



Wednesday Prayer

10th Sunday after Pentecost – Peace, be still

Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. Matthew 14:22-32

Time alone to pray. Fear. Lack of trust. And finally, calm.

This story from Matthew is well known, and we often focus on the lack of faith the disciples felt as the storm raged. And the faltering faith of Peter when Jesus was right there with him. I've had to remind myself over and over again in these past months to pray, to block out fear, to trust, and to be calm. A short verse I've sung in my mind has helped bring me to peace:

"Peace, be still. Peace, be still.
The storm rages, Peace, be still."

Last week, I was on a webinar "How Faith Restores" hosted by [Shared Hope International](#). The storm that rages for survivors of sexual violence *can* be calmed by people in the Church, who listen without judgement, believe without question, and love unconditionally. A panelist of survivor leaders shared the impact of the Church in their healing. One shared her surprise when her pastor talked about ending sexual violence, thinking "Wow, this is amazing and helps me feel this is truly a safe space and I'm accepted for all that I am. I can let go of my shame and begin to move forward." Another shared that someone in the church may have been able to intervene if these were "acceptable conversations" in the Church and someone had helped her understand the vulnerabilities that got her to this place. A male survivor leader said, "But what about the boys!" sharing how his work is opening conversations with boys that had never happened before.

To begin learning how to be a trauma-informed congregation, taking steps to help prevent sexual violence and provide healing, view Session II of [My Neighbor is Not for Sale](#) and the accompanying resources.

Lord, help us to be instruments of your peace, with unconditional love for all. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.