

Third Sunday after Epiphany
January 24, 2021
Cross of Glory Lutheran Church
Brooklyn Center, MN

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose voice is upon the waters, whose mercy is poured out upon all people, whose love cascades over all creation. **Amen.**

Let us take a moment of silence to confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

Holy God, **we repent of our sinful ways: the ways we turn inward, failing to live your outward way of love. The ways we fail to welcome those unlike us. The ways we fool ourselves into thinking that we are God. Forgive us our sins—those we commit knowingly and unknowingly, individually and communally, by our actions and by our inaction—and grant us your divine mercy. Amen.**

Through the power and promise of † Christ Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we are claimed as God's beloved children. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are freed to live as beloved community, to work for justice, and to strive for peace in all the earth. **Amen.**

WELCOME SONG #817 You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore verses 1, 2, 3 & 4

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| <p>1 You have come down to the lakeshore
seeking neither the wise nor the wealthy,
but only asking for me to follow.</p> | <p>Refrain Sweet Lord, you have looked into my eyes;
kindly smiling, you've called out my name.
On the sand I have abandoned my small boat;
now with you, I will seek other seas.</p> |
| <p>2 You know full well what I have, Lord:
neither treasure nor weapons for conquest,
just these my fish nets and will for working.</p> | <p>3 You need my hands, my exhaustion,
working love for the rest of the weary--
a love that's willing to go on loving. Refrain</p> |
| <p>4 You who have fished other waters;
you, the longing of souls that are yearning:
O loving Friend, you have come to call me. Refrain</p> | |

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen, amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Refrain: This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

Power and riches, wisdom and strength, and honor and blessing and glory are his. *Refrain*

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation: Blessing and honor, glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen. *Refrain*

For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray . . . **God of the lakeshore, by grace alone you empower us to come and follow.**

Caught up in your love, empower us now to freely share this love with our neighbors; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

READING: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

¹The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying, ²“Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.” ³So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across. ⁴Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, “Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!” ⁵And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sackcloth.

¹⁰When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SPECIAL MUSIC

GOSPEL: Mark 1:14-20

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

¹⁶As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. ¹⁷And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” ¹⁸And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Rev. Ali Tranvik

One of our favorite stops along the North Shore (other than Betty's Pies and Castle Danger Brewing) is the North Shore Commercial Fishing Museum in Tofte, MN. The museum tells the stories of the Scandinavian immigrants who, at the turn of the century, were lured by tales of abundance and opportunity. Some of these immigrants were farmers, some were loggers, but many were fishermen, hailing from the coastal villages of Norway. Most of these fishermen had no money, no education, no skills, so to speak. As rural peasants in the midst of a prolonged and severe economic depression, they had no foreseeable future in Norway, so out of desperation, many fled to the States. Indeed, in 1882, for example, 1.5% of Norwegians fled their homeland with nothing other than their fishing knowledge, their work ethic, and their native hardiness, characteristics that would help them find work in a booming frontier state like Minnesota. But the work was not glamorous, to put it lightly. Fishing Lake Superior was an arduous and often dangerous task. To catch herring and lake trout, fishermen had to brave the frigid waters and unpredictable weather of the lake. The onshore work was nearly as demanding; fish needed to be sorted and sold, boats needed to be repaired, nets needed to be cleaned and mended. While Duluth provided a market to support the fledgling fishing industry, immigrant life was not easy. The fishermen traded the harsh conditions of life in their homeland for the equally harsh conditions of life in northern Minnesota (North Shore Commercial Fishing Museum).

The Tranviks were one of these families. In the early 1900s, one of Isak's ancestors immigrated from the coastal fishing village of yes, Tranvik, Norway. They made their home along the shores of Superior and made their modest living by fishing.

Unfortunately, none of that fishing knowledge was passed on to Isak by blood, nor to me by marriage. Isak and I spent our last camping trip in the Boundary Waters carrying pounds of fishing gear on our backs, spending afternoons patiently waiting with our lines in the water, only to end up eating yet another pack of instant mac-and-cheese at the end of the day (the fish, on the other hand, were very well fed). Isak insists that he's a bad fisherman because he's good at golf—I'm sure his ancestors would be really proud of that...

Today, we find ourselves in the water with two fish-themed Bible stories. In our Old Testament story, Jonah has just spent three days and nights inside the belly of a fish and been spit up on the shore, where God calls him to go to Nineveh. In our Gospel story, Jesus calls four fishermen to be his disciples. Simon and Andrew had just cast their nets into the Sea of Galilee, and James and John were busy mending their nets, when suddenly Jesus shows up on the lakeshore and invites them into a different kind of fishing. "Follow me," Jesus says, "and I will make you fish for people." A strange invitation, to be sure (and perhaps even stranger that they immediately drop their nets and follow him??).

This story from Mark has always perplexed me—and not only because of my lack of fishing knowledge. Rather, it's troubled me because of the way it's often presented: we (Christians hearing this story at church) are the chosen disciples, specially-selected to follow Jesus. Meanwhile, the people who we're supposed to "fish for," if we are to rightly follow this Jesus, are people who haven't yet found Jesus. They're people who aren't Christian, or maybe they're those who don't go to church (the big catch, particularly, is those mythical young people). We are to "lure" them into church, using our large Sunday School, our flourishing young adult ministries, our stellar music program, etc. as "bait."

Now, we modest Midwestern Lutherans would never talk like this. Put in these terms, evangelism or discipleship sounds a bit aggressive, not to mention just plain manipulative. Our style tends to be to let the fish swim through our doors rather than go out to catch them, right? Or perhaps our uneasiness with this story stems from some of the "fishing techniques" that Christians across time and place have used to convince and convert people that have turned out to be far more harmful than faithful.

As I was reflecting on what Jesus meant by "fishing for people" and on what this story might mean for us today, I was struck with a new question about this story I'd never considered: Why do I automatically associate myself with the disciples charged with doing the fishing (especially

considering my own fishing skills)? What if, in other words, I/we are not the ones called to catch fish—what if we are the ones who *get caught*?

Today I want to invite us to read this fishing story not from the perspective of the fishing boat, but from the underside, from the underwater point-of-view. I want to invite us to think about our Christian calling as one less about catching others and more about being caught, or “*caught up in God*,” as theologian Willie Jennings puts it. I want to invite us to think of discipleship not as “following” Jesus (fish, after all, never choose to follow the fisherman), but as being tangled up in the nets of God’s grace. I want to invite us to think of this as a story not about us, in other words, but about God.

Pushing back against the ways that medieval Christianity had come to promote a theology of “good works,” Martin Luther popularized the phrase *sola gratia*, meaning grace alone, to suggest that life in Jesus is entirely a result of God’s grace. If following Jesus were up to us, in other words, we’d swim as far away as we could, as Jonah so aptly models for us. Following Jesus is not something we choose, because it asks us to do hard things: to ask the Ninevites to repent of their wickedness, as was the case for Jonah, or to drop our nets, leave our homes, say goodbye to our families and follow Jesus into a new kind of life that would turn out to be far more difficult than leaving our old one, as was the case for Simon, Andrew, James, and John. No, following Jesus is not something we would ever or could ever choose. It’s something that happens to us—something that catches us—in spite of us.

So what exactly are we *caught up in* when we are caught up in God, we might ask? A look into the fishing industry in Jesus’ day might give us some clues. “By the time Jesus started recruiting disciples, the fishing industry in Palestine was fully under the control of the Roman Empire. Caesar owned every body of water, and all fishing was state-regulated for the benefit of the urban elite. Fishermen couldn’t obtain licenses to fish without joining a syndicate, most of what they caught was exported—leaving local communities impoverished and hungry, deprived of the dietary staple they had depended on for centuries—and the Romans collected exorbitant taxes, levies, and tolls each time fish were sold. To catch even one fish outside of this exploitative system was illegal” (Hansen, Thomas).

What exactly are we caught up in when we are caught up in God? Taking into account this socio-political context, we see that Jesus’ invitation to the disciples wasn’t a plea to fill pews. He wasn’t reeling them into an Adult Ed class about church growth. He was inviting them, using a metaphor they knew well, to get caught up in a categorically different kind “fishing.” Not a kind of fishing like the fishing economy of Rome, which enriched the rich and exploited the poor, but an alternative fishing economy in which there is justice for the poor, mercy for the oppressed, and where *all* have enough to eat.

What exactly are we caught up in when we are caught up in God? For Simon, Andrew, James, John, it would entail being caught up with hungry hordes who Jesus fed in the wilderness, with lepers and paralytics and bleeding women who Jesus healed, with disliked tax collectors who Jesus sat down with for lunch, with Samaritans—outsiders, foreigners, *immigrants*—who Jesus scandalously welcomed.

Just three generations ago, the Tranvik family experienced this same kind of welcome. Trinity Lutheran Church in Duluth threw them a line of hospitality. Now, Trinity was by no means a perfect place (it was a church, after all). But the people of Trinity recognized something about our Gospel story today, it seems: that “following Jesus” wasn’t about catching fish but about recognizing that they were already “caught up with” others in the nets of God’s grace—caught up in an “inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment [net] of destiny,” as Martin Luther King says, tangled up with others, including Isak’s ancestor, a 35-year-old man with no money, no family, no English language skills, no-thing to offer (at least, by most standards).

Many of us have our own stories of movement, stories perhaps not too long ago of when our own families fled one place and came to another. And all of us as Christians—who “follow” Jesus Christ, who lived his life on the run—are a kind of displaced, dislocated people. A people on the

move. As Pastor Mark Tranvik reminded us a few weeks ago, it is when we think we've arrived that we are really lost.

What does it mean to live "tangled up" in our context, here in Brooklyn Center? To welcome the immigrants in our midst as we've been welcomed? To be caught up together in what God is doing *here*?

The lines are not ours to cast. The nets are not ours to throw. Catching, really, is not our job to do. For we are not God. But this is actually good news (as one pastor says, this is "the worst good news ever"). The Good News is that God is the Fisherman and we are not (and thank goodness, cause I have a hunch I'm not the only one bad at fishing). The Good News is that is that when we let God be God, we are swept up in something far better than we could ever manage on our own. We caught up in a kind of community we'd never choose to catch for ourselves, caught up in a kind life we'd never choose to live for ourselves, caught up in a kind of love that grace alone can give. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Sources:

- Debie Thomas, "Fishing for People," *Journeying with Jesus*, Jan 14, 2018.
- K.C. Hansen, "The Galilean Fishing Economy and the Jesus Tradition," *Journal of Bible and Culture*, Aug 1, 1997.
- Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," *The King Institute*, 1963.
- North Shore Commercial Fishing Museum: <http://www.commercialfishingmuseum.org/>.
- Willie Jennings, "Caught Up in God," *The Christian Century*, May 19, 2020.

HYMN OF THE DAY #807 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing verses 1, 2 & 3

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| <p>1 Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory
fills my heart with joy and love,
teach me ever to adore thee;
may I still thy goodness prove.</p> <p>3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be;
let that grace now like a fetter
bind my wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it;
seal it for thy courts above.</p> | <p>2 Here I raise my Ebenezer:
"Hither by thy help I've come";
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wand'ring from the fold of God;
he, to rescue me from danger,
interposed his precious blood.</p> |
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CONFESSION OF FAITH Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERTORY

Offering can be mailed to the church (5929 Brooklyn Blvd, Brooklyn Center, MN 55429), or to give electronically via the "Give" button at the bottom of our website (www.crossofglory.us). Thank you for your continuing to support God's work here at Cross of Glory!

OFFERTORY RESPONSE

1 All Your ways are good
All Your ways are sure
I will trust in You alone
Higher than my sight
High above my life
I will trust in You alone

2 Light into the world
Light into my life
I will live for You alone
You're the One I seek

Yeah I will follow You yeah
I will follow You yeah
I will follow You yeah

I Will Follow

Chorus Where You go I'll go
Where You stay I'll stay
When You move I'll move
I will follow You
Whom You love I'll love
How You serve I'll serve
If this life I lose
I will follow (You)
Yeah I will follow You yeah

In You there's life everlasting
In You there's freedom for my soul
In You there's joy unending joy
And I will follow
Knowing I will find
All I need in You alone
In You alone

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. **Amen.**

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

God who bids us come and follow, we cannot follow on our own, but you lead us, entangling us in the gift of your grace. Just as you have extended this welcome to us, empower us to welcome the neighbors in our midst. We pray especially for recently-resettled refugees and immigrants, for those who are unsheltered, for those who are fleeing violence, for all those seeking a place or a community to call home. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God who gathers, we give you thanks for the people of Cross of Glory. Bless the music-makers and grounds-keepers, the money-counters and quilters, the office staff and custodial staff, the Council, circles, and committees, and each member of this community who enriches our life together here. As we head into our annual meetings, continue to embolden us with your vision and guide us with your grace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God who creates, we praise you for the gifts of skies and seas, for birds and fish, for favorable weather and clean water. Help us see the ways that we are entangled with all of creation, and to care for it so that it is more livable for us all. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God who guides, we pray for the leaders of our country. Grant them humility, courage, and compassion, and equip us all to work for communities in which there is justice for the poor, mercy for the oppressed, and abundance for all. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God who heals, we pray for all of those in special need of your presence. For those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. For those crushed by loneliness as this pandemic continues. For those battling disease or chronic pain. For all those who care for them. We pray especially for Gordon

Nelson, Mavis Wold, Diane Wenninger, Audrey Pederson, Gil Hartlage, Terry and Carol Stejskal, Vicky Jacobson, Jeannie Kuzmich, for Sig and Grace, parents of Julie Aulwes, Nick, nephew of Lori Balzer. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one in whose grace we are caught up, your Son, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

And now let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us...

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

May you get caught up in the grace of God the Father,

May you get caught up in the love of Jesus the Son,

✠ May you get caught up in the life of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

Multiply Your Love

1 Multiply Your love through us
To the lost and the least
Let us be Your healing hands
Your instruments of peace
May our single purpose be
To imitate Your life
Through our simple words and deeds
Let love be multiplied

2 Multiply Your love through me
To someone in need
Help me Lord to freely give
This grace that I've received
Let my single purpose be
To imitate Your life
Through my simple words and deeds
Let love be multiplied

Chorus Let us see Your kingdom come
To the poor and broken ones
Let us see a mighty flood
Of justice and mercy O Jesus
Let love be multiplied
Let love be multiplied

3 Multiply Your church through us
To the ends of the earth
Where there's only barrenness
Let us see new birth
Use us as Your laborers
Working side by side
Let us see Your harvest come
Let love be multiplied

Let love be multiplied

Let love be multiplied (REPEAT)

Multiply Your love through us

Multiply Your love

Multiply Your love multiply Your love

Multiply Your love multiply Your love

DISMISSAL

Caught up in God, go now in peace!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

The Order of Service is from Evangelical Lutheran Worship which is commended for use in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

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Worship Leadership:

Lead Pastor: Rev. Ali Tranvik
Pianist, vocalist, worship team director: Mark Trease
Vocalist, choir director: Keith Williams
Lector: Dawn Bailey
Acolyte: Earl Simons
Tech Director: Ryan Bailey
Ministers: The people of Cross of Glory

<p>Congregational Support as of 12/31/2020 Annual Budget: \$225,000.00 Year to Date Budgeted: \$225,000.00 Year to Date Received: \$225,853.63 Difference: \$853.63</p>
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Immediately following today's Zoom worship service (approx. 10:30 am), please join us for the Pre-Annual Meeting. To join by phone, dial 312-626-6799, enter 802-502-5123 when asked for Meeting ID (press # if asked for Participant ID) and enter 433131 when asked for a password. To join by computer, visit www.zoom.us and enter Meeting ID 802-502-5123 and password 433131.

Community Announcements:

- Due to the today's Pre-annual Meeting, there will be no Virtual Coffee Hour this week.
- Please see the Annual Report Summary included with this week's bulletin. More information about how to take part in the annual meetings and access the full annual report is included.
- Cross of Glory remains in Level 1 of our Covid-19 Preparedness and Response Plan. All gatherings will continue to be virtual with the exception of essential personnel and building maintenance. A full copy of this plan is available electronically and in-print. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Task Force.
- All are welcome to take part in Bible Study this Tuesday morning at 9:30 am on Zoom.
- Table Talks, our monthly Adult Ed series, will take place from 7-8 pm on Tues, Jan 26 on Zoom. This month's topic is Faith + Imagination. See the Glory Banner for more details.
- Pastor Ali is thrilled to share that she and Isak are expecting a baby at the end of June. More information about her leave can be found in her letter to the congregation. Ali and Isak are grateful for your prayers and look forward to sharing more in the coming months.
- Reach out to Pastor Ali with any other announcements or pastoral care concerns by email (atranvik@crossofglory.us) or phone (763-533-8602).