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This is an outline of my sermon text for **the 10th Sunday after Pentecost**, on **August 9, 2020**. My focus was on the Gospel lesson, **Matthew 14:22-33** on Jesus walking on water to catch up to the disciple's boat, and Peter's imitation of Wylie E. Coyote, but on water. + pBRC

May God guide us as we step out in faith, doing God's work with our hands and hearts. AMEN.

- I have a parenting question for you all.
  - How do you handle when your child regresses?
  - What do you do when they stop doing something you know they can do and have done?
    - When they say they need a nightlight on when it hasn't been on in months?
    - When they want their sleeping companion back after giving it up a while ago?
  - You would want to know what changed, why they think they can't do what they have been doing.
    - You would want to know what changed for them.
- Our lesson from St. Matthew's Gospel picks up where we left off last week.
  - Jesus has feed the 5,000 plus people (remember the women and children) with what you can get from a fast food value meal for under \$10.
  - He sends the crowds away, and sends the disciples in a boat to go to the other side of the lake, and he goes off to pray in private.
    - They didn't get too far because of the winds into which they were rowing.
    - I'm not sure how the disciples thought that Jesus would meet up with them, but they did as they were instructed.
      - But they didn't have long to wonder about that.
      - 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.**"<sup>A</sup>
      - Another time, they were with Jesus in the boat, and it began to storm. They woke him because they thought they about to die, and he rebuked the storm, which stopped immediately.<sup>B</sup>
    - Now they see him, and he tells them not to be afraid. He is with them.

- Peter believes if Jesus can walk on water, Peter can do so as well, if Jesus tells him to do so.
  - If Jesus can command the storm to stop, he can command Peter to walk on water.
    - So Jesus said, “Come.” <sup>C</sup>
    - 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. <sup>D</sup>
    - Before we move on, I want you to re-read this line.
      - Peter ... started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus.
      - Peter was able to do what he asked Jesus to help him do.
        - Then something changed.
        - The wind blew in his face.
        - The new normal changed.
        - He realized what he was doing.
        - Peter was like Wyle E. Coyote, who has followed the Roadrunner off a cliff and realizes he is running on air. He stops, turns to camera, holds up a card upon which is written “YIKES!” and plummets to the ground. <thud>
- Why does Peter begin to sink?
  - Why does the Coyote fall and the Roadrunner keeps going?
  - They notice.
  - They stop paying attention to what they are doing, and they realize what they are doing.
    - They are walking on water. They are running on air.
    - They are sleeping in the dark. They are sleeping by themselves.
    - The church is surviving without anyone being in the church building.
    - The church continues to serve those in need, in fact, it becomes more inclusive.
    - The church is able to continue without Sunday in-person worship.
  - Then we notice what is going on. “YIKES!”
  - 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?” <sup>E</sup>
    - Jesus is not rebuking or embarrassing Peter.
    - He is asking Peter the same way you would ask why the nightlight needs to be turned back on, or why the sleeping buddy is suddenly needed.
    - What changed that makes you want to go back to where you were?
      - Why are you doubting?
      - Peter, you were walking on water. You did so with the little faith you have.
  - The Son of God came to Earth and became human so that the Earth and all who have lived there could be saved. Saved by Him.
    - What happened when Peter began to sink.
      - Peter cried out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him. <sup>F</sup>
      - Our Savior saved him. Jesus did what Jesus does.

- Now I am not saying to keep our doors closed, or that we don't need to get back together.
  - I am pointing out that there are new ways to do church and to be church, and I ask that we “Take heart, ... do not be afraid.”<sup>G</sup>
  - I want all of us to reach out to those who haven't been gathering with us on Sundays.
    - Please share them with me because I will be making contacts on my own.
    - I have a vision of a combined Covenant church that takes the best of what you all have been doing and making it possible to continue to do that work, but to reach out in ways we have not done before into our communities and beyond to find new ways to proclaim the Good News and share God's love.
      - I'm not ready to run out into the unknown, because despite my little faith, I have my “YIKES!” card handy.
      - But I am ready to walk in new directions because I know upon how firm a foundation we go.
        - Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,  
for I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.<sup>H</sup>
- Let us pray.
  - Father God, we know you call us to step out to serve where you call us. Remind us that in all we do, you are with us to strengthen and to guide. When we feel overwhelmed, and hold up our YIKES card, give us the comfort to know that Our Savior saves. AMEN.

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<sup>A</sup> Matthew 14:25-27.

<sup>B</sup> Matthew 8:23-27.

<sup>C</sup> Matthew 14:29.

<sup>D</sup> Matthew 14:29-30.

<sup>E</sup> Matthew 14:30-31.

<sup>F</sup> Matthew 14:30-31.

<sup>G</sup> Matthew 14: 27.

<sup>H</sup> How Firm A Foundation, verse 2, written by John Rippon, 1787.