



## ***Faith, Fear and Freedom***

July 3, 2022

*Matthew 14:22-33*

### **Connect**

- On this holiday weekend, name a favorite story, experience or tradition you hold in celebrating Independence Day.
- Of the three F's in today's sermon title, which one would you claim as most prominent in your life right now: *Faith, Fear* or *Freedom*. Why?

### **Engage**

- Read ***Matthew 14:22-33***. This is one of the great classic stories of scripture that is known beyond Christianity. Cultural references of “*walking on water*” are common place and attributed to this account of Jesus and Peter walking on water. What strikes you as most important about this story? What's the point?
- Jesus “*made*” the disciples get in the boat. He does not get in the boat with them. Does he need a break from them? Does he need to grieve the recent loss of his cousin and dear friend, John, on his own? What does this suggest about Jesus – his divinity? His humanity?
- As Peter sinks, he cries out for Jesus: “*Save me!*” Is our general mentality to call on Jesus only when we're sinking? If so, what does that say about our relationship with Jesus?
- Would you say your faith is driven more by fear or by trust? Discuss the difference and share why you choose fear or trust.
- In biblical times, the sea was seen as a symbol of chaos, mystery, and the unknown. Demons were said to dwell in the water. We know much more about oceanic and marine life these days and perceive demons differently. How would you describe demons in today's society? Is there anything that can be done to silence the demons?

### **Next Steps**

- We live in a fearful and anxious society right now. How might you be a calm presence amidst this cultural and societal storm? How might that be a witness and reflection of your faith in Christ? Take time to quell someone's fears this week simply by being a calm and encouraging presence. See if this quiets some of your own anxiety as well.

### **Pray**

*“In this whirlwind world we are living in right now, Lord, the storms seem close, full and out of control. When we are tempted to test you in it, remind us to trust instead. Help us take steps of faith forward knowing that you are with us each step of the way. Thanks be to God! Amen.”*