

## What Are You Focused On?

January 28, 2009

In the 14<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew is an interesting story. It takes place following the description of the miracle of Jesus feeding the 5,000 in the wilderness with only a few loaves of bread and some fish. Jesus had sent the disciples on ahead of him in a boat to the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

We are told during the night, that Jesus comes walking to them on the water. That is when Peter sees Jesus walking on the water. He says, "Lord, if it is really you, then command me to come to you on the water."

Jesus simply says, "Come."

And Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water to Jesus. Then we are told that when Peter saw the wind and the waves, he became afraid and began to sink. He shouted, "Lord, save me!"

Immediately (we are told) Jesus reached out his hand and caught Peter and said, "Oh Peter, your faith is so small. Why did you doubt?"

I really like this story. Because I find that I am so much like Peter. I want to follow God. I want to be faithful in my living. But if I am not careful, it is so easy to become distracted by the waves of life and the wind that threatens to blow over me and cause me to lose sight of what is important. Like Peter, I have had moments when I have taken my eyes off of Christ. That is when I feel I have been sinking.

What about you? Have you ever found yourself sinking? Have you ever found yourself distracted by the challenges of life? What helps you re-connect with God?

It is hard to listen to the news these days and not be discouraged. There are so many economic challenges facing our nation these days. They truly challenge us as people of faith. It would be/could be easy to lose sight of God and give into the economic fears that abound around us.

I believe it is vitally important for us to keep looking to God during this time. It is important to know that even though a tempest may be swirling around us, that as people of faith, God is willing to hold us in God's hands. It is important to remember to celebrate the gifts of this day; the family around us, the food for this day, the friends that sustain us and give life to us, and the work for which we have today.

The great news about this story from Matthew, at least for me, is that when Peter finally cries out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus was there for him. I have found this to be true in my life as well. For when I have felt like I was sinking in the midst of life's challenges and when I cried out, I discovered a friend in God who not only reached out to me. But this friend has lifted me up. For that I am grateful.

My hope and prayer is that you will know the assurance of trusting in God's love for you.

In the hope Jesus offers us,

*Rev. Scott Carlson*

*The Mission of Sun Prairie United Methodist Church is to invite and welcome people to be committed and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ through worship, through spiritual growth, through fellowship and through service to others.*