

## **Introduction**

Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation! Now we are in the storm, the boat almost swamped; but Jesus is here now, and when we call him, he will calm the storm. Even the wind and waves listen to him as they would to their creator. We also listen to him and are called to believe in the power of God's word in him, a power greater than all that we fear.

## **Prayer of the Day**

O God of creation, eternal majesty, you preside over land and sea, sunshine and storm. By your strength pilot us, by your power preserve us, by your wisdom instruct us, and by your hand protect us, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

## **First Reading: 1 Samuel 17:57--18:5, 10-16**

*This passage describes the beginning of David's rise to power. After defeating Goliath, David becomes a commander in King Saul's army, and is befriended by Saul's son Jonathan. All Israel loves David, but Saul himself is overcome by jealousy. In all this, the LORD is with David.*

<sup>57</sup>On David's return from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul, with the head of the Philistine in his hand. <sup>58</sup>Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

<sup>18:1</sup>When David had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was bound to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. <sup>2</sup>Saul took him that day and would not let him return to his father's house. <sup>3</sup>Then Jonathan made a covenant with David, because he loved him as his own soul. <sup>4</sup>Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that he was wearing, and gave it to David, and his armor, and even his sword and his bow and his belt. <sup>5</sup>David went out and was successful wherever Saul sent him; as a result, Saul set him over the army. And all the people, even the servants of Saul, approved.

<sup>10</sup>The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand; <sup>11</sup>and Saul threw the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.

<sup>12</sup>Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul. <sup>13</sup>So Saul removed him from his presence, and made him a commander of a thousand; and David marched out and came in, leading the army. <sup>14</sup>David had success in all his

undertakings; for the LORD was with him. <sup>15</sup>When Saul saw that he had great success, he stood in awe of him. <sup>16</sup>But all Israel and Judah loved David; for it was he who marched out and came in leading them.

## Psalm 133

<sup>1</sup>How good and how pleasant it is,  
when kindred live together in unity!

<sup>2</sup>**It is like fine oil upon the head, flowing down upon the beard,  
upon the beard of Aaron, flowing down upon the collar of his robe.**

<sup>3</sup>It is like the dew of Hermon flowing down upon the hills of Zion.  
For there the LORD has commanded the blessing: life forevermore.

## Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:1-13

*Paul and his fellow workers experience great hardships and even rejection while carrying out their missionary work. Nevertheless, Paul continuously proclaims that God has not rejected us but is graciously working for our salvation.*

<sup>1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

<sup>11</sup>We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. <sup>12</sup>There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. <sup>13</sup>In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

## **Gospel Reading: Mark 4:35-41**

*Jesus' calming of the storm on the sea reveals his power over evil, since the sea represents evil and chaos. The boat on the sea is a symbol of the church and invites us to trust God amid life's turbulence.*

<sup>35</sup>When evening had come, [Jesus said to the disciples,] "Let us go across to the other side."

<sup>36</sup>And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. <sup>37</sup>A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. <sup>38</sup>But 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?" <sup>39</sup>He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. <sup>40</sup>He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?"

<sup>41</sup>And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

## Prayers of Intercession

Let us come before the triune God in prayer, saying “God, in your mercy,” and responding, “hear our prayer.”

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, you gather your people from east and west, north and south. We pray for the mission of the church throughout the world, that your steadfast love may be made known to all peoples. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

You laid the foundations of the earth and the waters are the womb of creation. The morning stars sing your name and all creation shouts for joy. We pray for your blessed creation, that it may continue to flourish and magnify your glory. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

You keep watch over all nations. We pray for countries experiencing violence, hunger, and unrest (*especially*). Guide worldwide and local community organizations in their efforts to establish safety and justice. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

You are close to the brokenhearted and near to those in distress. We pray for those who are experiencing oppression. Liberate us from the systems and chains that bind us. Remove the barriers that separate us from one another. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

You dwell with us in this faith community. We pray for our leaders and elders (*especially*). Grant them knowledge, patience, and kindness, that through their leadership you may be exalted in this assembly. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Your love endures in all situations. On this Father’s Day, we pray for those who are fathers or wish to be fathers, for those with broken or strained relationships, for those who are missing their fathers, and for fathers who have lost children. Bless and strengthen them. God, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace.

**Amen.**

***A reflection for the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost...***

Who, Then, Is This? Our Only Help.

As the disciples set out together in the boat with the sleeping Jesus, a great windstorm arose so that the boat became swamped. As we set out in mission together in the ship of Christ's church, how many storms arise! The elements of chaos still seem to wreak havoc in our lives, communities, and in the church—and we become terrified. Though Christ is present the disciples and we ourselves begin to doubt his care and power: "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" His presence seems far too weak to help us, though it is exactly in this vulnerable weakness that Christ shows his almighty power. Jesus wakes at the disciples' cries and rebukes the wind and waves—they are no match for his command. The terrifying calm that follows demonstrates his divine power over all the chaos that continually threatens us. And we find ourselves awe-struck before the living God who has met us in our weakness and yet overcome it. The Christ who sleeps in the boat is the same Christ who hangs on the cross, seemingly helpless. Yet the helpless one is none other than the all-powerful Lord God. "Who then is this?" but the Lord of all! The God who in the beginning brought order to the chaotic face of the deep now in Christ brings peace as we face the storm. So why are we afraid? Have we still no faith in this helpless Lord who is our only help?

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