

## **Worship Service - “Missed Calls”**

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany, Year B,**

**6<sup>th</sup> February, 2021**

**Isaiah 6:1-8 CEV / Luke 5:1-11 CEV**

### **Intro/Prelude**

#### **[My Faith Has Found a Resting Place](#)**

Music by Andre Gretry, arranged by William Kirkpatrick,  
played by Annie Center

### **Intro / Call to Worship**

Jesus calls us to praise and prayer, to song and silence;

Jesus calls us to worship.

Jesus calls us to hearing and healing, to service and solidarity;

Jesus calls us to love.

Jesus calls us to advocacy and action, to protest and provision;

Jesus calls us to justice. Let us heed the call of Christ.

Let us worship together with joy.

**I'm glad to welcome you to online worship with Olympic View Community Church. We seek to welcome all of God's children to join us in bearing witness to the radically transforming power of God's love.**

**As we gather today, let's think about how prepared we feel to our faith calling, and what is really expected of us from our Creator, as we listen to this beautiful rendition of the song Come As You Are.**

### **Reflection Video**

#### **[Come As You Are](#)**

written by Deirdre Brown, performed by Fr Paul Gurr O Carm, copyright Spectrum Publications, Richmond, Vic., licensed to YouTube by RouteNote (on behalf of Spectrum Publications), and 2 Music Rights Societies

### **Invocation**

Faithful God, we come into Your presence with thanksgiving, deeply grateful for the unfailing love and faithfulness You have shown toward us, Your people. When we call out to You, You answer. When we are exhausted, You give us the strength to go On. When we find ourselves in trouble, You are there, standing beside us.

And so we come before You gratitude and praise, offering You the worship of our hearts and lives. Open our eyes to see and know You here among us; open our ears

to recognize Your voice. And then send us out from here, to live and work in the world as Your faithful disciples. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

**We light a candle today to represent the Spirit burning within us, and among us, guiding our time together. (light candle) Amen.**

**In our reading from Isaiah, we hear the story of his prophetic calling by God. As we listen to these words from the prophet, let's reflect on how we might somehow feel inadequate as well, and the promise this text offers for our own journeys.**

## **Reading from the Prophet    Isaiah 6:1-8 CEV**

In the year that King Uzziah died, I had a vision of the Lord. He was on his throne high above, and his robe filled the temple.

Flaming creatures with six wings each were flying over him. They covered their faces with two of their wings and their bodies with two more. They used the other two wings for flying,

as they shouted, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord All-Powerful! The earth is filled with your glory."

As they shouted, the doorposts of the temple shook, and the temple was filled with smoke.

Then I cried out, "I'm doomed! Everything I say is sinful, and so are the words of everyone around me. Yet I have seen the King, the Lord All-Powerful."

One of the flaming creatures flew over to me with a burning coal that it had taken from the altar with a pair of metal tongs.

It touched my lips with the hot coal and said, "This has touched your lips. Your sins are forgiven, and you are no longer guilty."

After this, I heard the Lord ask, "Is there anyone I can send? Will someone go for us?" "I'll go," I answered. "Send me!"

## **Scripture Video    Isaiah 6:1-8 | [Isaiah's Vision And Call](#)**

Lectionary bible reading

## **A Time of Prayer**

**Today we come together as a community to share together our joys and concerns, and lift them to God in prayer. If you would like to share a specific request to be included in our communal prayer time, please leave a comment in the video below, or email myself at: [vicarglenn@gmail.com](mailto:vicarglenn@gmail.com), and I'll make sure to include that request in next week's service, as well as send a prayer chain email, if you would like.**

## **Joys and Concerns**

Today we continue to give thanks for the healing experienced by Melissa Hinton.

We also lift up her daughter Amber and continue to hold her in prayer for comfort and strength in her struggles.

We ask for healing and strength for Cathy Oberg, following her fall last week. May she continue to heal and regain her mobility.

Our gratitude is lifted to God for the dropping rates of COVID in our community, and we pray that those affected may experience healing and wholeness.

Let's bring these concerns, and others in our hearts to God together.

## **Pastoral Prayer**

You call us, Wanderer of seashores and sidewalks, inviting us to sail out of our smug harbors into the uncharted waters of faith to wander off from our predictable paths to follow You into the unpredictable footsteps of the kingdom; to leave the comfort of our homes and accompany You into the uncomfortable neighborhoods we usually avoid.

As we wait, in our simple, sometimes crazy, constantly uncertain lives, speak to us, Spirit of Grace: of that hope which is our anchor; of that peace which is our rock; of that grace which is our refuge.

Gracious and eternal God, you have raised up your name and your word above everything; your steadfast love endures for ever. In a world where every day some division or strife arises we bring our prayers for others and for ourselves. Do not turn from the work of your hand, your human creation and the world in which you have set us: by your holy breath comfort the lonely; bind up the broken-hearted and those who mourn; calm the fearful; rejoice with those who celebrate; be present to those who call on your name, to those we named on our lips, and in the silence of our hearts, those whose concerns are known only to you; in Jesus' name we pray, Amen

**In our gospel lesson this morning, Luke tells the story of the calling of the first disciples. As we listen to these words, let's think about our own calling, and how willing we are to fully answer that call.**

## Gospel Lesson

## Luke 5:1-11 CEV

Jesus was standing on the shore of Lake Gennesaret, teaching the people as they crowded around him to hear God's message.

Near the shore he saw two boats left there by some fishermen who had gone to wash their nets.

Jesus got into the boat that belonged to Simon and asked him to row it out a little way from the shore. Then Jesus sat down in the boat to teach the crowd.

When Jesus had finished speaking, he told Simon, "Row the boat out into the deep water and let your nets down to catch some fish."

"Master," Simon answered, "we have worked hard all night long and have not caught a thing. But if you tell me to, I will let the nets down."

They did it and caught so many fish that their nets began ripping apart.

Then they signaled for their partners in the other boat to come and help them. The men came, and together they filled the two boats so full that they both began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw this happen, he knelt down in front of Jesus and said, "Lord, don't come near me! I am a sinner."

Peter and everyone with him were completely surprised at all the fish they had caught.

His partners James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were surprised too.

Jesus told Simon, "Don't be afraid! From now on you will bring in people instead of fish."

The men pulled their boats up on the shore. Then they left everything and went with Jesus.

## Scripture Video

## Luke 5:1-11

### [Jesus Calls The Disciples To Fish For People](#)

Lectionary bible reading

## Reflection – *"Missed Calls"*

When we think of calls, what's the first thing that comes to mind? For many of us, I'm sure it's those little devices that have become such a focus of our lives is the first thing we think of. Most of us have our cell phones on hand 24/7, always within easy reach and accessibility. We are always available to receive calls, or more likely, texts, messages, snaps. Often these little devices can consume our days and our lives. Yet, as time has moved on, it seems like we prefer less and less to actually speak with the person on the other end. We stray from that verbal interplay for the detachment and distance that makes us more comfortable than

the risk we feel in live interaction. Often, we look at the name or number of a live call and have that momentary decision to make, “do I want to really talk to them right now?” Am I right?

These magical “smartphones” enable us to see if it's somebody we really know, or somebody we really want to talk to, and gives us the option to answer, or “ignore” the call that is coming in. Technology has given us the power to truly disconnect whenever we want. There was a time that one could not tell who was on the other end of a call coming in, a time before caller id when you either chose to answer the call, or you didn't and missed it. It was a braver time, wasn't it, when you didn't know if it was good or bad, friend or foe.

Thankfully, in our stories today, both Isaiah and our Galilean fisherman know who it is that is calling. But that certainly doesn't imply that their reception was clear. Isaiah was awestruck by the glory and majesty of the scene he found himself in. A deity so grand that the hem of the divine garment alone filled the Temple. So intense was that presence that Isaiah keenly felt his inadequacy. He was too flawed to be in such a holy place. Like Jeremiah and Moses, he felt unprepared for the task before him. It seems from the story that he was not pure enough for such a sacred call.

Rudolf Otto, in his book *The Idea of the Holy*, wrote of the Holy as the experience of the Other, an experience both terrifying and fascinating. He illustrated the human response to the Holy by commenting on Isaiah 6 and Luke 5. Otto judged that neither Isaiah nor Peter is responding in moral terms, as if either of them has personally committed grievous sins of which they are now acutely aware. Rather, the spontaneous reaction of the individual when in the presence of the Holy is to feel the profound contrast between the sacred and the profane.

In Jesus' holy presence Peter feels the weight of profane human life. “Profane” is not a moral term but simply means outside the temple, that which is not holy. In this reading, Peter's and Isaiah's exclaimed confessions of being sinful are actually expressions of awe and praise, visible demonstrations of respect for the holy. The differences between these two call stories are at least as interesting as the similarity. Both Isaiah and Peter confess their unfitness for whatever the Holy has in mind for them. Yet like Jeremiah, God provided what Isaiah needed. His lips were purified, he was made ready for the task. In Luke, the writer provides a better case for Otto's argument that Peter's confession of guilt is more an exclamation of awe, respect and inadequacy in the presence of the Holy than it is a confession of guilt.

Jesus would forgive the sins of many in Luke's narrative, but he does not offer absolution to Peter, as God does through the seraphim to Isaiah. Rather, Jesus invites Peter to drop his fear. Whatever Peter means by “I am a sinful man,” Jesus responds not with a moral cleansing but with the invitation, “Do not be afraid.” Yet in either case, did those called have any idea what they were really getting into? Did they really understand the terms of their service contract? Isaiah's task was not certainly not what I would describe as a call with clear reception. His call was to: “Go and tell this people: “Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’ Make the heart of these people

calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." So on the surface it seems he was being set-up to fail in redeeming the people, or he was sent to do the opposite, ensuring that they didn't heed his prophetic message. Yet maybe this is reflective of th

There is certainly a life-altering power in God's word. "God said" and there was light and all creation. "God spoke" and Moses led the people of Israel out of bondage. "The word of the Lord" came to the prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah and prompted them to call the people back to the faith. "A voice from heaven" proclaimed the Beloved Son on whom God's favor rests. When it's God's number on the caller id, there is no limit to what may be entailed in that call.

There is an appeal and allure to Jesus' expression of that Word. It drew people to the lakeshore; they flocked to fill the synagogues. His reputation spread rapidly and people "pressed in on him to hear" what he had to say. They were looking for his call to get the 411, the info. Jesus makes real God's promises throughout the ages. He is that Word in the flesh, in the midst of their everyday lives, in the midst of everyday fisherman. God's living word cuts through the din and drudgery of daily life and offers a freedom that can't be found in the world that they have been trapped in since birth. That word falls on the ears of crowds hungry for change, on the ears of fisherman who find themselves afraid but amazed and attracted, and ready. Having no idea where that uncharted journey will take them, they answer the call, and leave everything behind. Because that's what happens when we see God on the caller id.

We have a choice. A choice to stay on the boat, where we feel safe and secure, where we feel we are in control. I say feel, because I'm sure we have all found at different times that we don't really have the control over our situation we often think we do. No matter how hard we try to manage our situation, curve balls still come our way. Our choice is to stay on our boats and live in the illusion of control, or we can step off into the unknown. We can accept that call when it comes. But once we hit or swipe "answer," and our ears and eyes and hearts are truly opened to God's word and God's call, we cannot go back to the safety of our boats. Hearing the word is just the beginning, acting upon it is part and parcel with taking that call.

Jesus is very clear in the next chapter in Luke. If we take the call and are not driven to action, we are like a builder who builds a house without a foundation. The first storm comes and wipes everything away. This is not a call to be answered casually. There are expectations, and serious consequences. A cost to be counted. The question is, are we ready to take that call? Do we listen and follow the word that Jesus gives us, or do we get caught up in our own nets, stuck in our boats? Is our reception clear or do we only hear the bits and pieces we want, that we can keep with us in our boats without stepping on the road with Jesus?

Maybe this is what the message of Isaiah really means. The call comes, but often we aren't ready to hear what is said. We aren't ready to take the action that call requires. It's a radical change we're called to, to step away from the nets of the world that so often entangle us

and pull us towards the “safety” that world offers us. That safety that only comes if we don't rock the boat too much, if we just go along with the flow and the current.

But there is hope in that challenging call we see coming in with Jesus on the caller id. Part of the good news is that Jesus meets us where we are. Simon, James, and John came face-to-face with their limitations in this world and had given up seeking fish for the night. Yet Jesus appears and asks them to take one small step, do him one small favor, and their fortunes are changed in an instant. Suddenly they had new possibilities opened to them they couldn't have imagined. That one small step into faith led to another, one of stepping away from what had been pulling them down, into an unknown future, a future of new horizons and new challenges. Yet they had the hope and promise that the first step had provided. What might the bigger journey hold? There was no way for them to know, but it was clear they were moving into deeper waters with greater potential. They knew what the nets of the boats they were leaving held, or didn't hold. There was no other way but forward if they hoped to gain what the world they left behind could not offer.

We too have a similar call ringing in to us right now. A call that leads us away from all the noise and confusion of this world, to sailing on into deeper seas, away from the familiar currents that threaten to pull us under. Yet we are drawn to those familiar tides aren't we, to those boats that we know so well, and seem to have kept us afloat. We'd like to just keep living in the boats our culture and country offer us. But what have those nets really provided for us? Do we find hope in what we catch or just discord and discontentment? Do the calls we receive in the waters of this world really reflect the liberating word of God, and the love that flows from that word? Or are they just nets that entangle and subdue?

As Christ's body in this world, we need to be willing to answer his call, not ignore it for the comforts that the boats of this world offer, including the pretty boat called the church that we think so highly of. We like to think that the only problems we have lie outside these doors, but when the church stops looking with open eyes, hearing with open ears, and doing with active hands, we too can resemble the crowd of Isaiah 6, unseeing, unhearing. The church as a whole seems to be withering like the stump in that passage. But maybe that's just what is needed. Maybe we need that nudge to help us realize it's time to grow in different directions, to boldly step out of our boats and seek new uncharted waters where the risks are high, but so is the potential. From stumps new sprouts can grow.

For those of us in the Pacific Northwest, that statement is all too true. Our forests are full of nurse logs and stumps. When a tree falls, new seeds take root in the logs and stumps left behind, eventually growing to become mighty trees in their own right. As we move forward together into an uncertain future, like the disciples in our story,

may we seek to find that living word at work around us, and drop our nets to follow him and swipe “answer” to that call, even if we find ourselves embarking on a new adventure into uncharted waters. Amen.

## A Call to Serve

God, you call us to give as we have received.

You call us to respond to your grace.

Let our generosity express our gratitude for your goodness in our lives.

**As we continue to seek to be a place of compassion and support to our community, we ask that you give prayerful consideration as to how you may support our efforts. If you would like to make a donation, gifts can still be mailed to our church office, or online donations can be made through the link in the video description. Thanks again for all your support, and may we continue to work together to keep being a place of ministry that seeks to promote the growth of God's shalom around us. Today, as we listen to the following familiar hymn played by Annie, Here I am, Lord, let's think about what we are willing to offer when we are called. Do we really answer the call?**

## A Time for Reflection

### Reflection on the Word [video] [Here I am, Lord](#)

written by Daniel J. Schutte, played by Annie Center

## The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Generous God, We have known Your unfailing love and faithfulness,  
Your care and provision, Your protection and salvation. And so we respond with  
deep gratitude, offering back to You a portion of what You have given to us.  
Accept the gifts we bring— tangible expressions of our love and gratitude  
for what You have so generously given to us. Amen.

## BENEDICTION

Here we are, O Holy One! Send us into your world to do your justice,  
Witness to your vision of grace, And follow you with courage into your transforming  
reign. Amen.

**As we extinguish this candle, let's carry it's divine spark into our own lives this week, shining God's light into the lives of all we encounter. Amen.**

## Postlude [Now Go Forward](#)

traditional Chinese melody, played by Annie Center