

## Service for Week 3<sup>rd</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025

By Chaplain Andy

### **Our Opening Prayer.**

Loving God, you call us to support one another, to offer comfort in times of need, reassurance in times of fear, inspiration in times of challenge, and confidence in times of doubt.

Forgive us for at times doing the opposite- finding fault, criticising and condemning. Help us instead to see the best in those we meet, so that we can help them in Christ to fulfil their potential and recognise their true worth. **Amen**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

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,  
the power and the glory  
for ever and ever.

**Amen**

### **Bible Reading Luke 5:1-11**

#### **The Calling of the First Disciples**

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding around him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets.

He got into one of the boats, the

one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signalled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Reflection**

In the gospels we have the accounts of when Jesus was starting his ministry.

Jesus had followers who came out to listen to him where he went but he needed to form a close group of people who could learn from him and pass on their knowledge to many more people than he could visit on his own.

I have been asked why the 12 disciples that Jesus chose were all men and it is because in that society at that time women could not stay away from home on their own or even speak to people who were outside of their own families. Such is the case still in some countries today. So, it is not surprising that they were men but what is remarkable is the men that Jesus chose as his close group of disciples.

No doubt there were some rich and influential people who listened and followed Jesus when he spoke in the synagogues as we read about in the gospels. Some of them could have spread his message very well, but no, Jesus does not call them to follow him. Instead, he called ordinary people who were not in influential positions or very wealthy. Those we know more about were fishermen who worked for their own fishing business, a tax collector, an accountant and a political revolutionary.

He called them to give up the work they had been doing and to follow him on his journeys around the country preaching, teaching and healing the sick. Jesus went about his ministry not by organising mass meetings, although some of these happened along the way, but by forming relationships with families and people in different places.

This was to find a base such as Mary, Martha and Lazarus's house where he stayed when in the area. From these families and their houses Jesus established a point of influence in that area even when he had moved on to a different location. These bases or house groups were in effect the earliest Christian churches.

Today the UK with church attendance declining (apart from Cathedrals) house groups and people meeting in places which are not traditional church buildings, are becoming more important. Again, the type of people attending these groups are not the people of power and influence, they are ordinary people such as you and me who like the first disciples can have an extraordinary influence on those around us.

This comes about not through heavy preaching or judging others but by demonstrating God's love for us all through our care, our love, our compassion for others in times of need and our celebrating with them in times of joy. To form a human relationship with them that is touched by the divine – by God, as Jesus did with the many families and people that he and his disciples met along the way. **Amen.**

### Closing Prayer

Loving God, I thank you that you are a God who has need of me, a God who has chosen to make yourself dependant on human cooperation and who needs my faith and service. Help me to honour the trust you have placed in me. **Amen**

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett