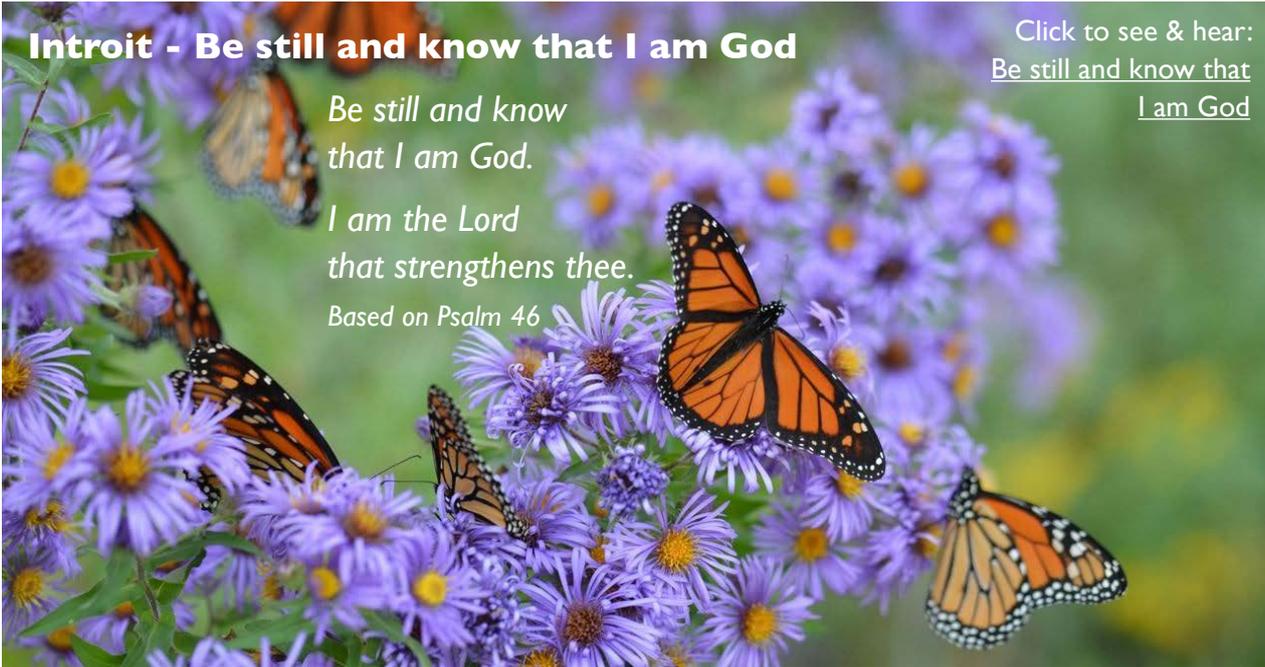
Introit - Be still and know that I am God

Click to see & hear:
[Be still and know that
I am God](#)

*Be still and know
that I am God.*

*I am the Lord
that strengthens thee.*

Based on Psalm 46



Opening prayers

O God our Lord help us.

The waves and the billows of our sin encompass us.

Be yourself the haven of peace that we may not sink.

We want to repent.

Stretch out your hand to us, O Lord,

as you did to Peter when he was about to sink.

Have mercy upon us and lift us up into your presence.

A prayer from South India

Our Father who art in heaven

hallowed be thy name;

thy kingdom come;

thy 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.

And 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 - O, for a thousand tongues to sing

Click to hear:
[O for a thousand
tongues to sing](#)

O, for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and king,
the triumphs of his grace!

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease -
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life, and health, and peace.

See all your sins on Jesus laid:
the Lamb of God was slain,
his soul was once an offering made
for every soul of man.

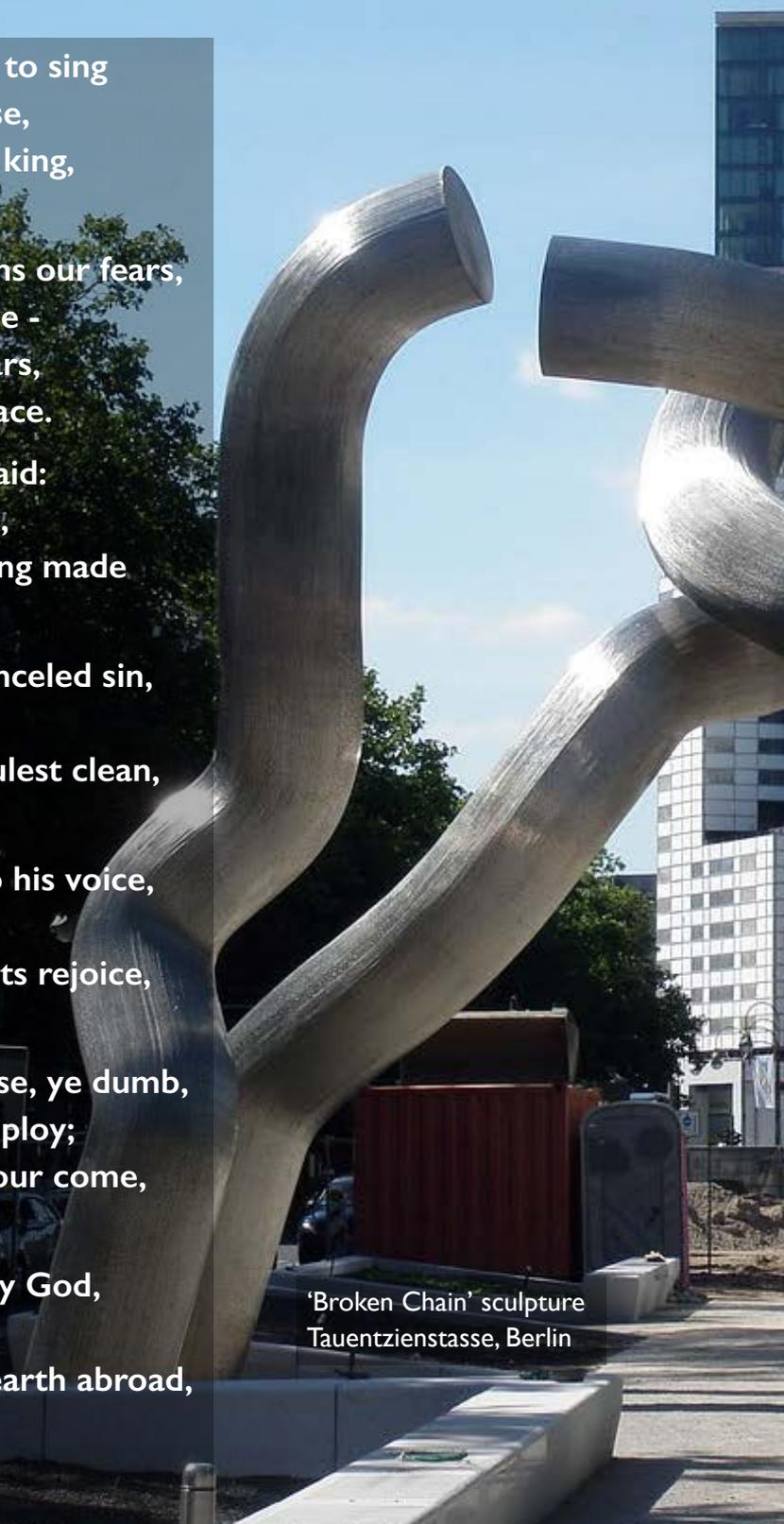
He breaks the pow'r of canceled sin,
he sets the pris'ner free;
his blood can make the foulest clean,
his blood availed for me.

He speaks, and, list'ning to his voice,
new life the dead receive,
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
the humble poor believe.

Hear him, ye deaf, his praise, ye dumb,
your loosened tongues employ;
ye blind, behold your Saviour come,
and leap, ye lame, for joy.

My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad,
the honours of thy name.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)



'Broken Chain' sculpture
Tauentzienstasse, Berlin

“... I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed: perhaps, that night, the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England.”



So wrote **Clive Staples Lewis** in his book ‘Surprised by Joy’, describing his return to a belief in God in 1929.

Lewis was raised within a Christian family, but the death of his mother when he was just 10, and his remote father’s unrequited grief, convinced him that the God he had met in the Bible was ‘if not cruel, at least a vague abstraction’. By the time he was 15 he had become an avowed atheist.

As first a student, and later a tutor, Lewis made his home at Oxford, and became increasingly influenced by the works of Christian authors such as George MacDonald and G. K. Chesterton; and also by his friends J. R. R. Tolkien and Hugo Dyson, whom he admired for their brilliance and logic ... while recognising that their intellectual life was underpinned by their faith in Jesus Christ.

The promptings from God were always present during these years of pain, doubt and searching and - as with Elijah, and as with the disciples - God was soon to be encountered in a dramatic and life-changing way.

At the age of 31, C. S. Lewis was brought into Christianity like a prodigal, ‘kicking, struggling, resentful, and darting eyes in every direction for a chance to escape.’

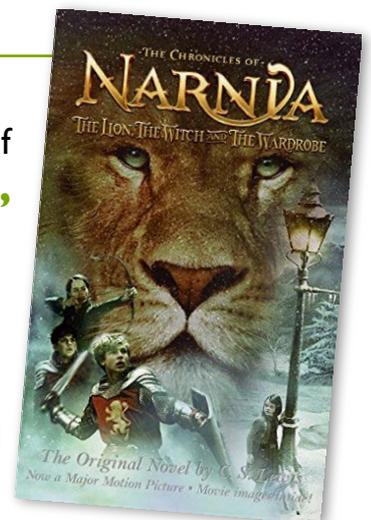
‘You must picture me alone in that room in Magdalen’, he writes, ‘night after night, feeling, whenever my mind lifted even for a second from my work, the steady, unrelenting approach of Him whom I so earnestly desired not to meet.’

C. S. Lewis - the most ‘reluctant convert in all England’ - would go on to become one of the greatest Christian writers of the 20th century.



For many, the first experiences of Lewis’ writings are journeying to the snowy land of Narnia in his book for children **‘The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe’**.

The great narratives of evil defeated by Christian love and redemption are introduced through a fantasy world of fauns, talking animals, wicked queens ... and the awesome and magnificent lion, Aslan.



Left: James McAvoy as Mr Tumnus, in the 2005 Walt Disney film version.

Click here for the: [‘The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe’ trailer](#)

Hymn - One more step along the world I go

Click to see & hear:
[One more step along
the world I go](#)

One more step along the world I go,
one more step along the world I go;
from the old things to the new,
keep me traveling along with you:

*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
keep me travelling along with you.*

Round the corner of the world I turn,
more and more about the world I learn;
all the new things that I see
you'll be looking at along with me.

*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
keep me travelling along with you.*

As I travel through the bad and good,
keep me traveling the way I should;
where I see no way to go
you'll be telling me the way, I know:

*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
keep me travelling along with you.*

Give me courage when the world is rough,
keep me loving though the world is tough;
leap and sing in all I do,
keep me traveling along with you:

*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
keep me travelling along with you.*

You are older than the world can be,
you are younger than the life in me;
ever old and ever new,
keep me traveling along with you.

*And it's from the old I travel to the new;
keep me travelling along with you.*

Sydney Carter (1915-2004)



Flowers at Bunyan Meeting



The flowers for the Communion Table this Sunday *would* have been provided by **Sheila Mousley**.

Reading - 1 Kings 19: 9-18

Click to see & hear Lesley reading:
[1 Kings 19: 9-18](#)

There he went into a cave and spent the night.

And the word of the Lord came to him: 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'

He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.'

The Lord said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.'

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'

He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.'

The Lord said to him, 'Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel – all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him.'

Hymn - Dear Lord and Father of mankind

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways!
Reclothe us in our rightful mind;
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence praise,
in deeper reverence praise.

With that deep hush subduing all
our words and works that drown
the tender whisper of thy call,
as noiseless let thy blessing fall
as fell thy manna down,
as fell thy manna down.

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
till all our strivings cease;
take from our souls the strain and stress,
and let our ordered lives confess
the beauty of thy peace,
the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still, small voice of calm,
O still, small voice of calm!

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)

Click to see & hear:
[Dear Lord and Father
of mankind](#)



Reading - Matthew 14: 22-33

Click to see & hear Geoffrey reading:

[Matthew 14: 22-33](#)

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

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

But Jesus immediately said to them: 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'

'Lord, if it's you,' Peter replied, 'tell me to come to you on the water.'

'Come,' he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!'

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?'

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



Anthem - Breathe on me, Breath of God

Click to see & hear:

[Breathe on me,](#)
[Breath of God](#)



*Breathe on me, Breath of God,
fill me with life anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will,
to do and to endure.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.*

*Breathe on me, Breath of God,
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.*

Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)

Sermon by the Rev'd Chris Damp

"Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Matthew 14 v 27

The miraculous feast of the five thousand is now over, and the evening shadows are lengthening. Straggling groups of people are wending their way around the northern shore of the Galilean lake, back to their villages and their homes. On the lake itself, there is a little boat, in which the disciples have set sail towards Bethsaida, whilst Jesus prays alone on the hill above the lake. As midnight approaches, a violent storm closes in around that small craft and the disciples strain at the oars, fearing all is



lost. "If only Jesus were with us; if only He was asleep in the rear of the boat."

From the hillside, Jesus can see His disciples. He sees every wave that breaks over that storm tossed boat, and He knows the anxious hearts and fearful minds of His friends.

For many hours those disciples struggled with the oars, and the flickering lights upon the shore appeared as distant as ever. It was then that Jesus came to them, walking on the water but they knew Him not and "they were terrified."



Above the noise of the storm, that gentle and familiar voice was heard “Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.” As these words fell upon the ears of the weak and terrified disciples, they rediscovered their strength, and their fears were gone. They found courage because Jesus was near to them once again.

Many years before this event, Elijah in his despondency and despair took refuge from his enemies in a cave. As he emerged from that cave, he encountered God in that still small voice which quieted his fears and gave him courage, for he was reassured that God was with him.

Many have found that God comes to them in their darkest hour. Once when Paul was chained in a dark dungeon, he felt God draw near and say “Take courage”. (Acts 22 v 11) And later Paul recounts that “everyone forsook me But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength.” (2 Timothy 4 v 16 - 17)

Throughout the ages, God has come alongside His people to give strength to the tempest tossed, and peace to those who are buffeted by the gales of life. It is that presence, power and love of the eternal Saviour which is the secret of Christian strength and endurance. Our Master is no distant notion; He is not a mythical being who soars far beyond human thought and reality. This Jesus is the living One, the acting One, the strengthening One. As the Psalmist reminds us “The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27 v 1)

The storm may roar all about us, the waters might threaten to overwhelm us, but never forget, the Lord is mightier than the power of the storm and stronger than the waves of even the deepest sea.

We can find assurance in knowing that God comes to us in the midst of life's storms. But like those disciples, we can often find that Jesus seems to delay His coming. In the darkest of nights and the fiercest of storms we often feel alone. This was true for Mary and Martha as they waited for Him at Bethany, and He did not come in their hour of need. Later Martha said to Him, “Lord, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” (John 11 v 21)

There was that walk to Emmaus when Jesus appeared reluctant to tarry with those two friends and “He made as though He would go further.”

Jesus seems to use such circumstances to some purpose, for in Bethany He demonstrated that He was the resurrection and the life and on that Emmaus road, He lingered so that the two companions might plead with burning hearts “stay with us.” As we were reminded a few weeks ago “in all things God works for the good of

those who love Him”. (Romans 8 v 28) In the unremitting tempest of our own lives and in that dark night of the soul, when God feels very distant, let us not lose faith. May we know that same confidence that sustained Paul as he wrote to Timothy: “I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.” (2 Tim. 1 v 12)

We must also remember that God comes to us in the most unexpected and surprising ways. Elijah did not find God in the power of the wind, earthquake or fire, but in that unexpected still small voice. The frightened disciples were terrified



when that ghostly figure came to them upon the storm tossed lake, but as they recognised the voice of their Master and their hearts were quieted within them.

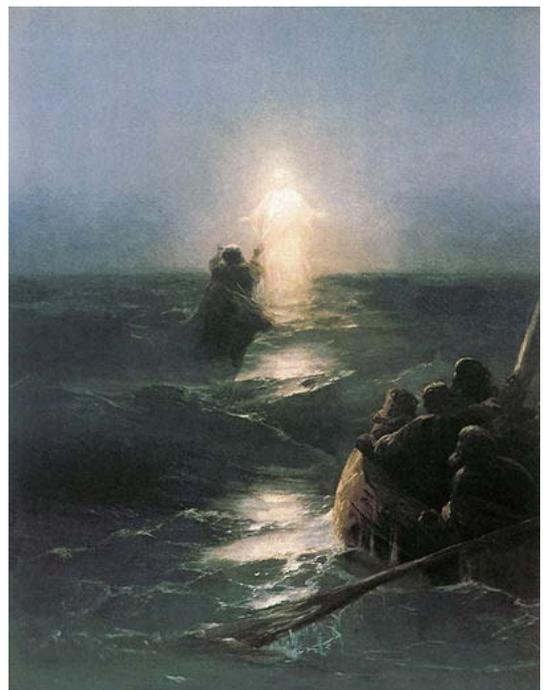
The disciples discovered that Jesus often came to them in the unexpected. He appeared to Mary that first Easter morning and she was so surprised she thought Him to be the gardener. That same evening, Jesus appeared to the frightened disciples in that upper room with His words of “Peace be with you!” Later, after toiling through the night and catching nothing, Jesus appeared on the lake shore and invited His disciples to put the net over the other side.

As we think upon our own lives, we may well recall those occasions when when we have encountered God in the unexpected and how that encounter has stilled our storms, and brought peace to our troubled hearts.

Jesus exhorted His disciples, “Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.” Let us heed our Master's voice, so that we might find that faith which will sustain us in the midst of life's storms. As the hymn writer said:

*Jesus calls us! O'er the tumult
of our life's wild restless sea
day by day his voice still calls us
saying, 'Christian, follow me.'*

*Jesus walks on the water,
by Ivan Aivazovsky (1817-1900)*



Hymn - How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

Click to hear:
[How sweet the name
of Jesus sounds](#)



How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
in a believer's ear!
it soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
and drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole
and calms the troubled breast;
'tis manna to the hungry soul,
and to the weary, rest.

Dear name! the rock on which I build
my shield and hiding-place;
my never-failing treasury filled
with boundless forms of grace.

Jesus, my Shepherd, Brother, Friend,
my Prophet, Priest, and King,
my Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
and cold my warmest thought;
but when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

Till then I would thy love proclaim
with every fleeting breath;
and may the music of thy name
refresh my soul in death.

John Newton (1725-1807)



*Slave monument
by Clara Somas.
Stone Town,
Zanzibar*

Prayers

Click to see & hear Peter: [Let us pray ...](#)



Let us remember God's presence with us now ...

Let us thank God for the ways in which the churches have responded to the needs of the present hour.

On-line services, telephone ministry and food deliveries are just some of the ways in which comfort and hope have been brought to many people. Thanks be to God.

The pandemic has brought out the best in many people. Give thanks for the concern, care and compassion shown. Pray that this spirit may continue when we return to some kind of normality ...

Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.

Pray for those suffering from Covid 19 and the many who have been bereaved. God grant them courage strength and comfort. Pray for those who are anxious about the future; those who have already lost their jobs and those who fear that they will soon do so; and those who are wondering if their business will survive ...

Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.



Every Thursday during the lockdown we stepped out of our homes to clap in support of the National Health Service. The clapping has stopped but those working in the NHS still need our prayers. Pray for those serving in hospitals, care homes and in the community. Thank God for their dedication and sacrifice.

There are other key workers whose contribution is vital to our well being ... Think of them all enfolded in the embrace of God's love ...

Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.



Remember government ministers, their medical and scientific advisors and all who continue to plan the way forward.

Remember too, the journalists and broadcasters who ask pertinent questions and help to keep us informed. Pray for those working night and day to discover an effective vaccine ...

Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.



We are understandably preoccupied with the pandemic but there are other issues and people who need our prayers. Lift up to God those people and situations on your heart today ...

Think of your family, friends and neighbours and give thanks for all that they are to you. Consider their various needs and hold them before God ...

Think of those in so many parts of the world constantly threatened by hunger, poverty and disease. Pray for the work of the relief organisations such as Christian Aid and Tear Fund ... May God help us to see the poverty that exists in the midst of plenty in our own society, and may he give us a heart to understand human need and a will to serve our neighbours ...

Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.



As we face our own anxieties, fears and troubles, let us open our hearts and minds to the ever present God. Remember the words of Jesus, "My peace I give you ... Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." Let him speak that word to us now ...

Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.



The Living God's Love Prayer:

Living God, draw us deeper into your love; Jesus our Lord send us to care and serve; Holy Spirit make us heralds of good news. Stir us, strengthen us, teach and inspire us to live your love with generosity and joy, imagination and courage; for the sake of your world and in the name of Jesus.

God beyond us, give us faith.

Christ beside us, give us peace.

Spirit within us, give us life.

Amen.



Click to see & hear:

[Guide me, O thou
great Jehovah](#)

Hymn - Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

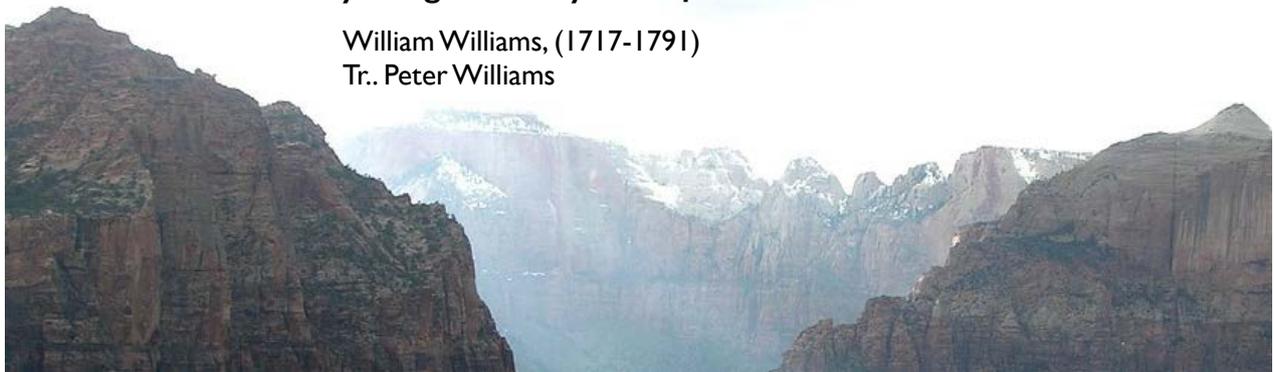
Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
pilgrim though this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain
whence the healing stream doth flow;
let the fiery cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises,
I will ever give to thee.

*O am aros, O am aros
yn ei gariad ddyddiau f'oes.*

William Williams, (1717-1791)
Tr.. Peter Williams



The Grace

And may the grace
of Our Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God,
and the fellowship
of the Holy Spirit,
be with us all, evermore.
Amen

*Hymns in today's service are used By Permission. CCL Licence No. 3740
The texts are from the New International Version (UK) of the Bible*



Bunyan Meeting
Mill Street
Bedford MK40 3EU

email bunyanmeeting@gmail.com
website www.bunyanmeeting.co.uk

Resources and Activities

This Sunday's Gospel reading is from Matthew. In chapter 14, verses 22 to 33 - see **page 8** - we hear the story of the disciples in a wind-tossed boat on the Sea of Galilee. They are frightened by the storm ... then they see **Jesus** coming towards them, walking on the surface of the water.

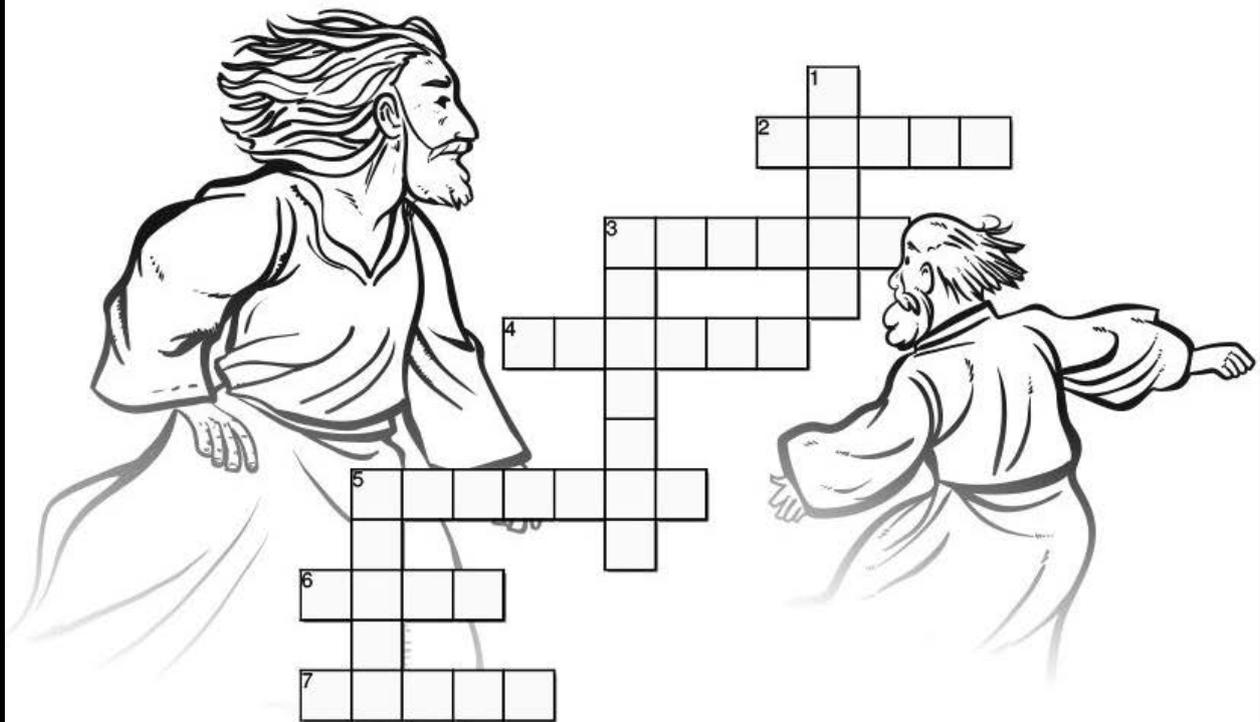
Simon Peter, always impetuous, climbs out of the boat in order to walk on the water to Jesus. He begins but, buffeted by the wind, starts to sink, and calls to Jesus to save him. Jesus grips his hand, and draws him out of the water, and back into the boat. Simon Peter says, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'



Here are two videos - one from a film, the other a cartoon - showing this scene: [Jesus walks on water](#) and [Jesus walks on water cartoon](#)

JESUS WALKS ON WATER

**Matthew 14:22-33,
Mark 6:45-52, and John 6:16-21**



Across

- 2. Jesus asked his disciples, "Why do you have so little _____?"
- 3. When Peter stepped out of the boat he too _____ on the water.
- 4. Jesus went away to spend some time in _____ with God.
- 5. After feeding the 5000, the disciples got in a boat and headed across the Sea of _____.
- 6. Jesus told Peter to "_____."
- 7. While the disciples were on the lake, a violent _____ arose.

Down

- 1. The wind and the _____ drew Peter's attention away from Jesus.
- 3. Peter knew that Jesus had control of the _____.
- 5. The disciples thought that Jesus was a _____ at first, and were very afraid.



Activities

BibleWise

Peter Walks on the Water

Matthew 14:22-33

Read the Scripture passage.

Peter trusted Jesus and the Lord took care of him.

Use the code to find out what we should do.

20 18 21 19 20 9 14 20 8 5 12 15 18 4

23 9 20 8 1 12 12 20 8 9 14 5

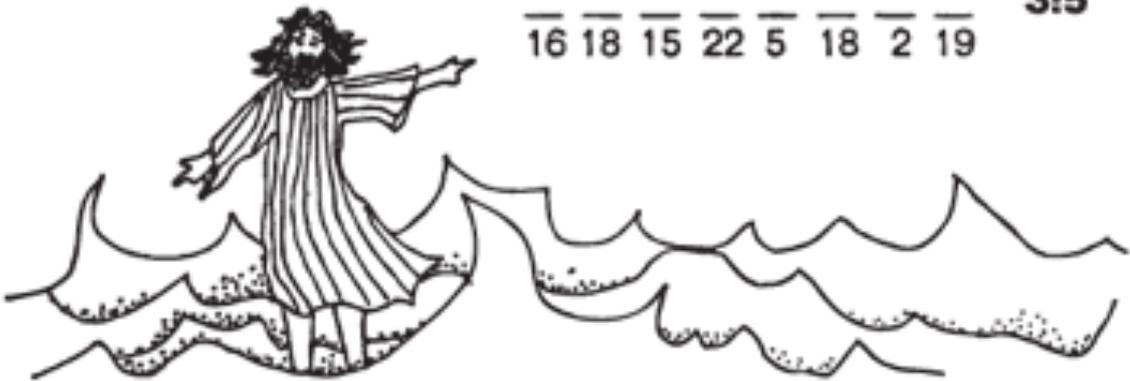
8 5 1 18 20 1 14 4 12 5 1 14

14 15 20 21 14 20 15 20 8 9 14 5

15 23 14 21 14 4 5 18 19 20 1 14 4 9 14 7

16 18 15 22 5 18 2 19

3:5



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Bible Activities For Everyone by Betty De Vries and Mary Currier. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books Publisher, 1999.