



# Calming the Storm

Welcome to this second edition of 'Together, Apart', intergenerational resources to help us be church together while we're keeping each other safe.

All the sections explore the same Bible passage in a range of creative ways. Choose whichever parts work best for you. You can use the resources on-line or print whichever pages of the PDF you need.

You can find lots more free resources like this at [www.reflectionary.org](http://www.reflectionary.org)

Here is what you will find in each week's post:



## A Word in Your Ear

A Bible passage that we can all learn from together, whatever our age.



## Food for Thought

Aimed at adults and teens, some thoughts and questions on the passage.



## Inner Space

A blank space for you to record your thoughts.



## Looking Closer

A creative and interactive look at the Bible passage. Great for older children and anyone who likes a creative approach.



## I Wonder...

An imaginative style of Bible study, perfect for younger children and those who like to immerse themselves in the Bible world.



## Take a Break

A chill-out zone, with meditative colouring for adults and children, and links to audio recordings of the passage so that you can listen while resting your eyes.



## Creation Station

A craft activity for children (or silly adults!)



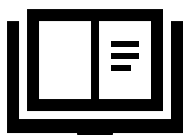
## Outside In

Suggestions for activities throughout the week that link with the Bible passage.



## High 5

Suggestions for how to spend time with God.



## A Word in Your Ear

Take your time reading this passage from The Bible. Ask God to help you hear. You can decorate the space around the words if you like.

### Mark, chapter 4, verses 35-41

That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side."

Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were also other boats with him.

A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion.

The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?"

He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

They were terrified and asked each other, "Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!"

(NIV)



## Food for Thought

Jesus calming the storm comes in three of the four Gospels, but I like Mark's account best because of the little details that he includes, like the cushion and the disciples' panic-stricken, "Don't you care if we drown?"

I wonder why Jesus slept instead of helping with the boat. I wonder if Jesus brought his own cushion deliberately, or was it one that lived on the boat for when they had to fish all night.

**Q: Why do you think Mark bothered to include these details?**

The Gospel writers arranged their accounts of Jesus's life very carefully, so it's always useful to see what they put before and after the passage we are looking at.

Mark relates this event just after Jesus telling a set of parables: "The kingdom of God is like...". Jesus follows up by demonstrating the kingdom with three emphatic displays of hope out of hopelessness, peace out of anarchy, calm out of chaos:

He calms the storm, recalling the story of creation, in which God's voice spoke order out of the chaotic waters of the deep, and behold, it was good. Next, Jesus deals with the wild, chaotic behaviour of the man of the Gerasenes not with iron chains, but with freedom and restoration. Finally, Jesus encounters two hopeless situations – the woman who has spent 12 years looking for a cure, and Jairus' daughter for whom Jesus' healing touch seemingly comes too late – and in both cases Jesus speaks words of peace and healing, life and wholeness.

**Q: What can we learn from the stories around Jesus calming of the storm?**

There is quite a lot of fear in this story. At first the disciples were afraid of drowning (and that's quite something for experienced sailors), but curiously, they end up even more afraid when they were rescued than when they were sinking!

We see the same reaction in the people of the Gerasenes in chapter five, when having seen Jesus' wonderful healing power, they beg him to leave!

**Q: Why do you think they reacted like this?**

There are two words in Mark's account, 'afraid' and 'terrified', which seem similar in English, but are very different words in Greek. The first means being cowardly, or timid. Jesus basically called them a bunch of scaredy-cats. I wonder if there was a chuckle in his voice.

The other word is 'great fear', which often means terror, but is also translated as amazement or reverence. It's the same word as 'fear of the Lord' (Acts 9:31), 'give respect to whom respect is owed' (Rom 13:7) and 'submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ' (Eph 5:21).

**Q: What kind of 'fear' do you think this was for the disciples?**



## Inner Space

What's going round your head? Here is a space for you to put your thoughts on paper. You can write, draw ... whatever you like. What will you put here?

A large, empty, rounded rectangular frame with a double-line border, intended for writing or drawing.



## Looking Closer

This story is about a battle between storm and peace. Storms don't always have to be about rain and wind – sometimes we can feel stormy inside when we are frightened or angry or hurt. What stormy things and people can you find in this story? Which things or people are peaceful?

**How do you think the disciples felt at the beginning of this story? How did they feel in the middle? How did they feel at the end? Write or draw something here.**

A large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for students to write or draw their responses to the questions above.

The sea was stormy, and Jesus was calm – so calm that he fell asleep in the boat! (I'm not sure I could have slept while the boat was tossing about!) The disciples were full of fear – they were as stormy as the sea, but Jesus said that they had no need to fear.

Jesus is bigger than fear, stronger than any storm.

**Find the stormy words in the story, and write them on the left side of this box. You can add your own stormy words if you like. (Remember that God does not mind wobbly spelling!)**

**Then write the calm words on the right side. Can you think of more calm words to add?**

**Now make some lines to join the stormy words to the calm words. Make the lines stormy at the left side and calm at the right, as Jesus calms the storm.**

A second large, empty, rounded rectangular box with a double-line border, identical to the first one, intended for students to write or draw their responses to the questions above.



## I Wonder...

Try to picture yourself in the story.

Where are you? What can you see, hear, smell, feel?

**I wonder where you are in this story. Can you draw yourself in the story?**

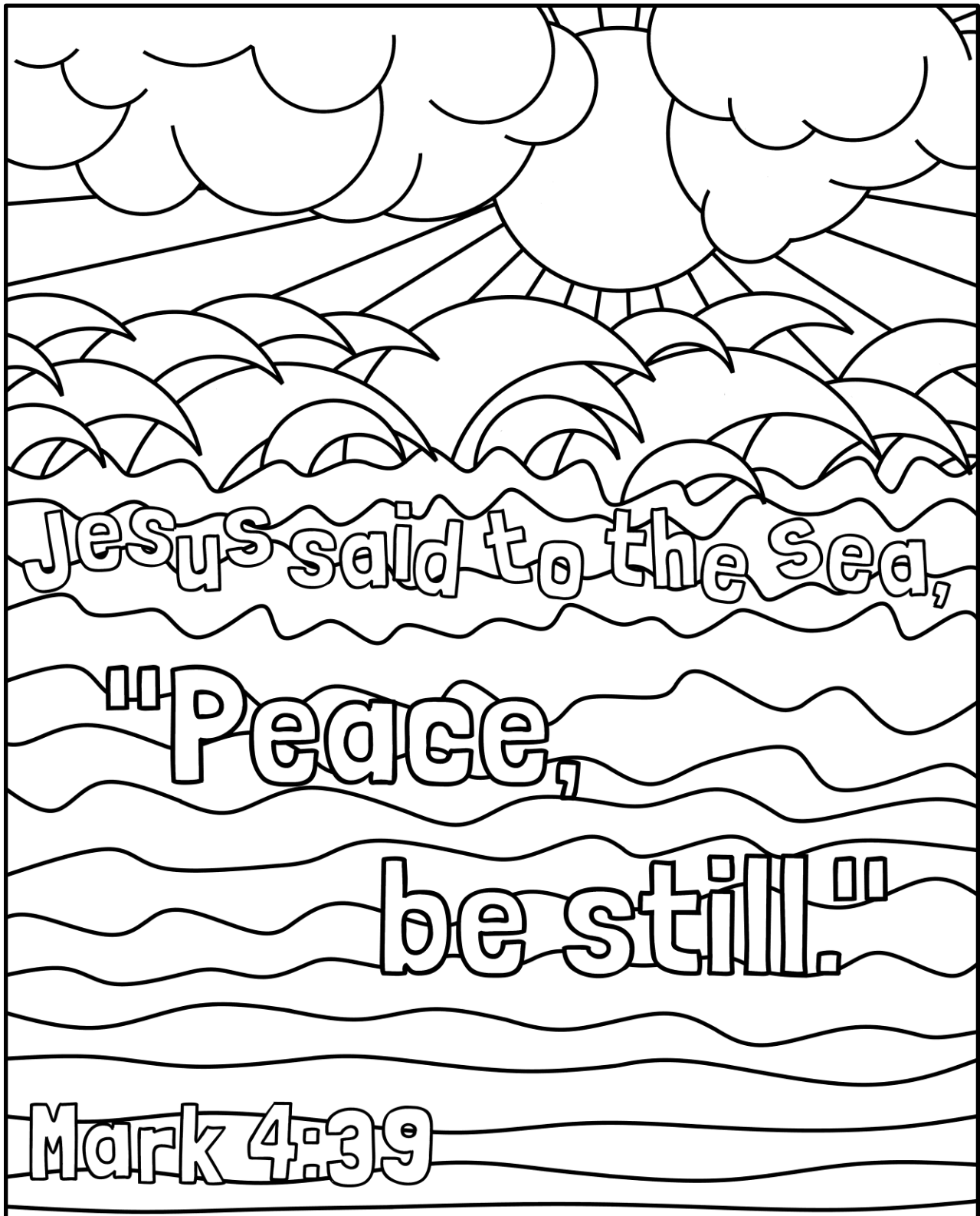
**I wonder what your favourite part of this story is. Write or draw it here.**

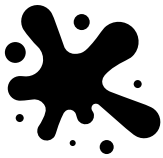


## Take a Break

Put on some music, or listen to the passage being read out while you simply sit and be. You can colour the picture below, or fill it with zentangles, or you can just spend the time breathing.

You can find Mark 4 on Bible Gateway audio [ESV](#) – [Message](#) – [NIV](#) – [NIV\(UK\)](#)





## Creation Station

Make some boats out of paper, sticks or recycling. Will yours stay afloat in the storm?

### You will need (some of):

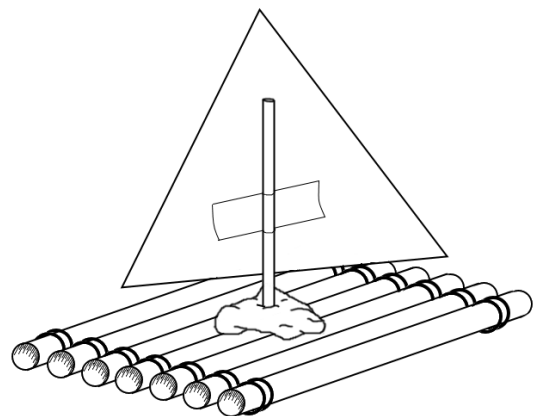
- Scissors
- Paper
- String
- Twigs
- Straws
- Play dough or blue-tack
- Plastic trays or lids from your recycling bin
- Crayons for decorating and drawing

### What to do:

- Make a paper boat from a sheet of A4 paper by following the pictures on the next page. You can add a picture of Jesus asleep in the boat if you like.

Or

- Make a raft from twigs and string. If you don't have any twigs, you can use straws instead.
- Put the twigs side by side. They should all be about the same length.
- Tie the string to the end of one twig and wind it up and down between the ends of the other twigs.
- Keep winding the string until you have gone around them a couple of times.
- Tie off the string and do the same at the other end.
- Younger children could use sticky tape instead.
- Put a blob of playdough in the middle and stick a straw in it for a mast.
- Add a paper sail and a picture of Jesus asleep on a cushion.



Or

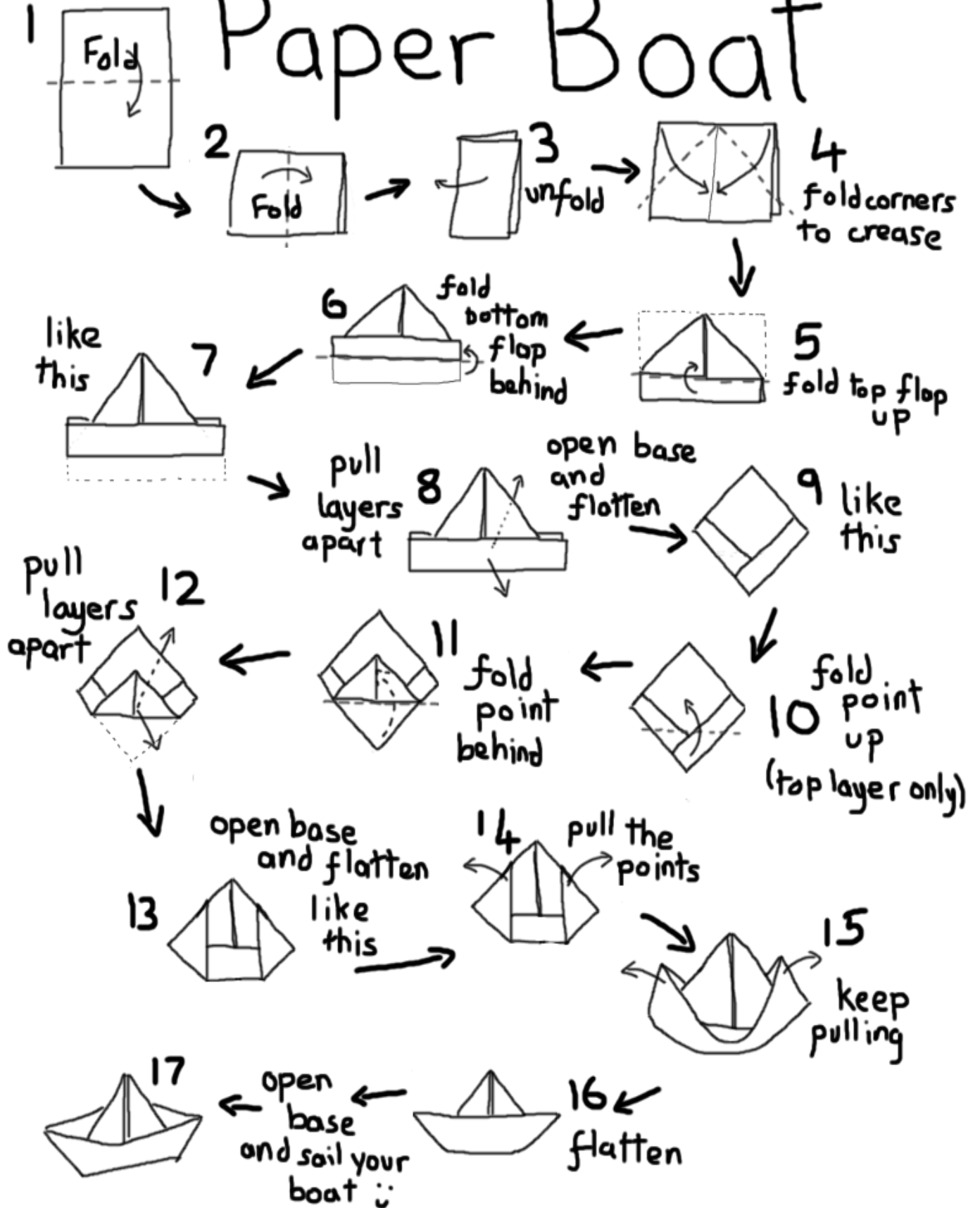
- Use some empty plastic containers or lids to make a boat or raft.
- Use play dough and a straw for a mast, and add a sail and a picture of Jesus asleep

### Make a storm!

- Put your boats in a pond, if you have one, or in the bath or a bowl of water (put some towels down, it's going to get messy!)
- Make a storm with your hands in the water. Will your boat sink?
- Now pretend to be Jesus, and tell the storm to stop. Phew!



# Paper Boat





## Outside In

Jesus said to the sea, "Peace, be still."

It's good to get outdoors if you can do so safely, but be sure to follow physical distancing rules. If you can't get out, you can always bring the outside in.

Here are some ideas for finding your own place of peace in what are stormy times for many of us.

- Look out of the window and count how many different colours you can see.
- Turn on lots of noisy things in the house. Crank the volume right up so that it is a cacophony. Then turn them off, one by one, and listen to the silence grow.
- Do something physically exhausting for as long as you can, then, when you are tired, lie down and feel the sensation of rest.
- Light a candle and watch the flame. Imagine that your fears are like the smoke which rises to God.
- Have a bath and do a lot of splashing. (Put some towels on the floor first!) Then close your eyes and let your body float in the water.
- Tense your body up really tightly – screw up your face, hunch your shoulders, curl your fingers and toes. Hold that for about 30 seconds, then slowly, bit by bit, relax your muscles. Start from your toes, let them uncurl. Then loosen your feet and ankles. Keep working slowly up your body until you drop your shoulders as low as they will go, and finally relax your face. Let your arms hang heavy in your lap and allow your head to droop down. Notice your breathing, and allow it to slow. Breathe deeply.

What else can you think of?

**My ideas:**

Which will you do this week?



## High 5

Spend five minutes talking and listening with God. Here is one way:

### Rainbow Prayers

Many people are putting rainbows in their windows for children to spot and as a sign of hope. Did you know that the rainbow is also a symbol of God's promise to care for us?

We can pray through the colours of the rainbow. If you like, you can start by gathering something for each colour, and hold it as you pray.

#### Red

Red reminds us of a stop light, and of all the people who have to stay safe at home.

*Dear God, please look after all the people who have to stay at home. Help us all to do our part in keeping vulnerable people healthy. Please help us to stop this illness spreading fast.*

#### Orange

Orange reminds us of the warmth of the sun or a cosy fire.

*Dear God, thank you for the warm love of our friends and families. Thank you for all the people who look after for us. Being cared for is like snuggling in a warm blanket. Thank you.*

#### Yellow

Yellow reminds us of the bright light from a bulb or a lighthouse

*Dear God, please help the scientists to have bright ideas as they work very hard to make vaccines and tests to help us. Please help the leaders of our countries to be wise and to make decisions that will help all people.*

#### Green

Green reminds us of the trees and flowers that are starting to grow.

*Dear God, thank you for the beauty of nature and for the hopefulness of spring. Please help us to keep healthy minds and bodies as we wait for this storm to pass.*

#### Blue

Blue reminds us of the flashing lights of emergency services, and it's the colour of the NHS.

*Dear God, thank you for our National Health Service and for all our emergency workers who are being so brave and dedicated. Please keep them safe and rested, and help us to make sure they have everything they need.*

#### Purple

Purple is the colour of a sunset sky and of clouds after a storm.

*Dear God, just as Jesus calmed the storm when the disciples were frightened, so may we know your peace in these stormy days. May we rest in your love and comfort as we watch as the dark clouds fade into a beautiful sunset and the peace of night.*

Amen.