

## Our song to sing or to read: God Has Chosen Me

**Refrain:** God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring good news to the poor.

God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring new sight to those searching for light  
God has chosen me, chosen me.

And to tell the world that God's kingdom is near  
to remove oppression and breakdown fear  
yes, God's time is near, God's time is near.  
God's time is near, God's time is near. **Refrain**

God has chosen me, God has chosen me to set alight a new fire.  
God has chosen me, God has chosen me  
to bring to birth a new kingdom on earth  
God has chosen me, chosen me: **Refrain**

God is calling me, God is calling me in all whose cry is unheard.  
God is calling me, God is calling me  
to raise up the voice with no power or choice  
God is calling me, calling me: **Refrain**

Music and Lyrics by Bernadette Farrell

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## Church in a Bag

### 17 January 2021

Dubbo Uniting Church



### Call to worship

Mighty God, everything you do reveals your glory and majesty.  
Open our eyes to see what you are doing in our lives. Let us marvel at  
your good gifts and your wise provision. Your acts are amazing Lord.  
We cannot comprehend the number of blessings you pour out on us  
from day to day. As we gather in thoughts with you now we pray that  
you would fill our hearts, our minds and our souls. Transform us Lord,  
and make us more like you. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
Amen



### A Prayer

Faithful Father, we begin each day by giving you thanks. Your love  
endures forever. It never fails. Though there are many ways in which  
we have failed, we have not exceeded the supply of your mercy and  
grace. We thank you for revealing yourself to us through your word. As  
we have reflected on your teachings today, we pray that we would  
hear your voice. We ask that your Holy Spirit would be at work,  
opening our ears to hear and our hearts to receive your word. May we  
be transformed into your likeness. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord,  
Amen.

**With thanks to Dan Eaton for preparing today's reflection**

### Preparation

God is committed to drawing disparate people into a community  
founded on his values. From Paul in Romans and Jesus in Matthew's  
Gospel, this is about calling out sin where we see it, in the hope that an  
individual will turn and mend his/her ways. Jesus' teaching here  
follows on from warnings to not put stumbling blocks in the path of the  
weak or the young. For Paul, it is about embodying love of neighbour  
and practising forgiveness. In doing this, we start to look like Jesus –  
not just as individuals, but as churches.  
Amen



## First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

### Reflection

A judge was presiding over a case in a small, rural county. The defendant was charged with drunk driving and trying to assault the police officer who arrested him. To convict the defendant on the assault of an officer charge, the District Attorney had to prove that the defendant knew the person he was assaulting was a police officer; and the easiest way to do that is to show that the officer was wearing a police uniform.

So the District Attorney asked the officer on the witness stand, "And how were you attired when you pulled the defendant over"? The witness looked at him blankly. It was clear he didn't know what the District Attorney meant by "attired". Everyone saw this but the District Attorney. "Would you repeat the question, please?"

In a slightly irritated voice the District Attorney said, "And how were you attired when you pulled the defendant over?" The witness still was puzzled. "Say that again", he pleaded. "How were you attired when you pulled the defendant over?" barked the District Attorney.

My friend said you could suddenly see the light bulb come on in the officer's head, and he proudly proclaimed "I was traveling on standard issue radial tires!"

Sometimes it's all about the language we hear. As it was with Samuel's confusion about what he was hearing. It took three times - and a little insight from Eli - before the 'light of the Word' was taken in by Samuel. In our busy and noisy world of babbling voices, it may take us several calls to hear the Lord speak to us. This story reminds us of the importance of listening for God and listening to one another.

## Second Reading: John 1:43-51

### Reflection

There is the story of a young woman who wanted to go to college, but her heart sank when she read the question on the application form that asked, "Are you a leader?" Being both honest and conscientious,

she wrote, "No," and returned the application, expecting the worst. To her surprise, she received this letter from the college: "Dear Applicant, A study of the application forms reveals that this year our college will have 1,452 new leaders. We are accepting you because we feel it is imperative that they have at least one follower."

Our text today is about calling for followers. Jesus is calling his first Disciples. Not all were excited about the call, it seems. When Phillip called Nathanael, he was somewhat doubtful: so much so that his response revealed a cynical sneer. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" answered Phillip, "Come and see".

Consider this from Brett Blair: there are all kinds of Nathaniels in this world sitting under fig trees waiting to be called. Martin Luther King had been called and was prepared to lead but it was not he who began the civil rights movement. It was a woman, Rosa Parks, a seamstress by trade. Like Nathaniel, she was found sitting when she heard the call - not under a fig tree but on a city bus. She heard the call when she was told, "You have to move to the back of the bus".

When Andrew found Nathaniel under that fig tree, he was there because he was tired and it was hot. He was escaping the heat of the day, but he got up and went to see this Jesus. But sometimes you have to stay under the fig tree to answer the call. You have to stand your ground and keep your seat. "No, my feet are tired, and I'm not going to move," she said. With that Rosa Parks set off the Civil Rights movement. How about you? What is your calling?

By nature, we don't want to be led. We want to lead. In the church, however, it is imperative that we have followers. In fact, it is imperative for all of us to be followers, even our leaders.

Ask yourself; what was it that Phillip saw in Christ that moved him to follow, that stirred him so to invite his friend Nathanael? Come and see what? What did Phillip see in Jesus of Nazareth?

Perhaps you will think about this today. Come and see what?

