

Our song to sing or to read: *We Are Your People*

We are your people; Spirit of grace
you dare to make us to all our neighbours
Christ's living voice, hands and face.

Joined in community, treasured and fed
may we discover gifts in each other
willing to lead and be led.

Rich in diversity, help us to live
closer than neighbours, open to strangers
able to clash and forgive.

Glad of tradition, help us to see
in all life's changing, where you are leading
where our best efforts should be.

Give, as we venture justice and care
(peaceful, resisting, waiting or risking)
wisdom to know when and where.

Christ as we serve you in different ways
may all we're doing show that you're living
meeting your love with our praise.

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Closing Prayer

Lord, as we go about the business of living, we pray that we may listen with our whole being, so that we may follow where Christ calls us to proclaim the message given to us. As we wait in hope for God, we pray that rather than becoming immersed in the business of everyday living, we might create a mindful space to receive the Kingdom. May God be our sanctuary; may Christ give us courage; and may the Spirit enfold us as we go in peace to love and serve the Lord. In the name of Christ

With thanks to Janice Monk for preparing today's reflection



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Church in a Bag

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Dubbo Uniting Church



Call to worship

Heavenly Father

The good news has been proclaimed. "The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" As we gather today in Christ's presence, may we hear your call to welcome the Good News, spreading your vision in whatever time, in whatever place and in whatever way you choose to send us. May we be filled with your Holy Spirit and remind ourselves that it is not we who chose Christ but Christ who chose us. Through His grace may we allow ourselves to be open to amazing possibilities.

Amen

Preparation

When we are caught up in the ordinariness of everyday living, the comfort and the constraints of the familiar, we sometimes lose perspective on the greater story. As we reflect on the decision made by four fishermen to leave the familiar and venture into the unknown, our views will always be mixed. For most of us major changes stretch the limits of our 'comfort zones' and it is sometimes easier to maintain the status quo rather than embrace change. Perhaps our perspectives are deserving of a re-examination. Maybe it is time to reflect on the words of Michael K. Marsh.



*"Finding God in our daily work is a difficult thing to do,
maybe some of the hardest work we do.*

*To even do this work suggests, I think, that we believe
and trust that all of life and creation are sacramental.*

*Too often we want faith to be an escape from the world
when in truth it is the means by which we engage the world."*

Reading: Mark 1:14–20

Reflection

For me, one of the most remarkable things about the Holy Bible is that it truly is a living document. No matter how many times I read the familiar passages, I never fail to be amazed at how utterly relevant scriptures are in the midst of life today. In my journey of discovery in preparing for this reflection, I discovered a sermon, written by Michael K Marsh, titled 'Casting and Mending'. I'd like to share some of the new insights that I took from his message.

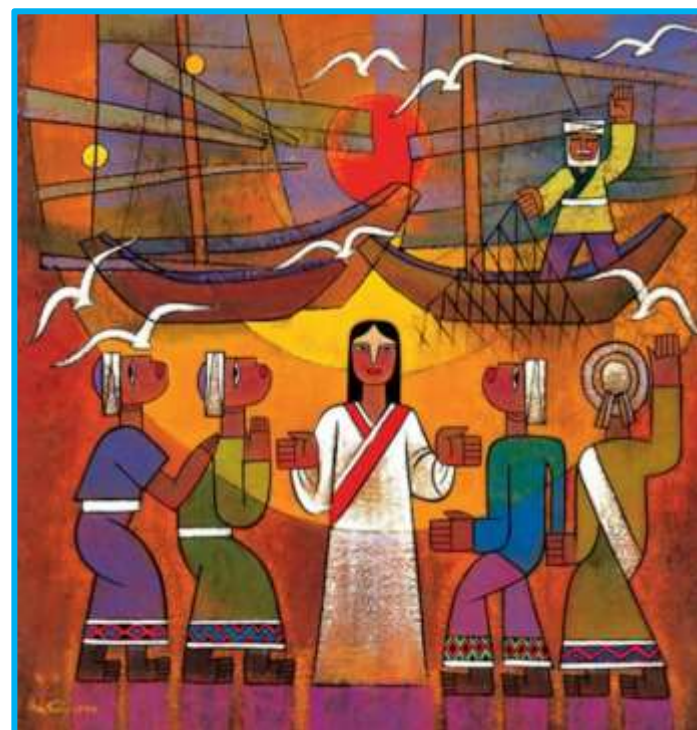
There they were. Four fishermen: Simon, Andrew, James and John. Working long, hard days, casting their nets, pulling them in; mending the nets, maintaining the boats. They were probably following in the footsteps of past generations in their family. So it is for most of us: not fishing for a living but living our days mostly bound by routine.

As we have grown from children to adults, much of our lives have been about 'casting and mending'. In our youth we tried to assemble the skills that would enable us to provide for ourselves and possibly a family. We try to be responsible citizens, playing our part in society, paying our bills, saving for retirement, sourcing food and shelter, accumulating possessions, trying to be valuable members of society. 'Casting and mending' our way through the ups and the downs of everyday life, it is inevitable that challenges to health, to relationships, to life as we know it will arise. This is the reality of life.

In the midst of their ordinary lives, the ordinary became extraordinary. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." This was not simply a job offer to garner new followers, it was the offer that would transform their lives and that is the wonderful thing for us. That call to 'follow me' is a call to discover, in the mundane, in the routines of the 'casting and mending', precious opportunities to grow, to change, to see a greater vision, and maybe take a new direction.

It is remarkable that those four fishermen 'left....and followed him'. No questions, no goodbyes, no itinerary, no destination. What is just as remarkable is that the same invitation holds true for us today. Perhaps we are so busy 'netting and mending' that we are scared to let go.

There is so much comfort in the familiar. It is how we identify ourselves. Yet, if we truly seek to discover God's Divinity within us, to receive anew God's life and be prepared to discover a new way of being, we must be prepared to let go and follow Him.



Calling Disciples