

Epiphany 5, Feb 7 2010. *Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg. With the blizzard and power outages, we aren't going to have worship at the church this weekend, but please know that your pastors will be praying for the whole congregation during that time. This provides a wonderful opportunity to worship at home. Here's a format to follow to create a worshipful time at home:*

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1) Gather your family or neighbors. If you live alone, write down names of people you miss from church or others. You could even call them and let them know they are in your mind this morning. Remember that you aren't alone as the people of God gather for worship wherever we are.

2) Light a candle and say to those around you:
The Lord be with you (and also with you).

3) Pray the Prayer of the Day:

Almighty God, you sent your only Son as the Word of life for our eyes to see and our ears to hear. Help us to believe with joy what the Scriptures proclaim, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

4) Read the psalm and the gospel lesson, printed below. If you'd like to read the first 2 readings, they are Isaiah 6:1-8 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Psalm 138

I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with my whole heart;
before the gods I will ¹ sing your praise.

²I will bow down toward your holy temple and praise your name, because of your steadfast love and faithfulness;

for you have glorified your name and your word above all things.

³When I called, you answered me;
you increased my strength within me.

**⁴All the rulers of the earth will praise you, O LORD,
when they have heard the words of your mouth.**

⁵They will sing of the ways of the LORD,
that great is the glory of the LORD.

**⁶The LORD is high, yet cares for the lowly,
perceiving the haughty from afar.**

⁷Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you keep me safe;
you stretch forth your hand against the fury of my enemies; your right hand shall save me.

⁸You will make good your purpose for me;

O LORD, your steadfast love endures forever; do not abandon the works of your hands.

Gospel – Luke 5: 1-11

Once while Jesus was standing beside the lake of Gennesaret, and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, ²he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. ³He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵Simon answered,

"Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." ⁶When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. ⁷So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" ⁹For he and all who were with him were amazed at the catch of fish that they had taken; ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people." ¹¹When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

5) Take some time to reflect on this lesson. Ask yourself, what would it be like to be there? What's it mean that the disciples left everything? How is God speaking to you through this passage? *Pastor Sarah's reflections are below.*

6) Say the apostles creed:
**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.*
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.**

7) Pray the prayers of the church (written by Melinda Fox)

As we are drawn to the light that is Christ and filled with the Spirit that flows from the waters of our baptism, we lift up our prayers in confidence that God loves and listens to us:
A brief silence.

Lord, as you once called Simon and the first disciples, you have made us, your church, a net for gathering people together. Now teach us the skills to proclaim your gospel with clarity and passion. Help us to go out into the "deep waters" of life where we can make good your purpose in us. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Gracious God, you filled our place in this world with good things and with an abundance of riches for us to share. Now give us generous hearts and caring hands, that we might make good your purpose in us, especially in places like Haiti where your people suffer hardship, deprivation, oppression or injustice. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

You raise up leaders throughout the world to care for all people. Now fill their hearts with a spirit of justice and the courage to advocate for what benefits all. Make good your purpose in us. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

You called us all to work in your kingdom. Now send us to where our gifts will serve those in need, here in our own community as well as to far off places and wherever we can be of comfort and support. And do not let our work be in vain. Make good your purpose in us. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of hope, you know the fears and anxieties we face. Be the strength of the weak in spirit, the addicted, the lonely and those immobilized by fear or any mental distress. Restore them to strength of mind and cheerfulness of spirit. We ask especially that you embrace all those in our congregation who are in any kind of need, those brought to you in our Book of Prayer and those we name now, either aloud or silently in our hearts Help them to know your healing power and find fulfillment in loving you,
Lord in your Mercy,
Hear our prayer.

8) Pray the Lord's Prayer:

**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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

9) If you want to, say the lyrics of this song (the melody is in the blue hymnal, WOV 784).

You have come down to the lakeshore seeking neither the wise nor the wealthy,
But only asking for me to follow.

O Jesus, you have looked into my eyes; kindly smiling, you have called out my name.
On the sand I have abandoned my small boat, now with you, I will seek other seas.

You know full well my possessions. Neither treasure nor weapons for conquest,
Just these my fish nets and will for working.

O Jesus, you have looked into my eyes; kindly smiling, you have called out my name.
On the sand I have abandoned my small boat, now with you, I will seek other seas.

You need my hands, my exhaustion, working love for the rest of the weary,
a love that's willing to go on loving.

O Jesus, you have looked into my eyes; kindly smiling, you have called out my name.
On the sand I have abandoned my small boat, now with you, I will seek other seas.

10) Finish by making the sign of the cross on your forehead (each others' foreheads) and say

Go in peace, serve the Lord. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Sarah's Reflections:

Reading the gospel this week I kept thinking of the disappointment of the fishermen at the end of the long night. They had nothing to show for their hard work. That'd be tough in any case, but doubly so if your identity rests on being a fisherman.

Jesus came along and told them to try one more time. This time, they pulled up nets that were full of fish. This is more than a message of perseverance in the face of disappointment (though that's in there). It's also a message about timing, willingness to trust even when all evidence points to failure and listening for the voice of God directing your work.

It's hard to know when to pull the plug on an idea, a dream, a relationship, or a project when it just isn't giving results. But when you are engaged in becoming who you were made to be (these are fishermen – they can do nothing else but fish), then Jesus seems to be saying: keep doing it; maybe adjust your tactics (deep water); but don't give up hope that God will work through you.

This gospel challenges us to dig deeper into the question: who were you made to be? Or, in church language, what's your vocation? Vocation means what God is calling you to do or be. As author Frederick Buechner says, "the place where God calls you is the place where your deep gladness meets the world's deep need".*

The disciples gave up everything to follow Jesus. But notice that they not asked to give up their vocations – rather to understand them in a different way. You may think, given the constraints of your life, that you can't be like those disciples and give it all up. What would it be like for you to hear God calling you to be exactly who you are but in a way that you haven't thought of before? What is your core identity and how could God work with you there? How do you become even more of Jesus disciple as a

teacher, parent, lawyer, student etc....? How is Jesus speaking to you and helping you understand who you were meant to be?