

2015 Summer Sermon Series (Inspiring Songs of *Fresh-Brewed Faith!*)

“Oceans” (Hillsong United)

**By Rev. James C. Ramsey, Pastor
East Union Presbyterian Church**

Texts: Psalm 121
Matthew 14:22-33

Preached: 6/7/15

This morning we begin our Summer Sermon Series – sermons that will feature the inspiring songs of Fresh-Brewed Faith – our Spring Youth Sunday School Class. Each Sunday we play a song to begin the sermon – this morning’s song “OCEANS” was originally presented to our youth by Joey Resciniti.

OCEANS is a worship song by Hillsong United. It was first sung at Hillsong Church in Sydney, Australia, but has since become a hit. I was fortunate enough to hear the song sung live at the Hillsong Church Conference in New York City. I attended that conference a couple of years ago with a group from East Union – It was the first Hillsong Conference ever in the United States.

I have printed the lyrics in the Christian Caller if you would like to follow along:
(or listen on youtube — <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xoZE2RsthRg>)

You call me out upon the waters
The great unknown where feet may fail
And there I find You in the mystery
In oceans deep
My faith will stand

(Chorus)
And I will call upon Your name
And keep my eyes above the waves
When oceans rise
My soul will rest in Your embrace
For I am Yours and You are mine

Your grace abounds in deepest waters
Your sovereign hand
Will be my guide
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds me
You've never failed and You won't start now

(Chorus)

Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders
Let me walk upon the waters
Wherever You would call me
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander
And my faith will be made stronger
In the presence of my Savior

(Chorus)

Oceans comprise about ¾ of our planet's surface area...and a good deal of our unconscious. I am drawn to the water in my conscious mind, as well! When I have free time, I want to be in a boat, on a river or lake...or the ocean. You can find me in a fishing boat more often than not, but a canoe works, and most recently a kayak. We took our kayaks out for their maiden voyage yesterday – and it was a complete success! I don't want to take them off the top of my van...cause I can't wait to get back on the water.

Being confident on the water helps me be confident in life, reminds me that God is with me, that Jesus calms my waters.

The Psalmist finds himself in trouble and so prays, "*Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck, I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold. I have come into deep waters...*"

Some of us travel to the ocean every year, if we can – we're drawn to it. The ocean is mystery... the great unknown. Somehow walking by it, in it, looking out over it –we cannot help but ponder spiritual things.

Joey shared that she actually thought about this song the last time she was in the ocean, struggling to keep her eyes (and nose and mouth) above the waves. She reflected: *If you never did anything, life would be pretty easy, just like lounging on the sand. It's when you start doing stuff that everything gets complicated, risky even. You could fail, be embarrassed, injured, or whatever. The waves knock you around. And those times you're out of the metaphorical boat let you know that you need Jesus. There's no other name to call.*

Oceans echoes the scriptures: I lift up my eyes unto the hills, from whence does my help come? It doesn't matter where you are on the journey of faith, whether you are fresh and new, a long-time traveler, in a settled place or a chaotic one...God calls us to step into the unknown – to take hold of our faith, of Jesus' hand...it's about raw trust. What is that next step toward God for you? Whatever that may be, we are invited, challenged, to live outside our own understanding – to trust that God will be there with you.