

# THE HOPE JOURNAL

LEARNING TO LOVE, TOGETHER

June 23, 2024



PASSION LED US HERE

## STORMS

*the frights of living and saving*

by Drew Downs

Most of us can imagine a time when we felt the world was collapsing around us. The storm is raging and we aren't sure how we are going to make it. And in the midst of it, there is somebody we care about acting like it's no big deal. Can't they see the storms? Don't they see the danger? The potential? Don't they even care?

The question rarely is whether or not they care about us, though.

Often they are the calm one. While we're trusting our own anxieties and certainties, theirs are the reliable ones.

It is a ridiculous notion, after all. When we all know that death isn't on the table. And that our own fears are an unreliable narrator. That we'd hold it against the rational one. Doesn't that show what we're really after, then? To be seen and acknowledged? The trick, however, is that we can't see that we already are.

# ORDINARY TIME

2024

## WHAT'S GOING ON

*"You know we've got to find a way  
To bring some loving here today".*

-Marvin Gaye

Disciples, Apostles, and Saints!

### **General Convention**

This coming week, Episcopalians from all over the world will gather in our neighboring state of Kentucky for the General Convention, the triennial gathering of the church.

For some people, it is a great big festival of the church with excitement and opportunity. For others, it is a two-week business meeting—so joy isn't on the menu. I've been a part of gatherings which have felt like both and can tell you the difference between them is mostly cosmetic and a matter of attitude. We think structure or planning or the right leadership is the difference. It's mostly the attitudes people bring and the expectations they operate with.

Maybe I've grown weary of the games. Or of the idea of radical seriousness replacing radical faith.

Mostly, though, I've come to expect that the great excitement that surrounded every General Convention of the 21st Century has died down because the political climate has changed. There are always issues, of course. But the era of the media covering Convention through an evangelical culture war lens is thankfully over.

A new era is dawning for the church. I hope we have the courage to make it a season of celebration, hope, and joy in the midst of everything.

With love,  
Drew

# ORDINARY TIME

2024

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## FOR SUNDAY

*Proper 7B*

June 23, 2024

### **Collect**

O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your loving-kindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

### **Reading**

Mark 4:35-41

When evening had come, Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. 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?" 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. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" 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?"

# ORDINARY TIME

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## Reflection

This story always makes me laugh. Jesus is sleeping in the back of the boat during a storm. The disciples freak out and shout about how Jesus *clearly* doesn't care that **they're all going to die!**

We know they aren't. They *should* know they aren't. And it is actually an open question whether they actually *believe* they are going to die.

But it is funny that they act like it is life and death. And that imperative is juxtaposed by Jesus sleeping, so he probably thinks they're going to be fine. That is incredibly telling. Not just about the things we believe, but about how different *our* sense of life and death is from Jesus's.

They think the storm is the problem and Jesus neither thinks it is *a* problem or *the* problem.

This is the comedy of misunderstanding, when we don't know the score and here is the authority figure, just chilling. Can't he see we are freaking out?

The real question of this story is not about life and death, but what it is they think Jesus can do about it.

In one sense, they want him to care for their feelings. But I don't think that's everything. They want him to care for their bodies. They want him to save all of them. And because death is clearly imminent, they need him to *do something*. They don't know what exactly. But something.

The thing is, that he does something. He does protect them. And *that* scares them more than the storm. What is it they *actually* wanted, then? What is it that we want?

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