

## Friends

Cookham Rise is finally accessible again as the floods have receded and the road across the moor is once more passable. I am reminded of my time on the Fens as a student, when they would deliberately open the floodgates at Welney and let the Wash run free if the weather warranted it, leaving a much longer route as the only way in. Then there was the time when no-one had told the new ministers about the annual London bike ride that closed the roads around Hampton and Molesey. The superintendent had to be fetched by the Hampton steward in a canoe. Luckily the superintendent at the time was a fit and energetic marathon runner and the steward an award-winning canoe tutor. Jesus of course, was himself no stranger to storms and floods, although, having taken up with fishermen, had easy access to a good boat.

There are four key passages involving Jesus and water. At his baptism, he walks down into the River Jordan and the Spirit of God descends on him like a dove. We hear God's voice "This is my Son, in whom I am well-pleased. Listen to him." Jesus passes safely through the water. At the wedding at Cana in Galilee, Jesus turns the water to wine to help out an under-prepared wedding couple. Jesus controls the molecular structure of the water. Jesus is woken from a deep sleep by the disciples when they are on the water and a storm blows up. He calms the storm and shows that he controls the activity of the water. Finally, Jesus comes out to them from the shore to the boat, walking on the water. Jesus, like the Spirit of God at Creation, moves across the water.

As we continue in this Ordinary Time between Epiphany and Lent, it is worth reflecting on the storms and floods in our own lives that threaten to rise up and overwhelm us: because there is too much and it engulfs us; because there are too few resources and we worry they will run out before we reach the end; because the issues which surround us to do with health, family, work are not under control and we feel the storm within and about us.

In all these situations, Jesus comes to us, moving on or through the water, offering us the calm that we need, the resource that we need, the power that we need. As we draw towards the end of this season of Covenant when we promise "Not my will, but yours be done" it is worth recalling that God is faithful back. The Covenant moves in two directions. The storms may come, but the Creator helps us move through or over them.

God bless, Vicci