

**Redeemer Lutheran Church
San Antonio, Texas**

**February 6, 2022
Fifth Sunday in Epiphany
Responsive Prayer 1: Pgs. 282-284**

NOTE: Offerings will not be received by passing the plate. For now, please place your attendance cards and offering in the plates located at each exit.

Masks are not required, but you can wear one at your own discretion. If you have not been fully vaccinated, or if you have a condition that would make you more susceptible to infection, we recommend that you continue to follow CDC guidelines and wear a mask. Please sit in pews where the cushions have been set down for bible class and worship.

Prelude

The Opening Hymn:

“Voices Raised to You We Offer” – LSB # 795

Invocation: Pg. 282

The Lord’s Prayer: Pg. 282

The Apostle’s Creed: Pg. 282

The Message Hymn:

“Holy, Holy, Holy” – LSB # 507

The Gospel Lesson: Luke 5:1-11 “Nice Boat”

Simon looked up from mending his nets to see a tall man touching his boat. It was Jesus, whom he’d first met down in Judea where Simon had been listening to John the Baptist’s

teaching. Jesus himself was a teacher these days, Simon had heard.

Jesus was fingering the joinery of Simon's boat, admiring the handiwork. "Very smooth," he said.

"Benjamin the boat maker finished it last fall," said Simon. "Last boat he made before he died."

Jesus ran his hand over the planks along the side of the craft. "It looks tight," he said, "Mortise and tenon joinery. Must have taken a long time to make."

"A long time is right!" Simon put down his nets. Talking was a lot more enjoyable than mending. "Benjamin and his son took seven months. I thought they'd never finish. And he charged me a pretty penny. But then, I probably have the best boat on the lake." Simon got up and came over to the boat pulled up on the rocky beach. "You look like you know something about wood."

"I'm a carpenter like my father before me," Jesus said, extending his hand. "Good to see you again. Mind if I look at the stern?"

Simon hesitated for a split second. It was a new boat, and he didn't want just anyone clamoring all over it, especially someone not used to being around boats. But his pride got the better of his anxiety. "Sure, just be careful not to trip over those ropes."

Jesus climbed into the boat and examined it carefully: rudder, oarlocks, sail mount. "Benjamin built you an excellent boat,"

he said as he climbed out. "By the way, I'll be teaching this evening along the beach. I was wondering if you could assist me getting the crowd seated tonight. I need a helper, if you'd be so kind."

"Glad to help, Jesus." He liked to be needed, and he liked the fact that a carpenter had pronounced his boat the masterpiece Simon knew it was.

That evening, after an attempt at crowd control, Simon sat enthralled. "The blind man you see healed before you are evidence of God's power among you to heal your life, set you free, and give you joy! The Kingdom of God is here," Jesus had preached. "Turn around and get your life right with God!"

This wasn't the learned discourse of your average itinerate teacher, quoting from Rabbi So-and-So to buttress his opinions. Jesus taught with a native authority, a boldness that left the self-righteous Pharisees in the crowd speechless and brought the common people to tears of shame and repentance. As the sun set and the people got up to leave, Simon himself had been shaken. Here he was, a loud and profane fisherman. Was he ready for God's Kingdom and Messiah? He was a good fisherman, yes. But a good man? Not really.

No time for reflection now. Capernaum's fleet was getting ready to put out for another night of fishing. Simon and his brother Andrew pushed the boat off the beach and gave it a running start before jumping in themselves. They rowed out a few hundred feet and cast the first of many nets. They would be busy all-night casting, then hauling in, casting and hauling in.

Just as dawn began to streak the sky with pink, Simon and Andrew threw out their final net of the night, ready to head in, sell their catch, and get some sleep. It had been a long night, but a better catch than most this week.

"Si--mon," a voice echoed across the water. "Si--mon."

Simon watched the net sink below the surface of the lake and then looked up. It was Jesus. Jesus, whose words of the Kingdom of God had challenged and gnawed at him all night as he had toiled.

"Si--mon." The call came a third time. Simon lifted his hand in recognition.

"Follow me!" The word was sharp, short, demanding. "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Fishers of men? Catching men rather than fish? What could he mean? But Jesus was calling. He was calling now!

The net was still in the water where Simon had thrown it, floats still bobbing, still there to trap some unsuspecting fish. But the fish wouldn't find its way to a breakfast table this morning, because both Simon and Andrew were over the side and swimming to shore. Dripping, they dropped to their knees before Jesus.

"Simon." Simon could feel the Teacher's hand on his wet, tangled hair. "Simon, follow me."

Simon looked up. "Yes, Lord, I'll follow. Where are you going."

"You'll see," said Jesus, pulling Simon's arm gently as a sign for him to get up. "And Simon, I'll need your boat."

His brand-new boat, pride of the town fleet? What did Jesus want with the boat? Simon looked up. "Sure, you can use it," he replied slowly, "... when we don't need it."

"But I need it," Jesus insisted. "You own the boat, don't you?"

"Of course, Lord, I own it outright. It took me three years to earn enough extra to pay for it."

"And you've decided to follow me, haven't you, Simon?"

"Yes, of course, Lord."

"Then your boat needs to follow me, too," replied Jesus. "Not just you, but everything you are and own need to follow me, to be at my call when I need them."

Simon was ashamed. "Yes, Lord. Please take my fishing boat. Use it whenever you need it ... I really want you to. Forgive my selfishness."

"You have a house, Simon?"

"Yes, Lord, I have a house."

"I need to use that, too."

"My house?"

"Yes, your house."

"Eh, Jesus. How can I say this? My mother-in-law lives with us and she isn't very well right now. I'm not sure we should disturb her, with her fever and all."

"Your boat and your house and you must follow me, Simon."

"Yes, Lord."

"And I'll care of your mother-in-law, you'll see. Why don't you lead the way?"

"Yes, Lord," said Simon, and he and Jesus and Andrew walked up from the beach into town as the sun peeped over the hills.

Written at Tiberias, Galilee. This story is fictional, but based on the gospel accounts. You know, of course, that when Jesus got to Peter's house, his mother-in-law was healed from her fever, and the house was used as Jesus' base-of-operations and the site for many teachings and healings. The boat, too, was used to transport Jesus and the disciples on their mission in Galilee. What do you have that needs to follow Jesus?

The Message:

Responsive Morning Prayers: Pg. 283

Congregational Prayers

Collect of the Day

Luther's Morning Prayer: Pg. 283

Benedicamus and Blessing: Pg. 284

The Closing Hymn:

“Listen, God Is Calling” – LSB # 833

Announcements

Postlude

*** Please take the bulletin home or discard in trash before you leave. ***