

# St Chad's Small Groups

## Week Commencing Sunday 23rd June 2024

**Mark 4:35-41 Proper 7 Trinity 4 Year B**

We light a candle, pause to be still, and to ask God to be with us.

### WELCOME

- Do you like a dip in the sea, a jaunt on a boat, a surf on the waves? Or are you more of a landlubber?

### WORSHIP

Loving and sometimes silent God,  
we come into your presence,  
thankful to quieten our hearts and to wait for you to speak.  
We bring our joys, our challenges, and our questions.  
We open our hearts honestly to you,  
and we wait in that space beyond questions  
to feel you hold us in compassion. **Amen.**

Read the bible reading: **Mark 4:35-41**

- Did any phrase or word stand out for you?

The Sea of Galilee is surrounded by hills, except for a valley dip at one end, which can act like a funnel for the wind. This means that the water can go from glassy calm to choppy white horses very quickly, as the wind whips up the water. As seasoned fishermen on this large freshwater lake, this will not have been the first time that the disciples have experienced this phenomenon, but this time it was particularly severe. Their complaint to Jesus is about the apparent mismatch between their peril and his continuing nap: they do not cry, 'Help!' or 'Do something!', they question whether he cares.

- Who do you turn to in times of trouble and why?

We turn that conversation into prayer by each offering thanks to God for the things we've discussed.

A simple: "**Thank you, God, for...**", is all that is needed. But do feel invited to pray in your own words. After each prayer we all respond: **Amen.**

### WORD

The disciples words to Jesus are probably not asking him to intervene miraculously; they are a cry from the heart, an exasperated rebuke from friends who feel abandoned: 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' Perhaps all they expect is another pair of hands to join in bailing out the boat. Instead, Jesus changes the vast space of the inland sea simply by speaking. Jesus' questions to them – 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?' – underline that they still only have a sketchy picture of who he is. The miracle affects the disciples more than the storm did.

1. What resonated with you from the sermon on Sunday? What challenged or surprised you?
2. Have a look at Psalm 107 verses 28-31. This is a psalm in praise of God's goodness, power and love. How might the memory of this Psalm impact the disciples' reaction to Jesus' calming of the storm?
3. How did the disciples' fear during the storm differ from their fear afterwards?
4. What would you fear more - the storm or Jesus?
5. If we had an easy life with no trials, do you think our faith would grow more? Why/why not?
6. Thinking about climate change, it's been said that Christians worldwide are united together in the same boat with Jesus. What do you think is meant by that and what difference might it make?

### A time of music or quietness for reflection.

Suggested music:

*Can You Hear Me?* by Thomas Hewitt Jones

Image: *Inner Storm*, Sculpture by John Maisano

A time of personal reflection:

1. What do you see in the sculpture? What thoughts and feelings does it evoke for you?
2. Jesus said, "Quiet! Be still!" and all was 'completely calm'. How would that feel for you? Can you hear Jesus's words for yourself?



### WHAT NEXT?

When you get home, listen (again) to *Can You Hear Me?* by Thomas Hewitt Jones. Can you take time this week to listen to someone who is wrestling with something, taking care not to advise or try to fix things, remembering the last line of the song is simply: 'I am near you'.

- Would anyone like the group to pray for something specific this week? This could be prayed for now or taken away for people to pray at home.

### Closing Prayer:

Eternal God,

**we praise and adore you for all that you are:**

for being bigger than even our biggest questions;

for caring more than we can fully comprehend.

**We praise and adore you**

**for your strength** and your silence;

**for your power** and your peace.

**We praise and adore you**

**for being in control** and yet not controlling;

**for being in the storms** and beyond them.

**We praise and adore you,**

**Father, Son and Holy Spirit,**

we praise you for ever.

**Amen.**