




Boats & Staying Afloat

Preparation

- *Share with people, in advance, the focus on “boats”. Encourage people to bring a boat with them – a boat picture, a toy boat, or something from a boat!*
- *Make enough origami boats for everyone to have one, for the “Staying Afloat” section, perhaps using this YouTube video (How to Make a Very Easy Origami Sailboat  Tutorial (Traditional model) Only 2 folds!): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcieP3uy4Dc> Have pens ready for people to write on the boats.*
- *Make a boat display as the central focus, ideally with everyone sitting in a circle round it. For the display, you may like to use some blue material as a sea, with origami and other boats floating on it.*
- *This service is about half an hour long. After the service, it’s a good idea to share refreshments together.*
- *The prayers in this service are based on “Storm – Vessel – Voyage” in “Dancers and Wayfayers” by Chris Thorpe published by Canterbury Press.*
- *The picture on the cover of this leaflet is by Chris Duffett – see <https://chrisduffettart.com/>*

Opening Prayer

God of our journeying,
show us your horizons
as we cast off from
the safety of the harbour.
Grant us fierce courage
as we face into the gale.
Help us to journey together
through the storms of life.
As we still our bodies,
slow our breathing and
open ourselves to you,
quieten our minds and hearts.
Amen

Boats

I wonder when you've been in a boat – perhaps a canoe or a dinghy, a rowing boat or a sailing boat. Or you may have taken a ferry to go on holiday. And many of us will have played with toy boats, whether on a pond or in the bath!

Using the boats in front of us and the pictures of boats on the next page, let's take a few minutes to share our experiences of boats.

When have you
been on a boat?



Photos by Adam Marikar (ferry boat) and Bruce Warrington (sailing boat) from Unsplash

Song

The verse from our song is written by the Forget-me-not group in Shifnal, Shropshire. Particularly when we are journeying through turbulent waters, it's important to stay connected, as we navigate a path forwards.

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together
with cords that cannot be broken;
bind us together, Lord, bind us together, Lord,
bind us together in love.

We are all in one boat
afloat in God's ocean of love,
knowing that we're not alone
as we weather the storms of life.

Bind us together, Lord, bind us together
with cords that cannot be broken;
bind us together, Lord, bind us together, Lord,
bind us together in love.

"Bind us together"
by Bob Gillman
© Thankyou Music

Bible Reading

We are going to share a story from the Bible. Jesus gets into a boat with his friends and a storm blows up. The reading is from the Gospel according to Saint Mark, Chapter 5, beginning at verse 35:

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "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.

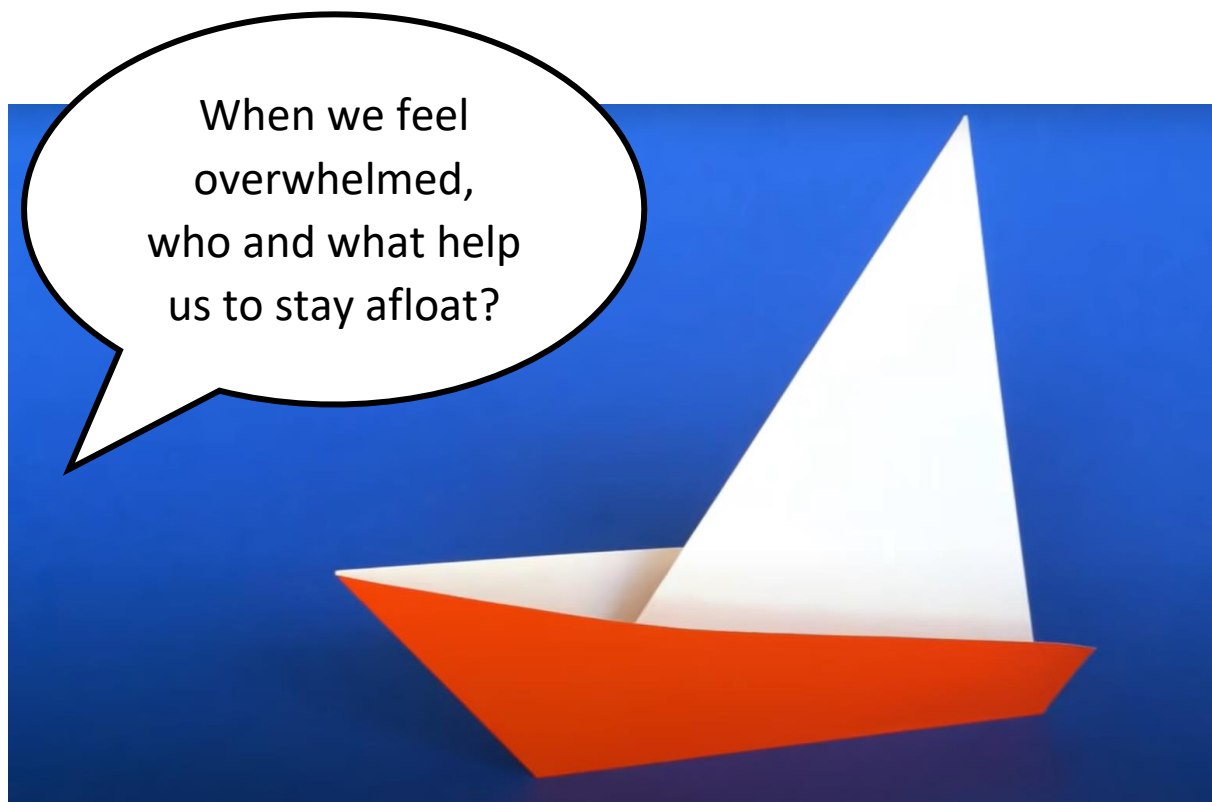
He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?". And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?".

Staying Afloat – Who and What Helps?

When the storm blows up, Jesus' friends are afraid. They are out of their depth and overwhelmed. And they turn to Jesus.

When we are out of your depth and overwhelmed, who are the people we turn to? What are the things that help us to stay afloat?

Let's spend a few minutes naming the people and things that help us to stay afloat, writing them onto our paper boat.



From "How to make a very easy origami sail boat":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcieP3uy4Dc>

Prayers

We recognise all
that we face
individually and globally
including the things
that overwhelm us
and we bring
these to God.



Soul boat by Jake Lever www.leverarts.org

He made the storm be stilled
and the waves of the sea were hushed. *

We recognise the times
when we feel despairing or discouraged
and we bring these to God.

He made the storm be stilled
and the waves of the sea were hushed.

We recognise the times
when we want to stay safe in the harbour
and not to face the gale
and we bring these to God.

He made the storm be stilled
and the waves of the sea were hushed.

* from Psalm 107 verse 27

As we navigate the waves of life
individually and globally
we ask God to help us to find
the place of peace
in the eye of the storm.

God, help us to journey with one another and with you
Staying afloat together through the storms of life.

In our struggles
when we lose sight of the shore
we ask God to help us to navigate
by the shining light of those around us
who inspire us forwards.

God, help us to journey with one another and with you
Staying afloat together through the storms of life.

As we journey across wild seas
we ask God to expand
our horizons of hope
and to give us strength and courage
to journey forwards in love.

God, help us to journey with one another and with you
Staying afloat together through the storms of life.

Song

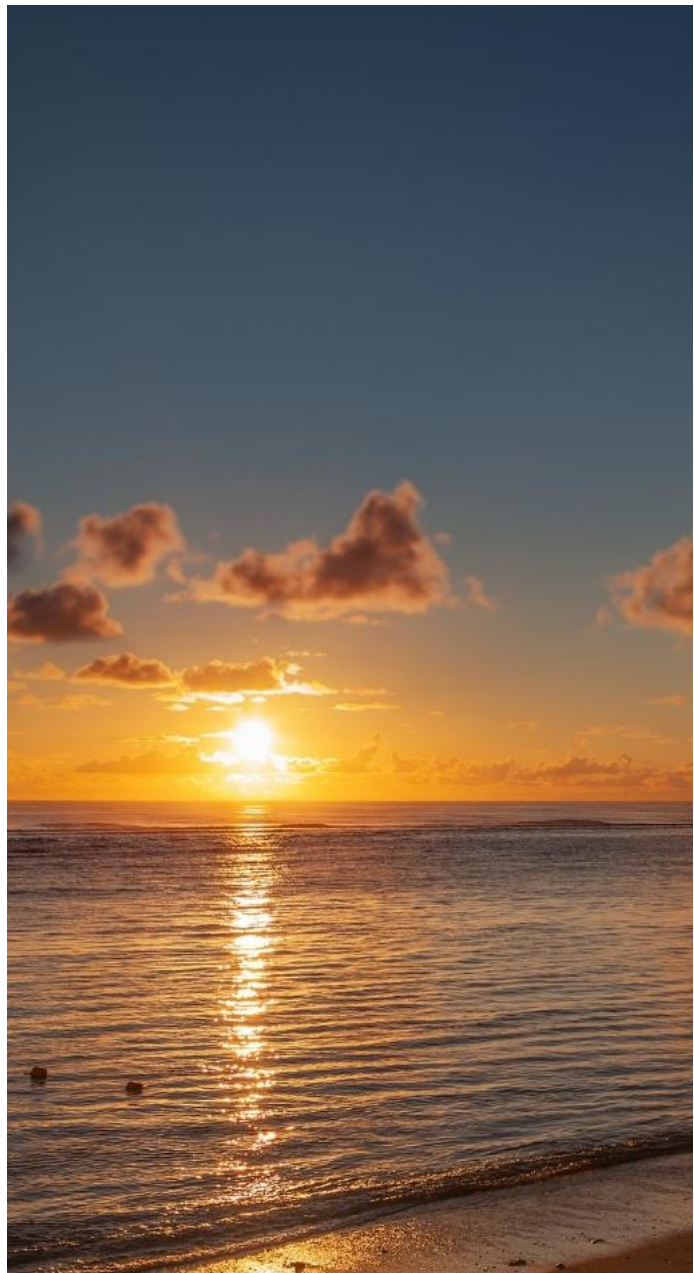
Our final song is based on The Breton Fisherman's Prayer.
Although the words may be new to you,
you may recognise the tune, Tallis's Canon.

My boat so small,
the sea so wide,
be near me, Lord,
through wind and tide.

In sun and calm,
In fruitful days,
the work is yours
and yours the praise.

But when the waves
are mountain-high,
be good to me
and hear my cry.

In surging seas
and tempest-tossed,
let neither life
nor faith be lost.



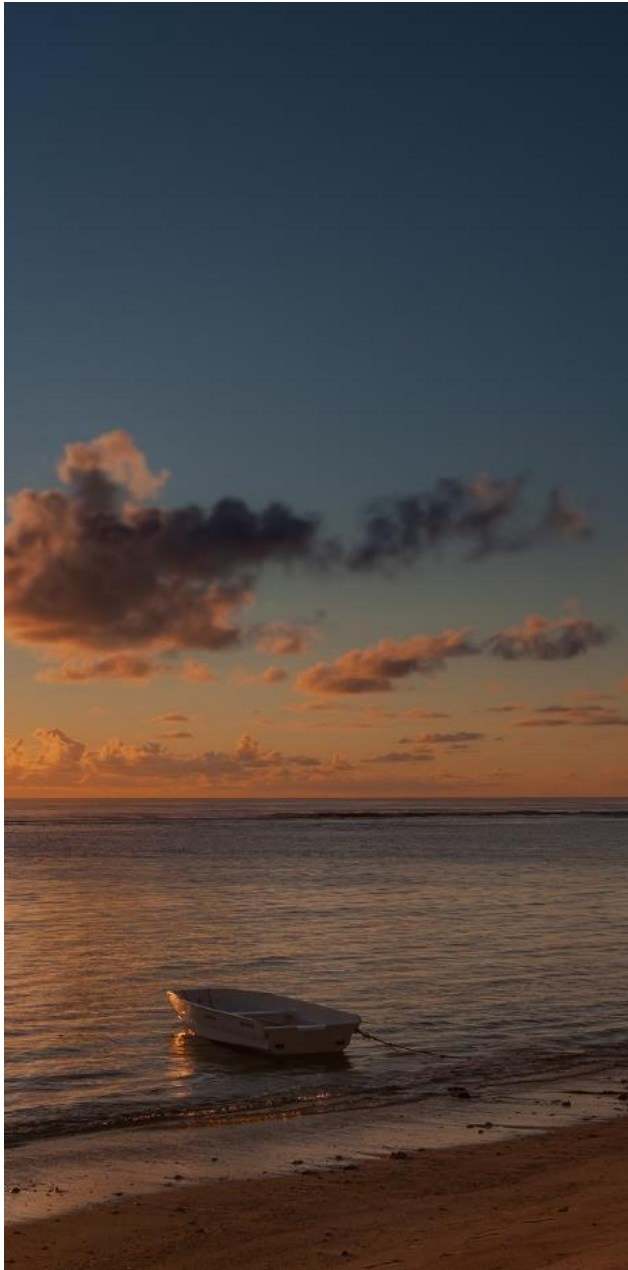


Photo from Pixabay
free for commercial use

Adrift, when strength
and courage fail,
O Spirit, breathe
to fill my sail.

When dark the night,
the harbour far,
show through the cloud
a guiding star.

My vorage done,
all trouble past,
to haven bring
my soul at last.

The sea so wide,
my boat so small,
may Christ to me
be All-in-All.

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The Lord's Prayer

We finish by joining together in the words of the Lord's Prayer, that connects us as one family across the generations and around the globe:

Our Father, which art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive
those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil
for thine is the kingdom
the power and the glory
for ever and ever.
Amen



Photo by Boba Jovanovic
from Unsplash

For more information on our dementia-friendly churches network across Staffordshire, The Black Country and north Shropshire, contact

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