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| **The Lessons Appointed for Use on the** | http://www.lectionarypage.net/Art/Newshield.gif |
| Sunday closest to June 22 |
| Proper 7Year BRCL |

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| ***Track 1*** |  |  |
| 1 Samuel 17: 32-49Psalm 9:9-202 Corinthians 6:1-13Mark 4:35-41 |  |  |

**The 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 lovingkindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.*Amen.*

**Old Testament**

**1 Samuel 17: 32-49**

David said to Saul, “Let no one’s heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.” Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are just a boy, and he has been a warrior from his youth.” But David said to Saul, “Your servant used to keep sheep for his father; and whenever a lion or a bear came, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after it and struck it down, rescuing the lamb from its mouth; and if it turned against me, I would catch it by the jaw, strike it down, and kill it. Your servant has killed both lions and bears; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be like one of them, since he has defied the armies of the living God.” David said, “The Lord, who saved me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, will save me from the hand of this Philistine.” So Saul said to David, “Go, and may the Lordbe with you!” Saul clothed David with his armor; he put a bronze helmet on his head and clothed him with a coat of mail. David strapped Saul’s sword over the armor, and he tried in vain to walk, for he was not used to them. Then David said to Saul, “I cannot walk with these; for I am not used to them.” So David removed them. Then he took his staff in his hand, and chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in his shepherd’s bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near to the Philistine.

The Philistine came on and drew near to David, with his shield-bearer in front of him. When the Philistine looked and saw David, he disdained him, for he was only a youth, ruddy and handsome in appearance. The Philistine said to David, “Am I a dog, that you come to me with sticks?” And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. The Philistine said to David, “Come to me, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the field.” But David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This very day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head; and I will give the dead bodies of the Philistine army this very day to the birds of the air and to the wild animals of the earth, so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, and that all this assembly may know that the Lord does not save by sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord’s and he will give you into our hand.”

When the Philistine drew nearer to meet David, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine. David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground.

**The Response**

**Psalm 9:9-20**

***Confitebor tibi***

9 The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed, \*
a refuge in time of trouble.

10 Those who know your Name will put their trust in you, \*
for you never forsake those who seek you, O Lord.

11 Sing praise to the Lord who dwells in Zion; \*
proclaim to the peoples the things he has done.

12 The Avenger of blood will remember them; \*
he will not forget the cry of the afflicted.

13 Have pity on me, O Lord; \*
see the misery I suffer from those who hate me,
O you who lift me up from the gate of death;

14 So that I may tell of all your praises
and rejoice in your salvation \*
in the gates of the city of Zion.

15 The ungodly have fallen into the pit they dug, \*
and in the snare they set is their own foot caught.

16 The Lord is known by his acts of justice; \*
the wicked are trapped in the works of their own hands.

17 The wicked shall be given over to the grave, \*
and also all the peoples that forget God.

18 For the needy shall not always be forgotten, \*
and the hope of the poor shall not perish for ever.

19 Rise up, O Lord, let not the ungodly have the upper hand; \*
let them be judged before you.

20 Put fear upon them, O Lord; \*
let the ungodly know they are but mortal.

**The Epistle**

**2 Corinthians 6:1-13**

As we work together with Christ, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see-- we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return-- I speak as to children-- open wide your hearts also.

**The Gospel**

**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?”

This week’s readings feel like all the winning, at least on first glance. We have the match-up of David and Goliath. And who doesn’t like the match-up of the underdog against the bully with the victory for the underdog? In the secod letter to the Corinthians there is a mild rebuke of not taking the word of the Lord seriously enough, as conveyed by Paul to the people of Corinth. The psalm is a cry of validation of God who stands by the oppressed. In the Gospel, Jesus speaks and calms the wind and therefore the seas, as only God, God in Christ can do. The conclusions of these readings pretty much do not get any better. So, why would I not want to stay with the feel good stuff, where we rest happily ever after? \_\_\_\_Generally that is not where or how any of us live. If this week, particulalry in the history of our nation, has shown us anything, it shows us that despite people professing to live in a predominantly Christian nation, we, as a country, are far from Christian and we are not done. There is not a happily ever after right now. May I say even that “we are never done.”

And so this is one of those times that the readings assigned for the day at first do not mesh well with the events of the week, with the exception of the psalm.

So let us start with the events of this week and the psalm. This past week, there was an uptick in the practice and new media focus upon the appalling practice of separating families, children from their parents at our Southern border with Mexico. Mid-week under much public outcry, Trump halted the practice started his administration, but there are many unaswered questions and thousands of children traumaticly separated from their parents. I really don’t care what your politics are, whether you believe in strong border control or not, are proTrump, or anti-Trump—-this policy of separating children from their parents is immoral and for asylum seekers it is illegal by international law. The UN human rights commission condemns the practice. Further, the audacity to ever defend an immoral action with quoting scripture is abhorent. Lets just pause and remember the Bible, Satan can quote scripture. Romans 13: 1-7 has been used to justify slavery and the Holocaust. The choice of scriptural justification of this practice actually speaks volumes of wickedness. The practice of proof-texting scripture for evil actions is never ever justified. Let us not even mention that this country was founded on separation of church and state. All that said, the verse right before Romans 13, reads “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:9) And following the passages on the law Romans 13: 1-7, are passages which speak of loving neighbor, “Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.” (verse 8).

Now, turning to the psalm there are many verses of the psalm that seem wildly apt and appropriate, (you can re-read it again at your leisure) but let us start with the beginning of our selection for today.

The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed, \*
a refuge in time of trouble.

10 Those who know your Name will put their trust in you, \*
for you never forsake those who seek you, O Lord.

This psalm is a powerful witness to the people of Israel and to us Christians as to whose side the Lord is on. The Lord seeks the company of the oppressed. If you are not oppressed,God is still availabe and knowable, but… if you want to know who has God’s company, who has God’s ear? it is the oppressed.

Which is all well and good, it is good to know that God is available for the oppressed, but what are we, the not oppressed sitting in our air conditioned church in the most powerful nation in the world, what are we to do?

We are to keep battling the windstorm when it is stormy. Yes, sometimes Jesus will calm the winds, and sometimes Jesus won’t. And yes, it is hugely important that Jesus is able to calm the winds, this is no slight of hand healing that takes place, this miracle of waking up and calming the winds is on the order of God’s acts in Genesis. However, the words that Jesus speaks to his disciples he also speaks to us. He speaks to us when we separate families and need to fix it. He speaks to us because we are responsible, and there is no question we are responsible. These are children that our government is harming. These are not someone’s children. If our nation separates them from their families, these are *our* children. These children who are harmed are our responsibility and what are we to do? Jesus says, “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?

Keep battling the storm. You have every reason to be afraid. The monsters under the bed are real. Why are you afraid? — Jesus wants to know. Because there are monsters? There have always been monsters. Is being afraid going to help any? I would guess proably not. And yes, there are legitimate reasons to be fearful, but God is with you so how about that faith? Can you hear your faith now? It doesn’t have to be your own battles, and if you aren’t oppressed, maybe it shouldn’t be your own battles. Fight the battles of the marginalized. What does anything else matter? Your relationship with God and your relationship with your neighbor, that is what matters. Who is your neighbor? The one God loves, first and foremost your neighbor is the oppressed. Do not let fear immobilize you. If you are a Republican and Trump supporter and so are all your friends, don’t let that stop you from doing what is right.

“See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!”

Those are not just words. Paul recognizes that it so many ways it doesn’t matter when Jesus returns. What matters is that salvation starts today, any time that we embrace righteousness; anytime we embrace doing what is right. Do not be afraid. Make your voice heard, add your voice to others. Now is the time for us to stay in the thick of the storm with the marginalized until the winds calm.