

Sunday 22nd August 2021
John 15:1-14
Rev.Scott Burton
Brightons Parish Church

Well boys and girls, we're thinking about this story in the Bible where there is a boat and our breakfast but I was thinking it might be quite nice almost to have a boat here in church if only we could make a boat here in church to help us imagine!

And so, I wonder if you might help me with some of these props. You're going to have to really use your imagination because it's going to be pretty basic but I wondered if using these blankets we might make a bit of a boat shape around this area at the front. Do you think you can help me? In a moment once the music starts we'll do it.

Now, there's not enough for everybody so we're going to have to have some teamwork okay. So, everybody kind of working in teams to do this, make a nice boat shape and maybe our adults around the front can help with that too. So, we're going to put on some music and get this going. Let's see what we can do.

Make a nice boat shape on the ground. Can we put it on the ground? All right, make a big boat, make it big enough for everybody to get in, make it big enough for everybody to get in.

All right, all right can you have a seat in your boat put my seat in the boat. Right in the boat is everybody in time. Oh, we've got a few outside the boat. Let's put it on the ground, use the blankets to, all right, we're all in the boat. Are we in? Did we fit in? Just! Well, we just fitted in I think.

So, we're inside the boat. We've got our boat, now I want you to imagine that you're some of Jesus's friends, the Disciples, and it's been a crazy few days at this stage because just a few days ago Jesus has risen from the dead and the tomb's empty, and He's appeared to you. Now, maybe you're wondering 'Well, why are we in a boat if this amazing thing has happened? Why are we in a boat?' Well, we don't really know but well they are, some of them are fishermen and maybe it was just out of comfort they decided 'Well, we'll go back to fishing.' So, I want us to imagine that we're in this boat and sometimes there might be a big sail and there might be roads so can we roll out we're going out fishing can you roll with me we're rowing out, hard work getting out in the boat and we're rowing out and because experienced fishing we know it's best to go at night, so it's night time the sun is setting, they rowed and they get to the spot so they stop rowing and then they throw out their net. Can you throw out your net? We're throwing out our net now, all night long they're throwing out their net and then what do we need to do with the net once we've thrown it out? Pull it back in! That's right, pull it back in, pull it back in. Oh, it's hard work but guess what? no fish were caught, no fish were caught and that happened again and again and again and as the sun began to rise these fishermen were tired.

Can you pretend to be tired? Can you pretend to be cold? So cold, and they were like How do you think they were feeling at this point? Can I see a face, to make up a face to

show me how they were feeling? What faces are you going to go for? Oh, we've got some grumpy, we've got some tired, Oh, lots of scary faces here.

Oh, they were not in a good mood were they and they thought it was time to go back so they rowed back. Can you row with me? Oh, back, back and short and as they go closer and closer to shore they notice someone on the shore. So, you can, yeah look over this way see. What you can see?

“Throw your nets on the right side then you will find some.”

Oh,, so the someone on the shore said to throw out their nets again. Let's throw out our nets. We're throwing out your nets and then pull in your nets. Oh, oh, so much fish. Oh, and the boat fills up with all these fish. How do you think these Disciples were feeling now? How do you think they were feeling? Happy, excited. At that point they realized that this person, not Richard, but this person was Jesus - just to get that in there before you got any ideas - we'll talk about that later I'm sure - and at that point they were like Wow, Jesus had made what was impossible and not working into something good and something possible happened, and they only did that because Jesus guided them and Jesus used His power to help them. And you know, this past year boys and girls, adults amongst us, it has been a tough year and we've missed so many things and we've missed and struggled with being in lockdown and being at home and stuck at home and feeling isolated and feeling alone and maybe feeling forgotten and maybe feeling scared and disappointed like some of the Disciples were feeling, but just like the Disciples we can hope and trust in Jesus. He is our help because Psalm 33 reminds us “So our hope is in the Lord for he is our help.” Boys and girls, could you repeat that with me and our adults let's say that together - So our hope and in the Lord, he is our help. Say it again So our hope is in the Lord, he is our help.

That is true. Jesus is our help and that's what the boat reminds us today that Jesus is our help and so our hope, our trust should be in Him. But the story doesn't end there, there's also a breakfast and as soon as His Disciples realize that Jesus was there well Peter couldn't contain himself, he just had to get to Jesus, and the rest of the Disciples they eventually came as well and when they got there, Jesus had prepared a fire and Jesus had prepared a breakfast as well, and said to them ‘Bring more food’ because they were hungry and the fire would warm them up, but not only that, Jesus stayed with them and spent time with them, and He talked with them, and He listened to them, and he just enjoyed their company, and they enjoyed His company because these men were His friends because they followed Jesus and He loved them, and, boys and girls, adults here, we need to remember that too. Not only Jesus is our help. He is our friend and He loves us with an unbreaking love, He loves us such that He will never leave us nor forsake us.

But how much of that is just head knowledge, and how much of it is heart knowledge? We need it to go deep down to know He wants your company, He wants your company and He gives His company to us as well, because He loves us with an unchanging and unchanging love.

And so, our story today with the boat reminds us that Jesus is our help and so we have to hope in Him and the breakfast reminds us that Jesus is our friend and His presence and His power and His friendship is there for us as well, and as we go back to normal in some shape or form, either here at church, or at home, and at school, and nursery, boys and girls, or as we go on to do different things to fulfill our purpose as a church, we need to remember Jesus is our help and that gives us courage, but Jesus is our friend and we can celebrate that whatever the storm or situation. I pray that we know these truths for ourselves. May it be so, Amen.