



Church Together

Jesus Walks On Water; So Can You

12th September 2021





Welcome

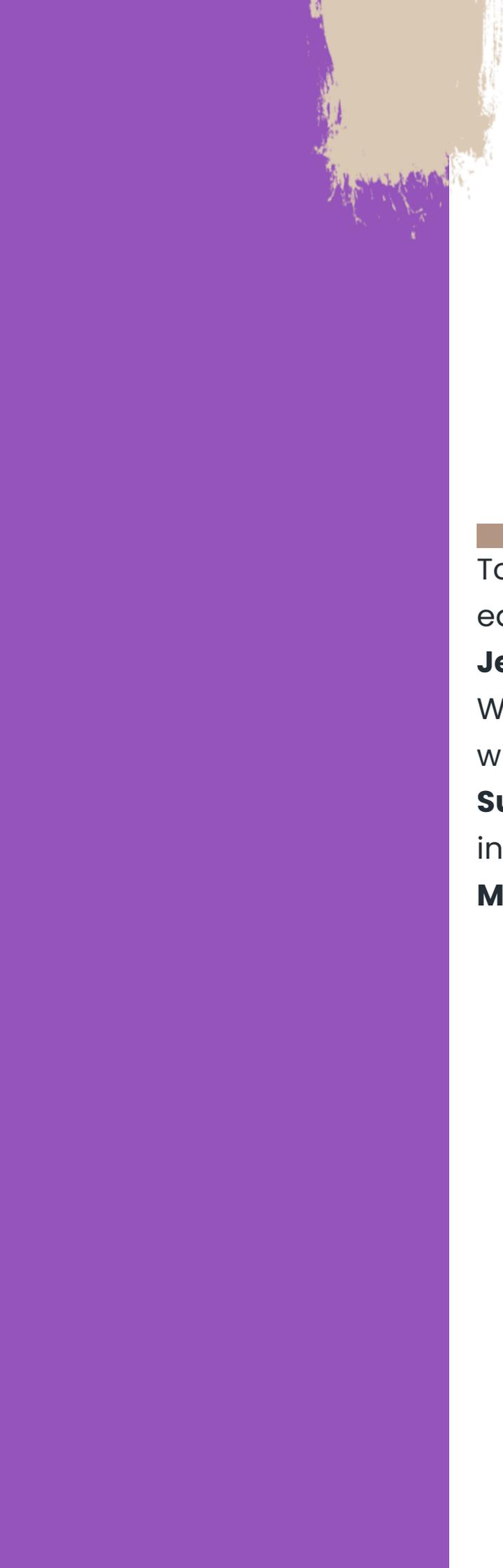
Welcome to **Church Together**.

No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together.

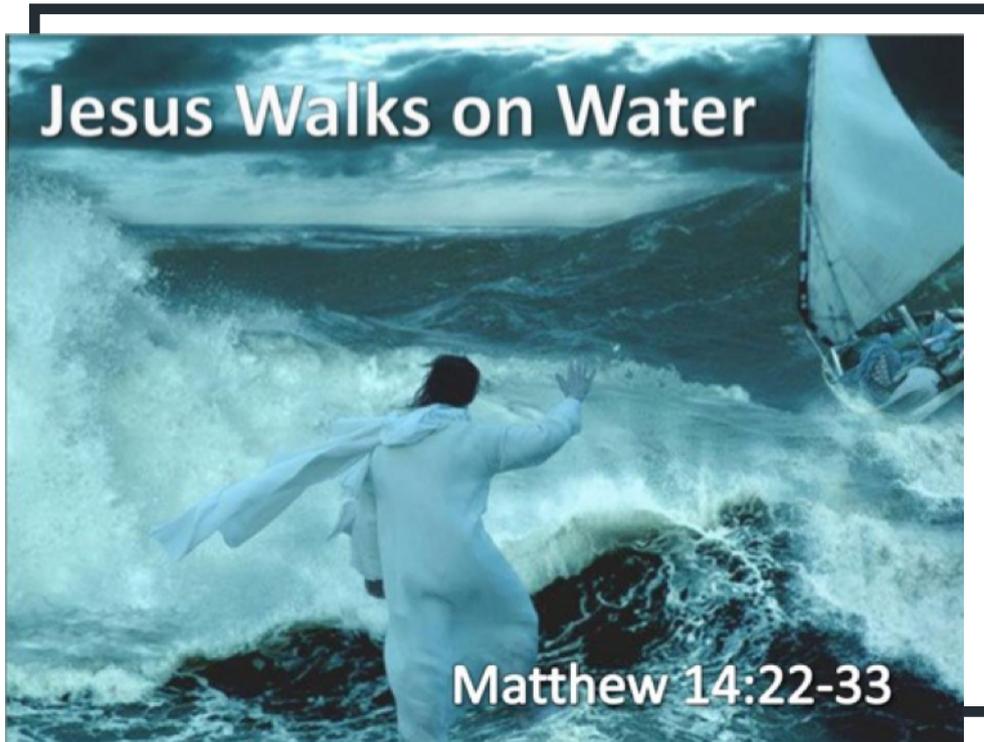
Our flexible Sunday worship patterns blend together on – line services, home deliveries and E – mailed copies of Church Together.

Today's service will be looking at: **Matthew 14 v. 22 – 33**

The theme for today's service is: **Jesus Walks On Water;
So Can You**



Today's service that is set out in this edition of **Church Together** is looking at **Jesus Walks On Water; So Can You.** We hope that you will be able to engage with what has been produced for our **Sunday Service** and that you would indeed **Know That Jesus Is With You, No Matter What.**



Jesus Walks on Water

Matthew 14:22-33

Call To Worship

Psalm 108 v. 1 – 5 NLT

My heart is confident in you, O God;
No wonder I can sing your praises!
Wake up, my soul!
Wake up, O harp and lyre!
I will waken the dawn with my song.
I will thank you, Lord, in front of all the
people.
I will sing your praises among the nations.
For your unfailing love is higher than the
heavens.
Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.
Be exalted, O God, above the highest
heavens.
May your glory shine over all the earth.



Opening Prayer

Thank you for the freedom to be amongst your family here today, meeting together in the warmth of your embrace. Loving and gracious God we thank you for the past week. The conversations we have had and the tasks that we have carried out.

We thank you that we are able to come to you just as we are, weary, tired and looking for direction. Imperfect and with many faults, but even so you accept us just as we are and you love us just the same. We thank you that we are still able to come before you in the busyness of our day, to worship you, and to offer ourselves in service to you.

Thank you that in worship we can put aside for a little time, the uncertainties of this world and rest upon the certainties of your Kingdom. Help us, Lord to be still in your presence, be in our hearts and minds as we prepare to hear your word. So, as we come together at this time we do so with an open heart and an open mind. Help us to hear what you are saying to us but not just hear

but to act also.

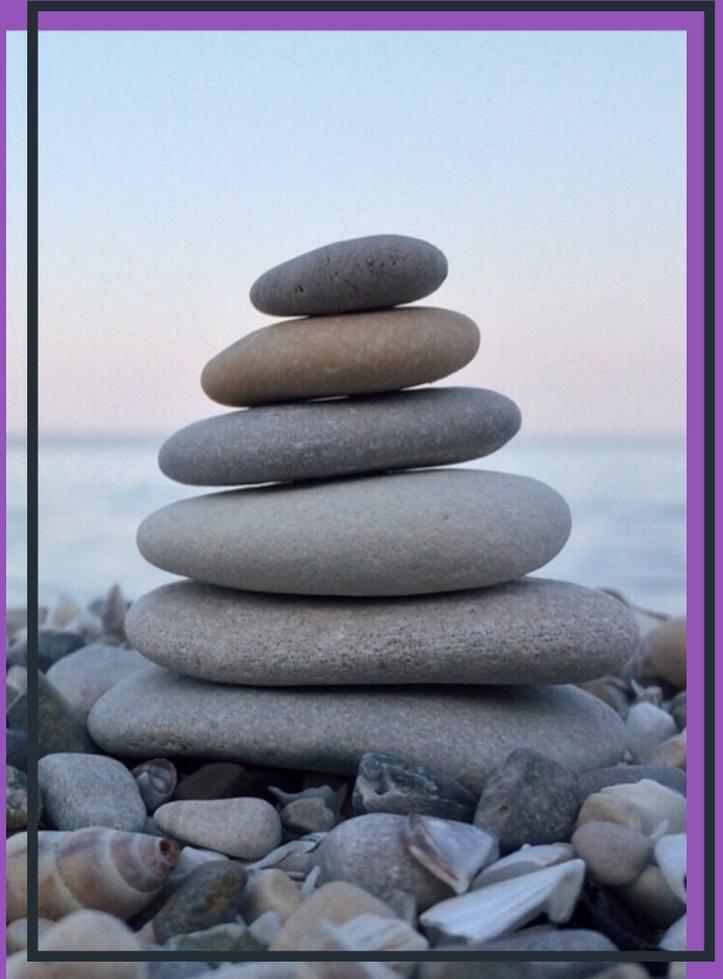
Thank you that we can bring to your feet all the hurts and fears that trouble us, and leave them there, knowing that your strength and assurance are all that we require. Help us to encourage each other Lord, and not to criticise, to build up and not to knock down, to develop and move forward on our journey of faith together.

Thank you Lord God for the opportunity of being with you today.

Amen

Song Suggestion

Tell Out, My Soul, The Greatness
Of The Lord



Bible

Reading

Matthew 14 v. 22 – 33 NIV

Jesus Walks on the Water

22 Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. 23 After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, 24 and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

25 Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. 26 When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

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

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

29 "Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and,

beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

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

32 And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. 33 Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."



Church Together Thought

The doorbell rings and Wendy whips off her apron, smooths her hair and she opens the front door. She invites the caller into the room where the children are not allowed to litter the chairs and floor with their toys. Ivan, her husband, has a more relaxed approach to callers. He brings them straight into the kitchen. In their faith, however, it is the other way round. It is Ivan who feels he must get his life cleaned up and ordered before he can come to God. Wendy is more confident of his loving acceptance of her and is willing to come just as she is and ask God to take on the cleaning and ordering of her life.

These are fictitious characters, but you probably know people who are like them in some way. Where do you fit into the picture, particularly when it comes to welcoming Christ daily and constantly into your life?

Accepted – Doubts and all

How do you approach God? Jesus' relationship with his disciples shows us that he accepted them with all their faults and struggles. He was to send his Spirit to help them grow more like him but did not expect them to transform themselves before they even came into his circle of friends. Simon Peter gives us plenty of evidence that Jesus accepts people with all their mixed motives and emotions.

Had you and I been in the storm – tossed boat with the disciples (**Matthew 14 v. 22 - 24**) and seen, before dawn, a figure walking on the water towards us, how would we have felt? How would we have reacted when we heard the familiar sound of Jesus' voice calling out to us?

It was typical of Peter to risk saying something straight away, while others' minds were still in a whirl. '**Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water.**' Peter's '**if**' suggests he was not totally certain, and yet one syllable, '**Come**', was enough to get him clambering over the side of the boat. I'm not all that surprised that none of the others followed him!

So here is Peter, in a very trusting and child – like spirit, literally coming to Jesus, until his

mind catches up with what his feet are doing! The wind distracts his attention away from Christ and he begins to sink.

What a comfort it is that Jesus is always there whenever we, too, feel we are sinking! Even if we feel like failures in our attempts to follow him, he is immediately (**v. 31**) at hand to catch us and bring us to a secure place.

Only after Peter is safely held – though not yet in the boat – does Jesus utter a gentle rebuke. It is not **'Well, whatever made you think you could do it in the first place?'** No, the rebuke is not for putting himself forward, but for not having a big enough faith. Jesus accepted all in the boat, however large their faith, and their response to his acceptance is to worship him as God.

Whoever suggested that putting faith in Christ is a straightforward business? Peter's greatest step of faith was at a time of his greatest confusion. References are to **Matthew 14 v. 22 – 33**.

So, let's look at the passage and see what it says to us today.

A STRUGGLE TO COPE WITH THE WORLD

What an extraordinary story! Why such a stunt – like miracle? No wonder the disciples thought they were seeing a ghost (**v. 26**).

Not so! The sea had always been for the Jews a symbol of the chaos and disorder that needed to be controlled (**e.g. Psalm 104 v. 5 – 9, and the accounts of the creation and the exodus**). The sea is often a symbol of death itself yet here is Jesus with his feet securely on it (**v. 25**).

The disciples had been placed in danger in the course of obeying Jesus (**v. 22**). We are told in the passage that it was cold and dark (**v. 25**). Jesus was nowhere to be seen, for we are told in (**v. 23**), that he had gone alone to pray.

No wonder this story has resonated with Christians down through the centuries – this is precisely the world with which we are familiar, a world with suffering and struggles that we find hard to understand and a sense that we are left to fight through these sufferings and struggles alone.

A STRUGGLE TO UNDERSTAND JESUS

You would think that having seen Jesus calm a storm (**Matthew 8 v. 27**), the disciples would not have been surprised to see him walking on water. Apparently not! Don't be dismayed if you find it just as hard to understand why God does certain things after thirty years as you did after thirty days – that is the nature of the struggle!

Martin Luther once said: *Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and confident that a man could stake his life on it a thousand*

times.

Fear can stop us learning. So can a reluctance to take risks, for risk - taking never becomes automatic, and the violence of the world around will always be a challenge to our understanding. But take courage that, despite all those things, the disciples still came to a point where they could worship Jesus as the Son of God (**v. 33**). Maybe our thought should be that only great risks can lead to great discoveries!

A STRUGGLE TO HAVE FAITH

ILLUSTRATION

The bishop's car ran out of petrol but, much to his relief, his wife remembered passing a garage half a mile back up the road. He searched the boot for a container, but could only find his grandson's potty, so it had to do! He trudged to the petrol station, then back with a full container.

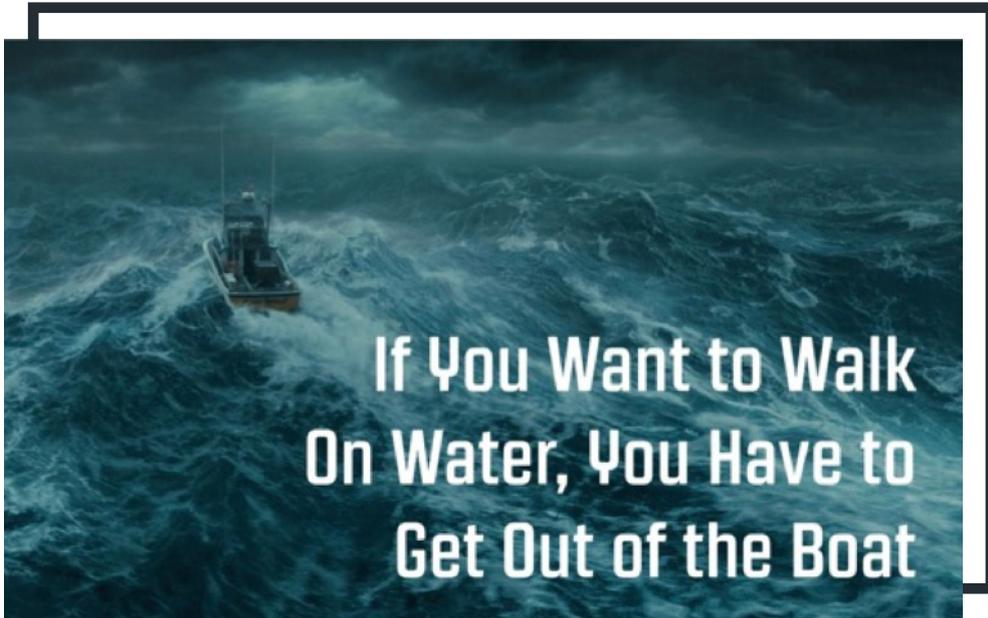
A community church leader recognised a fellow Christian in need, and slowed his car to offer help. As he approached, he saw the bishop pour the contents of the potty into the tank. The man gasped: **'If I'd known they have faith like that in the Church of England, I'd never have left!'**

What amazing confidence Peter must have had in Jesus even to attempt to go to him across the water (**v. 29**). And come to that, what amazing confidence Peter had in himself! For a moment, at least (**v. 30**)!

Perhaps to have confidence in our own faith is to have a misplaced confidence. When we stop our questioning and smother our doubt, it may be a sign that we have misplaced our confidence – that we are lacking in knowledge of ourselves. Like Peter, there are lessons for us to learn which may not be a pleasant process (**v. 30**).

Adversity and uncertainty open us to learning in a way which security and comfort do not. Perhaps that is why the New Testament views doubt with a realistic mixture of sympathy and encouragement to overcome it (**Jude 1 v. 22 - 23**). Jesus' support is continuously at hand (**v. 31**). Back in the boat, the new understanding of the Lord of all nature beside us repays the hardship many times over (**v. 32, 33**).

What we see is that Jesus walked on water and then empowered Peter, through faith, to do the same. Life is never without its occasional storms. However, when we trust God, we, like Peter, can receive God's power to make it through the storm. As long as we hold on to our faith and keep our eyes on Jesus, we will not be overcome by the storms of life. It is when we focus on the troubled waters around us and forget God's assistance that we start to sink. If we want to make continued progress, we need to keep our eyes on God.



**If You Want to Walk
On Water, You Have to
Get Out of the Boat**



Song Suggestion

The Splendour Of The King



Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

Now that we find ourselves once again holding services in Church, we are able to give of our finances to the work of the Lord when we are in church.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.



Prayers of Intercession

Loving Heavenly Father, it gives us joy and delight to be in your presence this day. To know that you are indeed our Lord and Saviour. To you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts today we pray, by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and therefore worthily magnify your holy name this day.

Loving God, we lift up in prayer today, the community in which we worship, and those whose lives interweave ours. We pray for the many churches in Huddersfield; may their lives of worship and service be used by you, may they be guided by your Spirit, and may they be filled with the joy of the risen Lord Jesus; and may they, along with us here today, be brought into a deeper partnership as we celebrate and serve you where we find ourselves.

We pray for the many local schools in this area as they have started back for the Summer term in the last couple of weeks. May they be places where children, young people and staff are prized for who they are;



where good education is passed on to the upcoming generations for the good of their lives and the communities that they are part of.

We pray for those whose occupation is to serve this community. We pray for health workers, police, emergency services and all those who contribute to the lives of this community. May they, together with all who live here, help this to be a better community where need is met and hope is given.

For a moment in the quietness of this day, we pray, Lord Jesus, for those who have served in our church and in the world, but who are no longer with us. We thank you, loving Lord, for all those who have heard the call of Jesus, and have responded with their lives. We thank you for those who have shared their faith with us. In silence now we name before you those who have served us in special ways, influenced our lives and lead us nearer to you. As we learn from both their successes and failures, so may we offer ourselves as servants of your kingdom today we pray.

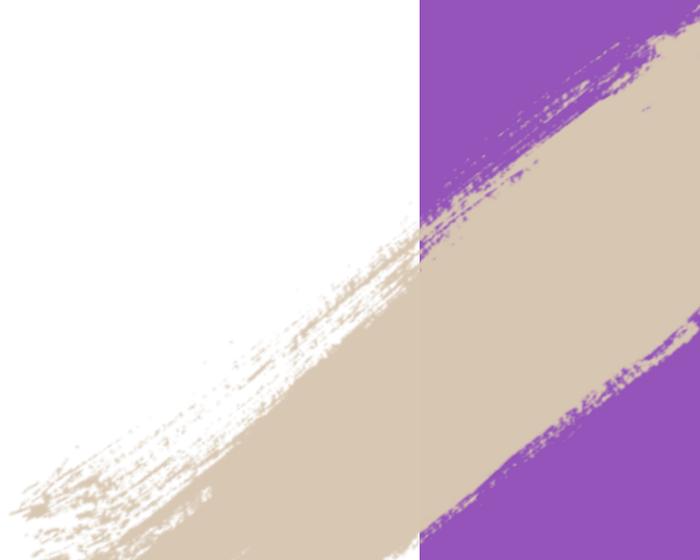
We ask all of these prayers in the powerful and wonderful name of Jesus.

Amen

Having God in your boat
doesn't mean that you'll not
face any storms.

It means that no storm
can sink your boat!

**Walk in faith and you will
never walk alone.**



Song Suggestion

Lord For The Years, Your Love Has
Kept And Guided





Blessing

And now may the Love of God,
The Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.
And the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
Remain with us all,
Now and forever more.

Amen

