

**“Go away from me, Lord,  
for I am a sinful man!”**

Luke 5:8, NRSV



# WELCOME TO WORSHIP

February 21, 2024

## INTRODUCTION

Jesus doesn't seek out trained rabbis and priests to be his disciples; instead, he calls a few Galilean fishermen to follow him and join his ministry. In this story, Jesus tells Simon Peter to drop his nets one more time, even though they've been fishing all night long and have caught nothing. To their surprise, they haul in nets bursting with fish. In response to this abundant miracle, Peter says, "Go away from me, Lord!" And yet, Peter and his partners drop their nets and follow Jesus. What is the beginning of your faith story? When has God sought you out? Have you ever felt like your calling was pursuing—or chasing—you? Did you resist? Did you follow?

Grace Lutheran Church  
A congregation of the ELCA

## **PRESERVICE MUSIC**

### **WELCOME AND GREETING**

P: Come in.

Feel your feet on the floor.

Settle your worries.

Take a deep breath.

Dust the cobwebs from your ears.

Relax the tension in your jaw,

**C: for Christ is here.**

**God never stops seeking us.**

P: We have been found.

**C: Let us find God in return.**

P: Let us worship the God of deep waters.

**C: Amen.**

### **OPENING HYMN: #807 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing**

### **CONFESSION**

P: In our scripture passage for today, we will read about Jesus calling Peter to be a disciple. In the story, Peter is in the presence of the Divine for quite some time before he realizes it. Jesus crawls into Peter's boat. He tells him to head toward deep water. Together, they let the nets down. And it is only when the boat threatens to sink, due to the extreme abundance of fish, that Peter turns to Jesus and truly sees who's in his boat. Sometimes we miss what's right in front of us. Fortunately, Christ keeps crawling into our boats anyhow. So join me in the prayer of confession, not out of fear, but out of a desire to finally see who's right in front of us. Let us pray:

**C: Loving God,**

**You call us by name.**

**You join us in the deep waters of life.**

**You invite us to drop our nets and follow you,**

**and yet, more often than we'd like to admit, we are like Peter.**

**Over and over again, we stand slack jawed and surprised  
to find you in our midst.**

**Forgive us for drowning out your voice with our own.**

**Forgive us for assuming that we can tackle deep waters by ourselves.**

**Forgive us for forgetting that you will never stop climbing into our boat.**

**Turn our hearts, our minds, and our spirits toward you,  
for you are the Lord our God, and it is in your name that we pray.  
Amen.**

## **FORGIVENESS**

P: Friends, Peter didn't exactly make a good first impression when Jesus got into his boat. He questioned dropping his nets, as they hadn't caught any fish all night. He was oblivious to who Christ was for quite some time, and once he realized the Divinity standing in his boat, he quickly deemed himself unworthy.

And even still, Jesus called Peter a disciple and a friend.

Church family, hear and believe this good news:

You can make a thousand bad impressions.

You can make every mistake in the book, roll your eyes, and assume you know better.

And *even still*, Christ will forgive you, claim you, and continue to seek your heart.

That is the good news of the gospel. Rest, celebrate, and trust in that.

**C: Amen.**

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

P: Creator God,

You hear everything.

You hear the rush of the wind through the trees.

You hear a baby's first cry.

You hear the crickets chirping, our silent prayers, and laughter around tables.

You hear it all!

We don't need that same capacity,  
but we do need to hear your Word, O God,  
for we cannot live on bread alone.

So today we pray: give us the ability to truly listen.

Give us the ability to listen with our hearts,  
and may the truths revealed in your scripture today change us.  
With hearts full of gratitude we pray,

**C: Amen.**

## **READINGS**

### **LUKE 5:1-11** (from The Message)

**5** <sup>1-3</sup> Once when he was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret, the crowd was pushing in on him to better hear the Word of God. He noticed two boats tied up. The fishermen had just left them and were out scrubbing their nets. He climbed into the boat that was Simon's and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Sitting there, using the boat for a pulpit, he taught the crowd.

<sup>4</sup> When he finished teaching, he said to Simon, "Push out into deep water and let your nets out for a catch."

<sup>5-7</sup> Simon said, "Master, we've been fishing hard all night and haven't caught even a minnow. But if you say so, I'll let out the nets." It was no sooner said than done—a huge haul of fish, straining the nets past capacity. They waved to their partners in the other boat to come help them. They filled both boats, nearly swamping them with the catch.

<sup>8-10</sup> Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell to his knees before Jesus. "Master, leave. I'm a sinner and can't handle this holiness. Leave me to myself." When they pulled in that catch of fish, awe overwhelmed Simon and everyone with him. It was the same with James and John, Zebedee's sons, coworkers with Simon.

<sup>10-11</sup> Jesus said to Simon, "There is nothing to fear. From now on you'll be fishing for men and women." They pulled their boats up on the beach, left them, nets and all, and followed him.

### **PSALM 25:1-10** from **THE MESSAGE**

**25** <sup>1-2</sup> My head is high, GOD, held high;  
I'm looking to you, GOD;

No hangdog skulking for me.

<sup>3</sup>I've thrown in my lot with you;  
You won't embarrass me, will you?  
Or let my enemies get the best of me?  
Don't embarrass any of us  
Who went out on a limb for you.  
It's the traitors who should be humiliated.

<sup>4</sup>Show me how you work, GOD;  
School me in your ways.

<sup>5</sup>Take me by the hand;  
Lead me down the path of truth.  
You are my Savior, aren't you?

<sup>6</sup>Mark the milestones of your mercy and love, GOD;  
Rebuild the ancient landmarks!

<sup>7</sup>Forget that I sowed wild oats;  
Mark me with your sign of love.  
Plan only the best for me, GOD!

<sup>8</sup>GOD is fair and just;  
He corrects the misdirected,  
Sends them in the right direction.

<sup>9</sup>He gives the rejects his hand,  
And leads them step-by-step.

<sup>10</sup>From now on every road you travel  
Will take you to GOD.  
Follow the Covenant signs;  
Read the charted directions.

## **REFLECTION**

## **HYMN: #793 Be Thou My Vision**

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

P: I believe in a God of abundance—

**C: a God who sees possibilities where I cannot,  
and who holds onto hope when I am at the end of my rope.**

P: I believe in a God who comforts—

**C: a God who says, “Do not be afraid;”  
a God who joins me in life’s deep waters.**

P: I believe in a God who invites—

**C: a God who says, “Follow me,”  
and, “You will be fishers of people.”**

P: I believe in a God who seeks after me relentlessly and persistently—

**C: a God of second chances and boundless mercy;  
a God who calls us by name.**

**We believe.**

**Help our unbelief.**

**In Christ’s name we pray.**

**Amen.**

### **OFFERING**

*We will collect the offering at this time. You may send your giving to the church office or give through the link to our Vanco site that is easy to find on our website: [gracelutheranelroy.com](http://gracelutheranelroy.com).*

P: Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness as we seek and follow your Son, Jesus, in whose name we pray.

**C: Amen.**

### **LORD’S PRAYER**

**C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily  
bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the  
kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.  
Amen.**

## **HYMN: #583 Take My Life, That I May Be**

### **BENEDICTION**

P: Beloved wanderer, as you leave this place, may you carry your curious heart on your sleeve. May you look for God in every face. May you find the courage to get out of the boat, to run to the tomb, and to speak of your faith.

And when the world falls apart, may you hear God's voice deep within, saying, "Take heart, it is I, be not afraid."

You are called. You are blessed. In both your ups and your downs, you always belong to God. Go now in peace. Go trusting that good news.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

"Prayers by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.



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**Synod Authorized Minister:** Kris Stauffacher

**Custodian:** Dave Clark and crew



Come Grow  
in Grace

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**How many days and nights did Jesus fast in the desert?**

**TRIVIA NIGHT!** Join us for trivia on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 5:00-7:00 pm. Pizza, soda, and prizes will be provided with paid entry fee. Watch for more details. (40 days and nights)

**SIGN UP FOR LENT SOUP SUPPERS IS LOCATED IN THE NARTHEX.**

Soup Suppers continue through March 20th. Supper at 5:30 pm. Worship at 6:30 pm. This Lent our worship services will follow the theme “Wandering Heart,” which focuses on the life of Peter. These services use language we can all relate to. Consider inviting a friend who has struggled with church sounding too “churchy”.

**EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORMS** are available in the Narthex. Orders are due by March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**CONTACT INFO UPDATE** Please write your Name, Cell Phone Number, and Email Address on the clipboard on the back table in the Narthex. We are updating this information so that once we will be able to send notifications to all members, such as when services are cancelled.

**FREE MOVIE: ONE NIGHT WITH THE KING**, Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2:30 pm at the Elroy Theater. Sponsored by Bethany Lutheran – Mauston and Thrivent. Contact Kris for more information or to receive your free tickets.

**USHERS NEEDED** Now that we are passing the plates to receive the offering, additional ushers are needed. A sign-up sheet is located in the Narthex.

**WE PRAY FOR:** Holly Hinzpeter, Kandy Hagen, Suzanne Soltvedt, John Thompson, Dawn Ertel, Dorothy Klipstein, Ethel Mae Baldwin, John Miller, Hunter Clark, Hank Benthauser, Dean Burmaster, Bob Brod, David Denter, Ed Miller, Lynne Rudy, Henry Schmid, Megan Braund, Helen Milne, Sam Loizzo, and Joy Bever