

Christ Church New Southgate & Friern Barnet

22 January 2023

Welcome

Song: Praise is rising, eyes are turning to
You, we turn to You
Hope is stirring, hearts are yearning for You,
we long for You
'Cause when we see You we find strength to
face the day
In Your presence all our fears are washed
away, washed away

*Hosanna, Hosanna
You are the God who saves us
Worthy of all our praises
Hosanna, Hosanna
Come have Your way among us
We welcome You here, Lord Jesus*

Hear the sound of hearts returning to You,
we turn to You
In Your Kingdom broken lives are made
new, You make us new
'Cause when we see You we find strength to
face the day
In Your presence all our fears are washed
away, washed away

Song: Jai Jai Naam Yeshu Naam (Hail the
Name, Jesus' Name)
Gaoon main subhoshaam (I'll sing praise
every sunrise and sunset)

Balheen ka sahaara (You're the defender of
the weak)
Paapiyon ka dost kai Tu (You're the friend
of sinners)
Yeshu Tu hai kitna pyaara (Jesus, you're
altogether lovely)

Shabd Na kaise bataoon (Words fall short,
how do I even say?)

Reading: Matthew 4.12-23 read by Roger Oram

Jesus Begins His Work in Galilee

¹² When Jesus heard that John had been put
in prison, he went away to Galilee. ¹³ He did
not stay in Nazareth, but went to live in
Capernaum, a town by Lake Galilee, in the
territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴ This
was done to make come true what the
prophet Isaiah had said,

¹⁵ "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
on the road to the sea, on the other side
of the Jordan,
Galilee, land of the Gentiles!

¹⁶ The people who live in darkness
will see a great light.
On those who live in the dark land of death
the light will shine."

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach his
message: "Turn away from your sins,
because the Kingdom of heaven is near!"

Jesus Calls Four Fishermen

¹⁸ As Jesus walked along the shore of Lake
Galilee, he saw two brothers who were
fishermen, Simon (called Peter) and his
brother Andrew, catching fish in the lake
with a net. ¹⁹ Jesus said to them, "Come with
me, and I will teach you to catch
people." ²⁰ At once they left their nets and
went with him.

²¹ He went on and saw two other brothers,
James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They
were in their boat with their father Zebedee,
getting their nets ready. Jesus called
them, ²² and at once they left the boat and
their father, and went with him.

Jesus Teaches, Preaches, and Heals

²³ Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the Good News about the Kingdom, and healing people who had all kinds of disease and sickness.

Radiant God,
in Jesus, your Son,
you have made yourself known
to those who are near
and those who are far off.

**We give you praise
that no-one is beyond the reach
of your love
and that you desire
everyone to be drawn to your light.**

We give you thanks
that your light shines
in all places and towards all peoples
and that your light
has shone in our hearts.

**Help us this day
to walk in the light of your Spirit
as we seek to live for your glory.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Glorious God,
we confess to backing away
from your brilliance
preferring the shadows
if not the darkness itself
lest your radiance
disclose who we truly are.
Thank you that you treat us tenderly
and that your light brings life.

**Forgive us
when we doubt your goodness
and heal our wounds.
Pour out your Spirit upon us
that we might be lights to the world
and in your service know your joy.
Amen.**

Song: Hear the call of the kingdom, lift your eyes to the King,
Let His song rise within you as a fragrant

offering,
Of how God, rich in mercy, came in Christ
to redeem
All who trust in His unfailing grace.

Hear the call of the Kingdom to be children
of light,
With the mercy of heaven, the humility of
Christ.
Walking justly before Him, loving all that is
right
That the life of Christ may shine through
Him.

King of Heaven, we will answer the call,
We will follow, bringing hope to the world,
Filled with passion, filled with power to
proclaim
Salvation in Jesus' name.

Hear the call of the Kingdom to reach out to
the lost,
With the Father's compassion in the wonder
of the cross,
Bringing peace and forgiveness, and a hope
yet to come;
Let the nations put their trust in Him.

Prayers for the world

Praying with our hands for the world. Hold
each finger in turn:
Thumb – prayer for people close to you.
Pointer (1st finger) – prayer for leaders.
Middle finger – prayer for those in authority.
Fourth finger – prayer for those who are
sick or weak.
Little finger – prayer for your own needs.

Song: God of all comfort

God of all comfort, God of compassion,
reveal your mercy through us your church,
disturb our slumber, move us to action,
to show your kingdom on the earth.
Make us like Jesus, full of your Spirit.
declaring good news to the poor,

proclaiming freedom for every captive
and the favour of the Lord.

Show us the value of every person
show us your image in every face;
we all are equal, we all are broken,
and need the kindness of your grace.
We stand together, here in the margins,
there in the hardship and the pain,
we cry for justice and restoration,
until the silent sing again.

We hear the groaning of all creation,
we hear the promise of earth renewed,
so make us agents of your redemption
in this, the world so loved by you.
May we grow bolder, may we speak louder,
until your voice of hope is heard;
for we see Jesus, going before us,
to bring his kingdom on the earth.

We pray your kingdom come on earth.
We pray your kingdom come on earth.

Sermon: God calls everyone

Sometimes we read the bible and do a double
take don't we? And this passage of the bible
caused me to look again in three different
ways. The first part reminded me of
Christmas, and all those Advent names for
the Messiah – a bright morning star, and light
in the darkness ... you can almost smell the
mincepies and mulled wine.

The second part that caused me to think again
are Jesus words as recorded here in John.
Aren't they very similar to John the Baptist?
Yes they are ! Let's look:

John the Baptist

Mark 1.4 : Turn away from your sins and be
baptised!

Luke 3.3: Turn away from your sins and be
baptised! And God will forgive your sins.

Matthew 3. 2 Turn away from your sins,
because the Kingdom of Heaven is near!

Jesus

Matthew 4.17: Turn away from your sins,
because the Kingdom of Heaven is near!

Here in Matthew's gospel, Jesus uses the
same phrase as John the Baptist. John the
Baptist tells all his followers, look for the one
who is greater than I. Jesus does not, he
announces the Kingdom of Heaven in near.
In Matthew's gospel these are the first words
of Jesus to the crowd, and he uses them to
declare that a new kingdom is here and a new
king is near. John the Baptist prepares the way
and Jesus begins the new kingdom. The
Kingdom of Heaven is a phrase that Matthew
uses, it means the same as the kingdom of
God. The kingdom of heaven is wherever we
find God at work, wherever we find God's
grace, mercy and justice, power, love and
compassion present today.

And the third part, that really got me thinking
was mention of Andrew. Last week we heard
the story from the gospel of John where John
the Baptist calling out across to Jesus – 'There
is the lamb of God. And we heard that two of
John's disciples went with Jesus and spent
time with him. One is unnamed, the other is
Andrew. Andrew then finds Simon Peter his
brother and says 'we've found the Messiah'
and he takes him to Jesus.

Today we're reading Matthew 4.12-23. And
we see Andrew again! We see Andrew is
fishing with a net with his brother. Each
gospel varies slightly. The fact that we have
four gospels means that the bible gives us a
fuller picture of what life was like with Jesus.
However, Andrew's story in John counters
the sermons that say – Jesus called them and
they followed him at once, for we know from
John's gospel that Jesus already knew Andrew
and Simon Peter. But what does it say about
being called to follow Jesus? We could say
that it takes time to accept the call of God.
We could say that most people have an
experience of God's presence before deciding
to follow him. We could also say that the

decision to follow for Andrew and Simon Peter was not a rash decision but a sustained calling of God. Whenever we hear the story of God calling a person to faith, or ministry, or even to share their faith, we hear a similar story don't we? God speaks, God nudges, God puts special people in our lives, God speaks to us through scripture, God speaks to us through prayer, through dreams and then we might say yes. Things haven't changed so much. One thing remains constant: God calls.

Who does God call? God calls everyone. God calls everyone to follow and serve him.

One of the techniques I have learnt recently is axial coding. I've used this method to try and make an argument from interview transcripts. I thought we could have a go at it together.

You have before you a table, with gaps to fill in. We're going to compare and contrast the two callings by lake Galilee of Simon and Andrew and then James and John. Take the verse about Simon and Andrew first, and ask yourself the following questions,

Condition What is the overall theme?

Context Where are the men?

Action What did the men do?

Consequence What is the impact?

Then please consider James and John and ask the same questions again.

The theme of both stories is the call of Jesus to men. We know that Jesus only had 12 male disciples, but we also know that women played a critical role in the life of Jesus – he appears to the women first after the resurrection, and women were early church leaders, founders and financiers. Jesus calls all four men to come with him, to be taught how to catch people – how to share the good news. In all the gospels, pretty much the first thing Jesus does is to pull a team together. Jesus was a believer in team work, and

likewise we know that today the church is not a one woman show, it is a team of people for we together are the body of Christ and together we are following God's call. We need each other. Full stop.

Both pairs are at the lake aren't they? But did you notice that one set are in it and one have a boat. What does that difference mean? The type of net that Simon and Andrew used is a a diktya, not a big net, just a net, and see they are in the water. James and John have a boat, Simon and Andrew only have a net. God calls those with not much money, and people who have a bit more money to follow him.

Both pairs are fishing. Fishing is hard work, demanding, requires plenty of courage and common sense. Jesus is not in the university. He is not in the temple. He is not in a Jewish part of town. But he is calling people to work with him to declare the kingdom of God. Jesus needed down to earth, normal people who were prepared to graft. Jesus saw in them the ability to found the church, a world-wide religion and the kingdom of heaven. So why would he not call and equip any of us?

In a broader context, they are all at Galilee. Galilee was a pagan area, full to brim of busy villages with at least 15,000 people in 204 villages across the area. There were Roman administration centres like Capernaum, and they were right on the M1 of the biblical world, for the valuable passing trade to and from Egypt. Andrew and Simon are from the same Jewish family, but Simon has a Jewish name and Andrew has a Greek name. Here is a small sign of Jewish families integrating with the local culture and customs. Jesus called people from a varied background, who knew plenty about different people from different places. The same Jesus calls us, from each of our diverse backgrounds to serve him.

What did they do? At once they got up and followed him. Simon and Andrew just get up and go. James and John leave their Dad

floating in the boat. The call of Jesus is total commitment to him and his kingdom. It matches his commitment to us: to call us to repent, to love us wholeheartedly and to always, always be with us.

What was the impact? It's the reason we are sitting here today. It's the reason each of us decided to come to church today, the reason this church was built, the reason why every church has been built. It's the reason that each of us were told about Jesus, and so on and so on.

So what? If we need encouragement to share our faith, hear the call of Jesus – come follow me and I will teach you. If we need affirmation of our ability to serve, hear Jesus calling different people, of different abilities and backgrounds to follow him. If we feel like we cannot be worthy, think again. For Jesus calls all of us, wherever we are, whoever we are to follow him. Hear his call to you today, and may our answer be yes.

Prayer

**Living God, enable us this day
to be pilgrims and companions:
committed to the way of Christ,
faithful to the call of Christ,
discerning the mind of Christ,
offering the welcome of Christ,
growing in the likeness of Christ,
engaging in the mission of Christ,
in the world that belongs to Christ.**

**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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

Song: We seek your kingdom throughout
every sphere
We long for heaven's demonstration here
Jesus your light shine bright for all to see
Transform, revive, and heal society

Before all things, in him were all things
made
Inspiring culture, media, and trade
May all our work serve your economy
Transform, revive, and heal society

Peace, truth, and justice reigning everywhere
With us be present in our public square
Fill all who lead with your integrity
Transform, revive, and heal society

Forgive us Lord, when we have not engaged
Failing to scribe your heart on history's page
Make us again what we were made to be
Transform, revive, and heal society

Faithful to govern ever may we be
Selfless in service, loving constantly
In everything may your authority
Transform, revive, and heal society

Blessing

By your Spirit
help us to grow more
in the likeness of Christ,
bearing his light
as we seek to serve you
in the Church and the world.
Amen.