

Lord God, who calms the troubled waters, we bless you for your presence in the midst of all our fears, all our trials, all our worries. We release to you the things we hold too tightly, and we trust your words of peace. Be among us in this hour and may we lean into your everlasting arms of love, secure that we are yours, now and always. ... May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing and of you, who are ROCK, REDEEMER, and COMFORTER of us all. Amen.

Our theme these next few weeks is UNRAVELING...seeking God when our plans fall apart. Each week we will spend time looking at our lives in partnership with a biblical narrative where God meets us in the spiraling, unraveling our plans and our lives... and weaves us into something new.

The term 'unraveling' is not necessarily a negative or undesired moment or circumstance. The dictionary (American Heritage,890) states unravel to be a verb (action) 1) to separate (entangled threads) 2) to separate and clarify the elements of (something mysterious or baffling); to solve.

I was first struck by this term when I was visiting with one of the fellowship groups... Threads. As folks were knitting, or crocheting, or embroidering, or whatever their hands were working on, they were chatting. This is a fascination to me... mostly because I have to concentrate when I work at something.

At one point, one of the persons held up the piece, studied it and then began to take apart some of the recent stitches. Wait, what are you doing?, I asked. The person explained there was a dropped stitch and everything after had to be undone so it could be corrected. I was amazed... yep that's right! The creation had to be *Unraveled* so that new stiches could be put in place. Wow, I thought, that'll preach!

And here we are... looking at Jesus, Peter and the disciples in a boat, and a storm. What's unraveling... what's being separated... what mystery is being revealed? How should this inform our lives?

Jesus and the disciples have just fed the crowd of more than 5000. The crowd had come, following Jesus after the death of his (Jesus') cousin, John the Baptist. Jesus had been seeking a quiet place to pray after the sad news, but the people followed him.

Now Jesus has sent the disciples away in the boat and he has dismissed the crowd. Jesus has been in prayer, communing with God.

Wind & waves can come up quickly on the Sea of Galilee... so the disciples in the boat are being buffeted about. Early in the morning, battered by waves and wind, the disciples struggle, and then...*Here Comes Jesus, see him walking on the water.*

Thinking they're seeing a ghost, the disciples scream in fright. Jesus speaks, 'Have courage...It's I, don't be afraid.'

And Peter responds... 'if it's you have me come to you on the water'. And Jesus said 'Come!'

And Peter, full of courage, full of boldness, steps out of the boat, onto the water, and walks toward Jesus.

And the Peter drops a stitch... he sees the wind; he becomes frightened; as he sinks, he shouts, 'Lord, save me'. *Here Comes Jesus, see him walking on the water. He'll lift you up and help you to stand.*

Back in the boat, the wind settles, and the disciples proclaim 'You must be God's Son!'

So, friends, let us look at Jesus, Peter and the disciples in a boat, and a storm. What's unraveling... what's being separated... what mystery is being revealed? How should this inform our lives?

'This familiar sequence is not the story of a skeptic who habitually doubts, but the story of a faithful follower who becomes overwhelmed by the circumstances surrounding him, who begins to lose his nerve when the odds are stacked against him, but who from Jesus finds a steadying hand.' (Bruggemann)

What are the stormy seas that threaten to overcome us? How might this faith community offer support?

The current headlines are a good indicator... the impact of the Coronavirus, the calls against racial injustice, the concerns of violence and abuse.

Then I saw the tote bag... 'knitting keeps me from Unraveling'.

What keeps me from unraveling is Jesus... Jesus keeps me from Unraveling. And it is Jesus that weaves me together when it feels like my world's fallen apart.

....Let's pray...

O God, you have shown me the path of life.

I trust in your unfailing love.

I trust in your forgiveness and grace.

I trust that you love me.

May the life I live be a light that reflects your love to others.

This I pray, in Jesus name.

Amen.