

Pray

Looking out the airplane window both times.

It's estimated that 35,000 people died across Europe this last summer due to the ferocity of the heatwaves. Scientists warn us next summer will most likely be even hotter. I think these things and I AM OVERWHELMED. I shut it down. I refuse to hear or see more or to register what is clearly before my own eyes.

In my morning meditations over these last 6 months, there has been a theme, I keep hearing God calling me to wake up. I have thought it was for me only, but yesterday morning I began to wonder if this word is for us all. I don't know what this waking up might mean specifically for us, but I know we are not meant to be hiding in fear, in sleep, from the world around us, we are to engage in love and become beacons of hope.

The disciples were overwhelmed in the midst of the storm.

This state of being overwhelmed can be distressing, frustrating, terrifying, so much so that we distract ourselves to avoid the realisation. But the disciples didn't let this fear put them to sleep. I don't know what they thought Jesus could or would do, but they had the presence of mind to cry out to him.

We have a Powerful, creator God who loves his creation, knows his creation – all of it... each one of us no matter how insignificant we believe we are.

And Jesus' answer was to stand up to the storm and silence it. And Jesus answer was to have faith.

Fifth Mark of mission – Treasure: To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

We do not need to be afraid of being overwhelmed as we are asked to face situations on our planet that are vast. We are called to cry out to God in hope, to recognise Jesus is in our boat, he can deliver that dead calm, the peace that goes beyond understanding in our souls.

But he can also give us the courage to face the problem, to be overwhelmed yet not consumed or paralysed. God does not expect you or me or our church to fix the problems of drought, global warming, famine. God simply delights in each of us when we love what he loves, treasure and

respect the gifts he has given us, to see hope when others see absolute calamity and to act as he would act were he human....again. Each of us, to the best of our ability, each of us crying out to him to guide us, empower us, to do the work he has ordained...for us. And surprisingly, maybe even counter intuitively, when we genuinely act to delight God we find we are living our own best lives, in ways we do not expect

How can we keep people cool next summer in church, at home? How can we keep people warm enough this winter while caring for creation? How can we use less fossil fuel in our own lives, give back to God's creation where we have been careless or even wanton. Do we use the agency we have available to protect all that God loves – our vote, our voice, our resources. Is there an appetite to do something corporately together? As a church we have replaced all of the lighting in the main body with led/eco friendly fixtures and it is beautiful, and I am grateful to those who have made this happen, but there is more to do. As a church we have earned the Bronze Eco Church award. Perhaps we are called to pursue the silver award.

Do we dare to act in the face of feeling overwhelmed when the bravest action is simply to be awake to the problem and refuse to give into hopelessness like so many around us? God is with you, is with me, because he loves us. God invites us to wake up, to cry out, to listen or discern the seeds of hope already around us and to act, to share this hope with others, to change our own behaviour.

Let's take some time in silence to seek God's will.

Loving God help us..

To Wake up: What overwhelms you in our world maybe such that you cannot even bear to find out more

To Cry out: Honestly, without agenda to what God's response might be – a simple help will do.
What is your cry?

To Listen to God – hear God's love for you, see the hope he has offered to you in your life

To Act: where is your passion? what might God be calling you to do?

When I returned from The Netherlands, I found the vicarage garden gradually returning to green, new shoots of grass are growing. I wonder what we are being called to do to encourage healing and sustain` new growth in our midst?

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