

**Second Sunday before Lent,  
Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> February 2022**



Dear Friends,

***In fear and amazement they asked one another, 'Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.'***  
*(Luke 8: 25)*

Earlier in the week, I heard a wonderful vignette from a member of our Ministry Team who had been speaking to some young children about St Valentine. Asking them gently whether they knew what was so special about Valentine's Day, one little boy shouted out the enthusiastic reply '*Jesus!*' This toddler's emphatic answer wasn't necessarily the one being sought in that moment, but his open heart for Jesus speaks volumes. Would that we each instinctively sought Jesus as the answer to all our worldly questions!



***Isle of Wight ferry battles heavy seas in storm Eunice - STEVE REIGATE***

This week we find the disciples in a particularly apposite bind. As Storms Dudley and Eunice sweep our nation, leaving roads blocked by fallen trees, power outages and a majestic spire blown off a village church in Somerset, the doughty fishermen are themselves caught up in a storm. Oftentimes, we find it hard to identify with the situations we read about in the gospels. However, in real time today, our country has been ravaged by phenomenal storms which have left our Hampshire villages without means of communication because of high winds wreaking a trail of devastation. Today, many of us are only too easily able to relate to the disciples' experiences.

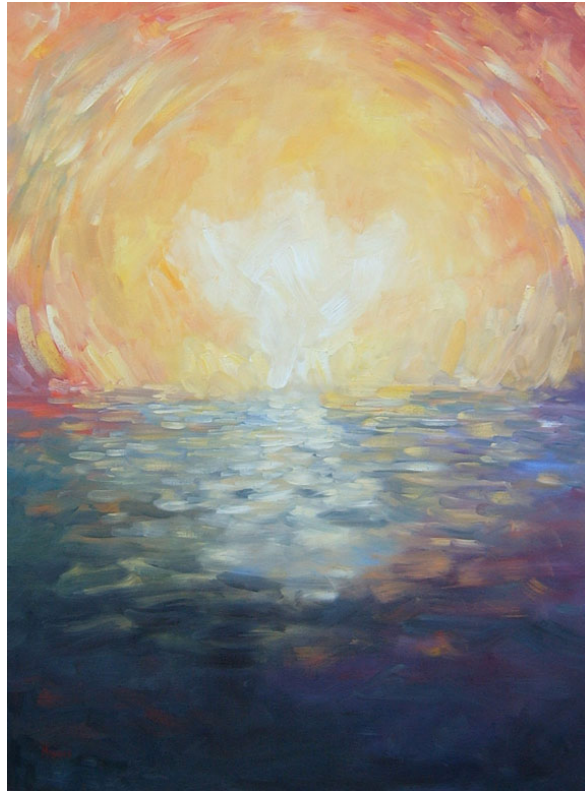
News reels are full of images of juggernaut lorries being blown over on UK motorways, aircraft trying to land at Heathrow in precarious conditions, garden fence panels being tossed around like tissue paper and the O2 Arena roof being ripped off as if by a giant opening the lid on a can of beans. I cannot begin to imagine how terrifying these events must have felt for those involved and our prayers are with everyone left anguished and vulnerable. One message to the Heathrow Control Tower from an aircraft about to make its descent, poignantly announced they had run out of in-flight sick bags.



**Source – RTE**

I wonder how many passengers, who ordinarily never thought of praying to God, found themselves screaming for His protection and for the expertise of the pilots to prevail – just like the disciples found themselves doing in the fearful weather conditions which threatened to overwhelm them on the Sea of Galilee. In such situations, when the veneer of self-sufficiency by which we live our lives reveals itself to be shockingly fragile, we instinctively call out to our Lord and Saviour to save us.

Our little theologian who instinctively discerned the answer to the meaning of Valentine's Day (and every other question he might be asked for that matter) was 'Jesus' has hit the nail right on the head. The real answer to the disciples' question, 'Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him,' is not whether Jesus stilled a storm on the Sea of Galilee, but whether the God who miraculously delivers His people from situations far beyond their control in biblical times still acts to deliver those of us who call out His holy name in the trials of our lives today.



***'Illuminations' by Mike Moyers***

Jesus, unperturbed by the ravages of the storm, sleeps peacefully on the fishing boat. When He is wakened by the terrified disciples, His first response is to ask them to have faith. He was with them in that dangerous squall, just like He is with us in the situations which threaten us, however unexpectedly they occur.

We too must have faith in His miraculous ability to create calm out of chaos. Call out the name of Jesus. Acknowledge His divine identity as Saviour in your life. Rest in His love and receive the peace of His life-giving grace. Jesus is always the right answer to every question we could ever have!

Yours, safe in the sovereign power of Christ,

**Jax**

**Rector, The Downs Benefice**

**Collect Prayer for the Second Sunday before Lent**

Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever.

**Amen.**



### **Luke 8: 22 -25 - Jesus Calms the Storm**

One day Jesus said to his disciples, 'Let us go over to the other side of the lake.' So they got into a boat and set out. As they sailed, he fell asleep. A squall came down on the lake, so that the boat was being swamped, and they were in great danger. The disciples went and woke him, saying, 'Master, Master, we're going to drown!' He got up and rebuked the wind and the raging waters; the storm subsided, and all was calm. 'Where is your faith?' he asked his disciples.

In fear and amazement they asked one another, 'Who is this? He commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him.'

### **Schedule of Services**

*This schedule is correct at this time but may be subject to future alterations – please check on our website for the most up-to-date information.*

All services start at 10am, unless marked differently on the table below.

We ask that you continue to wear masks and book services by contacting the Benefice Office on 01962 880 845 or [office@downsbenefice.org.uk](mailto:office@downsbenefice.org.uk)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Ch</i>	<i>Cr</i>	<i>Li</i>	<i>Sp</i>	<i>Wh</i>
<i>20<sup>th</sup> Feb</i>	Holy Communion	Morning Worship		8am – BCP Holy Communion	
<i>27<sup>th</sup> Feb</i>			Morning Prayer	Morning Worship	8am – BCP Holy Communion
<i>2<sup>nd</sup> March ASH WEDNESDAY</i>	12 noon - Holy Communion with Ashes		Holy Communion with Ashes		<i>With Chilbolton</i>

<i>4<sup>th</sup> March</i> <i>FRIDAY</i>	2pm – Women’s World Day of Prayer Service				
<i>6<sup>th</sup> March</i>	Morning Prayer	Holy Communion	4pm – Café Church		
<i>13<sup>th</sup> March</i>	4pm – Evening Prayer for Lent		Holy Communion		Morning Prayer
<i>20<sup>th</sup> March</i>	Holy Communion	Morning Worship		8am – BCP Holy Communion	
<i>23<sup>rd</sup> March</i> <i>WEDNESDAY</i>			Holy Communion		
<i>27<sup>th</sup> March</i>	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Mothering Sunday Family Service	Mothering Sunday Family Service