

Churches Together in West Camel *at All Saints West Camel*

A service of prayers for the missing yachtsmen and their families

Paul Goslin, Steve Warren, Andrew Bridge, and James Male

Monday 19 May 2014

Opening sentence

God has said "I will never leave you; I will never forget you." So we can be sure when we say "I will not be afraid because the LORD is my helper." (*Hebrews 13: 5-6*)

Introduction

We have been drawn here today by our common concern for Paul Goslin, Steve Warren, Andrew Bridge, and James Male, four yachtsmen, two of whom who have connections here in West Camel, who are currently lost at sea in the Atlantic Ocean.

Their yacht, the Cheeki Rafiki, was returning home to the UK with a crew of four, following a successful race in the Caribbean. On Thursday the Skipper Andrew Bridge reported that the boat was taking on water. The experienced crew believed that the situation was stable but amended their course to head for the Azores group of islands. Contact with the men was lost on Friday after they reported running into difficulties about 1,000 miles (1,600km) off Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Andrew Bridge's father said he believed the men had escaped the boat into a life raft. The US Coastguard-led air and sea search was called off on Sunday, and the families are now appealing to the US Coastguard to resume their search. Thousands of signatories to an online petition are also calling on the US Coastguard and Foreign Secretary William Hague to reopen the search for the men.

We gather here to show our solidarity with the families at this time of grief, to share our sense of helplessness but also to draw on the resources of our Christian faith - that a loving, merciful God can and will hold us at this time, hear our prayers and help to bring some resolution to our hearts.

So in this short and simple time together we will pray for the yachtsmen, we will hear a passage of scripture, we will pray for the yachtsmen's families and for the authorities involved in the decision to resume the search operation. And we will conclude our time together by singing the naval hymn, Eternal Father, Strong to save, which is itself a prayer for those in peril on the sea.

Let us pray.

Prayers for the yachtsmen

We pray for Paul Goslin, Steve Warren, Andrew Bridge, and James Male, currently out of reach in the Atlantic Ocean.

For their safety and wellbeing;

That their experience would have enabled them to take every opportunity to make themselves as safe and secure as possible.

That they will have the strength to survive the elements, and that the elements would be merciful to them.

We hold them before God, who has each of us in the palm of his hand, and pray for their safe return.

Silence.

Lord, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

Ken Chalmers, West Camel Methodist: Reading - Psalm 107: Prayer for Deliverance from Many Troubles

1

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures for ever.

2

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,
those he redeemed from trouble

3

and gathered in from the lands,
from the east and from the west,
from the north and from the south.

23

Some went down to the sea in ships,
doing business on the mighty waters;

24

they saw the deeds of the Lord,
his wondrous works in the deep.

25

For he commanded and raised the stormy wind,
which lifted up the waves of the sea.

26

They mounted up to heaven, they went down to the depths;
their courage melted away in their calamity;

27

they reeled and staggered,
and were at their wits' end.

28

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he brought them out from their distress;

29

he made the storm be still,
and the waves of the sea were hushed.

30

Then they were glad because they had quiet,
and he brought them to their desired haven.

39

When they are diminished and brought low
through oppression, trouble, and sorrow,

41 ...

he raises up the needy out of distress,
and makes their families like flocks.

42

The upright see it and are glad;
and all wickedness stops its mouth.

43

Let those who are wise give heed to these things,
and consider the steadfast love of the Lord.

Prayers for the families and the search operation

We pray for the families of Paul Goslin, Steve Warren, Andrew Bridge, and James Male:

- in their distress at the news of their loved ones' vessel losing water and losing radio contact last week.

- in their feeling of helplessness in this situation, and reliance on others;
- in the faith they have in the men's skills on the water and the hope that this will have led them to take the best action possible to save themselves;
- in their call to the US Coastguard and Foreign Secretary William Hague to resume the search operation.

We hold the families before God, who has each of us in the palm of his hand, and pray for their comfort and help tonight.

Silence

And finally, we pray for the US Coastguard and UK Foreign Office officials, in their response to calls to resume the search operation - for wisdom, for compassion, for the willingness to use resources in this humanitarian task.

Silence

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 114: Eternal Father, Strong to save

Eternal Father, strong to save,
 Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
 Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
 Its own appointed limits keep;
 Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,
 For those in peril on the sea!

O Christ! Whose voice the waters heard
 And hushed their raging at Thy word,
 Who walkedst on the foaming deep,
 And calm amidst its rage didst sleep;
 Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,
 For those in peril on the sea!

Most Holy Spirit! Who didst brood
 Upon the chaos dark and rude,

And bid its angry tumult cease,
And give, for wild confusion, peace;
Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,
For those in peril on the sea!

O Trinity of love and power!
Our brethren shield in danger's hour;
From rock and tempest, fire and foe,
Protect them wheresoe'er they go;
Thus evermore shall rise to Thee
Glad hymns of praise from land and sea.

Closing Prayers and blessing

Now thus says the LORD, your Creator:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
Thus says the LORD,
who makes a way in the sea,
a path in the mighty waters. *(from Isaiah 43)*

May the Father who opened the waters of the Red Sea to allow his people to pass through give us safe passage tonight;
May the Son who pronounced the words, 'Peace, be still', and calmed the storm on Galilee, bring us his peace;
And may the Holy Spirit who at creation brooded over the waters, embrace these four yachtsmen, their families and all who care about them tonight.

And the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us
now and always, **Amen**,

Service compiled and led by Revd John Davies, Rector of the Cam Vale Churches and Revd Ken Chalmers, Minister of West Camel Methodist Church