

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth**  
**Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022**  
**Rev. Gerry Gallant**

**Casting our nets**  
**Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**  
**Luke 5:1-11**

**Welcome**

**Announcements**

Church Communication

If you are not on the churches email list or following on Facebook, please join up on **Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/pg/St-Andrews-Presbyterian-Church-in-Perth-101446979060932/posts/> and/or send us an **email** [standrewsperth@gmail.com](mailto:standrewsperth@gmail.com) and get added to the email list. I will be communicating out things regularly on both platforms.

Confirmation Class.

All interested parties need to let me know by the end of January, the schedule will be determined once we know who is confirming.

Membership Class.

For new church members, as well as anyone interested, we will be starting a new members class on Sat. Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 in the church. We will be using the book 'I am a Church Member' written by Thomas Rainer. It is a six-week class that is designed to give people a better idea of what it means to be involved in a church and what it means to be a member.

Bible Studies!

Bible studies have resumed. The book of Ester is being studied on Mondays with Water Gemmill. If you are interested in joining any of his classes, please reach out to him.

We are into the second book of James during our Wednesday Bible studies. Classes run at 8am, 12pm and 7pm. With a Thursday Zoom meeting at 7pm. Everyone is welcome and please feel free to invite friends and family.

Prayers for the people

We need someone to take charge of prayers for the people. Reaching out and updating the prayer list, as well as finding someone to share the prayers during our service

If you are interested, please let Fabiola or me know.

If you are looking to volunteer in any other way:

Outreach and evangelism talk to Edgar De Paz

Education talk to Tressa Oliver

Worship talk to Melissa Valliquette

### **Call to Worship**

Let us sing and pray in God's presence.

**Praise be to God!**

For God has created the world and called it good.

**Praise be to God!**

In Christ, God has redeemed the world and defeated the powers of death.

**Praise be to God!**

The Holy Spirit is at work in the world, calling us to follow Jesus.

**All praise and glory to God, Holy One and Holy Three!**

### **Prayer of Adoration**

God ever creating, ever loving, ever leading:

your presence is peace when we are frantic;

your Word is truth when we face deception;

your Spirit offers freedom when we are paralyzed by fear.

You give purpose in confusing times;

You call for justice when the world settles for inequality.

For all that you are, all that you have been, and all that you will be,

we worship you as the Source of Life,

the Promise of Redemption,

and the Spirit of Love in Action,

One God, now and always.

### **Opening Hymn # 185: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (V 1, 4)**

When I survey the wondrous cross

On which the Prince of glory died,

My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small:  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

### **Call to Confession**

We know that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ. Let us in freedom confess the wrong we have done.

### **Prayer of Confession**

**Merciful God,  
you call us to fullness of life but we confess our shortcomings.  
We have wandered from your ways and wasted your gifts;  
we have ignored your grace at work among us,  
and focused on loss and complaint.  
We have been suspicious of the motives of others,  
too quick to judge and too slow to forgive.  
Give us the courage to see clearly who and what we are.  
With your forgiveness, cleanse us from all our faults and failings,  
and inspire us to walk a new way.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

God is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.  
As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is God's love;  
as far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our sins from us.  
Rejoice that God has forgiven you and opens a new future this day.

### **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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
Forever and ever. Amen.**

## Responsive Reading

### Psalm 138

#### Give Thanks to the LORD

138 OF DAVID.

<sup>1</sup> *I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart;  
before the gods I sing your praise;*

<sup>2</sup> *I bow down toward your holy temple  
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness,  
for you have exalted above all things  
your name and your word.*

<sup>3</sup> *On the day I called, you answered me;  
my strength of soul you increased.*

<sup>4</sup> *All the kings of the earth shall give you thanks, O LORD,  
for they have heard the words of your mouth,*

<sup>5</sup> *and they shall sing of the ways of the LORD,  
for great is the glory of the LORD.*

<sup>6</sup> **For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly,  
but the haughty he knows from afar.**

<sup>7</sup> *Though I walk in the midst of trouble,  
you preserve my life;  
you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies,  
and your right hand delivers me.*

<sup>8</sup> **The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;  
your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever.  
Do not forsake the work of your hands.**

#### Music Ministry: "Come to the Table" by Senior Choir

#### Prayer for illumination

God of light and life,  
We turn to your Word for guidance and inspiration week after week.  
Send your Holy Spirit to move in and among us this day  
as we listen to the Scriptures read and interpreted.  
Help us to hear your challenge and your promise,  
and to respond with our commitment to follow Jesus, your Living Word. Amen.

## Scripture

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

#### **Jesus Calls the First Disciples**

**5** On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, <sup>2</sup> and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. <sup>4</sup> And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." <sup>5</sup> And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." <sup>6</sup> And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. <sup>7</sup> They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. <sup>8</sup> But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." <sup>9</sup> For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, <sup>10</sup> and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." <sup>11</sup> And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

### **Children's Hymn # 58: "This is My Father's World" (V 1, 3)**

This is my Father's world,  
 And to my listening ears  
 All nature sings, and round me rings  
 The music of the spheres.  
 This is my Father's world:  
 I rest me in the thought  
 Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas--  
 His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world:  
 O let me ne'er forget  
 That though the wrong seems oft so strong,  
 God is the Ruler yet.  
 This is my Father's world:  
 The battle is not done;

Jesus who died shall be satisfied,  
And earth and heav'n be one.

### **Children's Lesson**

Today's story is about fishing. Fishing is something I think just about anyone here can understand.

How many of you go fishing in the summer? Do you go fishing with bait and hook? In a river, on a lakeshore or in a boat? How many of you have been flyfishing?

You see fishing is a simple concept to understand, we catch fish so we can eat them, unless you have a fish allergy like me that is. Yet, when it comes to the actual act of fishing it can get extraordinarily complex. There are baits and lures you pick and use for specific fish in specific water conditions.

Many fly fishermen tie their own flies because they believe that the flies that are for sale in the store are not the best for catching fish.

Simon-Peter and his crew are on the shore after fishing all night with no luck and Jesus tells them to get back into the boat and try again. They are professional fishermen, they know all the gear, the places and times and here comes this carpenter telling them how to catch fish. Could you imagine having your art teacher or music come in and tell your math teacher how to teach math? Or how about the other way around, who would like to see their math teacher come and try to teach music?

Yet, when they listen to Jesus something amazing happens. Even with all of their skill and knowledge they caught nothing. Then they listen to Jesus and their boats are so full that they almost sink.

Do you think there might be a simple lesson here for all of us, young and old in the scripture? I think there is, 'Listen to Jesus, you never know what will happen!' Even when we think we are the experts, we should be listening to Jesus and doing what he tells us to do, because he knows everything better than we do. That means we need to study our bibles, pay attention in Sunday school and worship, and pray to him regularly.

Let us all pray that we could learn to listen and obey Jesus a little better each day,

Loving God,

We thank you for the blessing of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Father we pray today that you would send your Holy Spirit to be in work in each of us, to open our hearts to your word and your will so that we could learn to listen to and obey you a little more

each day. We pray you would give us the strength to continue in study of the scripture and the opportunity to share it with others. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

### **Sermon**

The calling of the first disciples is one of the most memorable pieces of scripture in the New Testament. call for the disciples to give up their lives as normal everyday fishermen and become the fishers of men. We even have it immortalized here in this church on the stained-glass window. The

What does this dramatic event have to do with the modern church, with you and I? What does this shift in the lives of these first disciples have to do with the lives we all live each and every day? We know that it calls for us to evangelize, to be active participants in the great commission, but how do we do that? This piece of scripture we are looking at today has something to say to each of us about the great commission and how we should be fishers of men in our lives.

#### **Luke 5:1-3**

**5 On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, <sup>2</sup> and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup> Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat.**

The crowds of people are pressing in upon Jesus, so he steps onto the boat. An ordinary boat, an ordinary place of work. Somewhere where people went to work, to make a living. Jesus stepped into this normal everyday place and changed it instantly. When Christ stepped onto the boat it changed because it went from a place of labor and frustration to a place of intimacy and fellowship with Christ, not just for those on the boat but for everyone in the area surrounding the boat that could hear the voice of Christ.

This is what the church is called to be in this world. I have been here in the church when it is completely empty, it is just a building. A beautiful old building, one that has a wondrous history, yet when it is empty it is just that, it has no greater meaning. What adds the greater meaning, what makes it a special place is when the people of God gather together in this building. When God's people gather in this building it changes, it becomes a place of closeness with Jesus, a place of fellowship with other believers, a place full of warmth and love. The church by definition is not just the building it is the people.

Why is it that the church building changes so radically in character when the children of God gather together in it each week?

Well first off it is the people who gather here each week.

### 1 John 3:1-3

**3 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.**

**<sup>2</sup> Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. <sup>3</sup> And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.**

The church is where the children of God gather, where those who are true believers gather together in fellowship and in Praise and worship of our God. That makes this building a special place, which makes anywhere the children of God gather a special place.

The church building, a school gymnasium a park, a house, they all become special places when the Children of God gather in them. They become a church regardless of what real world purpose they serve. When Jesus set foot into the boat, he changed it from being an ordinary fishing boat into a Church of Christ. Yet again taking the ordinary and making it into something extraordinary.

When we gather together here in this building each week, we change it from a building into a church. A place where we praise our sovereign God, a place where we preach the word of God and where we seek to learn and obey the teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That is what makes this a special place.

It becomes special, not because of the stained glass, the wooden pews, or the history, but because of the food we get for our souls when we engage in the word of God. It becomes a special place because it helps us overcome our sinful nature as we are encouraged in the scripture and because it is a place where we can find the fellowship and support of our fellow believers, our brothers, and sisters in Christ.

This is what the church becomes when the children of God gather within a space. It becomes the light in the darkness, the beacon on the hill that draws others to its light. It becomes the oasis in the desert of this world, a place where the weary can find refuge and revival. A place where those who are being beat down by the realities of this world can find help and hope in the kingdom of heaven which is still to come. It becomes a place where we can find acceptance and love regardless of how the world views us, because of our shared love of Jesus Christ.

The church is a special place and I pray that we never take it for granted. There are places in the world where people need to meet in secret, in hiding to praise and worship God because of the persecution in their countries. I pray we will never know that reality, that we will always value our church, whether it is a simple building or a beautiful old historical building like this. May we always love our church, pray for our church support our church and defend our church in this world, because this is that beacon of light for God's children.



The second way that Jesus changed that ordinary little boat into something extraordinary is the same way we transform any building into a church. When Jesus stepped upon the boat, he sat down, and he taught. He turned a fishing boat into a church by using it as his pulpit. Many churches are invested heavily in tradition. The preacher needs to be up front behind the pulpit, etc. etc. etc. Yet the truth is that Jesus preached from a dirty, smelling, normal everyday fishing boat and it became a church. It became a place where everyone within hearing range was taught the word of God.

When Jesus sat and taught it showed us all a picture of what the church is meant to be. Jesus did not just come to Earth and heal, everywhere he went, in everything he did he taught the word of God.

This is what the church is called to be, a place of instruction. Did you know that the actual title of a pastor in the reformed tradition is not pastor or father or reverend? It is Teaching Elder, which is a pastor's primary job, teaching the word of God, the same way it is a church's primary job to teach the word of God. It is a place for the instruction of the soul. From the moment we enter a church, to the Sunday school, to the preaching time, and in all the praise and worship, the instruction of the Word of God should be the primary focus. It should be a place of instruction in righteousness and our goal should be in enabling people to become more knowledgeable and better followers of the scriptures. Biblical instruction should be the cornerstone of every church regardless of the building or place in which it is located.

Our Sunday Schools, our bible studies, our youth groups are not meant to be times where we play games and have fun first, they are places where we are meant to study and glean knowledge and truths from the scripture. The irony of this lies in the past, at the time of the creation of the United Church of Canada, the Presbyterian church went through a great divide. One of the men who helped establish The Presbyterian Church in Canada was Walter Bryden. He authored a book on why he stayed Presbyterian and in it he noted the trend of the day to focus on entertainment rather than the teaching of the Christian doctrine. He spoke to how while having some merit in attracting people, did very little to teach them of what Christianity was and meant in their lives. The Presbyterian church in 1924 returned to teaching doctrine while the United Church of Canada focused on entertaining the youth. Here we are just 100 years later facing a divide in our churches over a doctrinal manner, because we failed to teach and instead fell into the trap of entertainment.

Our time in church is not a time for a preacher to get up in front of you and try to get you emotionally worked up. It is not a time meant to make you feel better about yourself, or to condemn yourself. It is not about yelling or whispering, it is not about preaching for 10 minutes or 100 minutes, although this is what many churches are making it about these days. Instead, it is about preaching the whole counsel of the Word of God. The whole counsel, the stuff you want to hear and the stuff you do not want to hear, for as long as it takes, whether that is 5 minutes or 5 hours, because the focus is God and His Word.

This is how scripture charges a preacher of the word:

## 2 Timothy 4:1-2

**4 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: <sup>2</sup> preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.**

The church is a place of instruction. A place where you come ready to learn. A place where you come eager to study God's word, with your bible, and a pen, and maybe even a notebook. Where you come with a heart that is ready to absorb in the truths that God is giving to you in His scriptures and willing to take them forth into the world you live and share them with others. Yet the reality of many churches and many people is that the church has instead become a social gathering, a place you go to once a week, or less, and endure the sermon because of habit or ritual rather than love of God. A place where you seek your own satisfaction and entertainment rather than seek the Truth of God's will.

## Luke 5:4-5

**<sup>4</sup> And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." <sup>5</sup> And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets."**

Which is why for many of us the church can sometimes be a place of irritation. Simon was frustrated when Jesus told him to go out and let down the nets. In the second verse we saw that the men were not even in the boats when Jesus arrived, they were ashore washing their nets.

Simon and his crew were fishermen, they had been up all-night toiling at their day-to-day work of catching fish, trying to earn a living for themselves and their families. They had not caught a thing, they were likely tired and frustrated, cleaning their nets by removing all of the debris that they had caught instead of fish.

Imagine how irritating that must have been. Peter was a professional fisherman. He knew what to do, he knew where to go, he knew what tools to use, what baits worked. He knew everything he needed to know about the fish and yet here he was that morning cleaning out empty nets with his crew.

This is how church is for many of us. We come to church week after week, month after month; we sing, we pray, we listen, we learn, we testify, and we go home. We get up and do it again every week almost out of habit. We are busy and we feel like we are doing good, but something is missing. Just like the fishermen were busy, doing a good thing while they were cleaning the nets, we are missing the fish.

This is how evangelism is for many of us, the fishing of men, or even our own families. We think we have all of the knowledge we need; we believe we know the place the men are at, we believe we have all of the tools. We know what to do, we have seen others use a bait that works and when we try it, we get nothing, not a single fish and we are like those men sitting on the beach that day, frustrated and irritated, tired, and maybe questioning our career choice.

Yet this day that Jesus joined them something changed. He tells them to 'put out into the deep and let down your nets.'

Jesus knew the boat was in good shape, that it was maintained and looked after by the fishermen on the shore, so he orders them to take it out into the deep. Jesus knew the boat was seaworthy the same way the church is seaworthy. There is nothing wrong with the church, the children of God. Despite all of the problems the church has, despite the many false churches around the world, the real churches, the biblical churches, are fine and operating according to God's word. While the waters may be rough, some of the crew exhausted and perhaps a little seasick, some of the sailors are frustrated and feeling let down from no catches. The truth is that the church of God's children is strong, and all of the problems it is facing need to be fixed internally by falling back onto the bible and scripture and not seeking out the ways of the world.

Why did Jesus tell them to set out into the deep? If you want to catch fish, you need to go to where the fish are swimming. In the heat of the day the fish definitely were not swimming in the shallows and from the frustrated and exhausted looks of the crew he knew that the fish were not in the boats. That left one place for the fish to be, out in the cool deep waters.

How true is this of the church? When we evangelize, when we fish for men why are we doing it in the boat? Why are we fishing so close to our shores? The fish are out there in the deep waters not huddled up against the walls of the church.

**Mark 16:15**

**<sup>15</sup> And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.**

The operative word being 'Go.' If we want to be fishers of men, we need to be going out into the world. This means talking to people in places where we are, not just at church or just people we meet through Christian brothers and sisters. We need to be willing to go out into the deep waters of the world if we want to be able to cast our nets and catch fish for the lord. We can stay in the church and pray for God to save souls, but until we go out to where the fish are and start casting our nets, very few souls will be saved.

The second thing we need to recognize is that they needed to let the nets down into the deep. The crew could have made the perfect net, kept it in pristine condition and hauled it in their boat over the entire sea of Galilee and never caught a fish. They could have bought the best nets available, studied at the greatest fishing schools in the world on how to cast and draw in

their nets and still never caught a fish. They might have gone and talked with every other fisherman along the shore about fishing, discussed how each one casts their nets differently. All of this busy work would do absolutely no good until they were willing to let down the net, to let it down into the deeps to where the fish actually were.

How is this like the church today. Many seem to believe that as long as you have the right bible translation, the right kind of preacher, the right music, the right stage, the right slides, the right lighting, the right clothes, say the right things and do not offend anyone in the world, the fish will magically show up and jump into the boat. Imagine if real life fishermen worked under this premise, they bought all the best fishing equipment, got the best-looking boat they could get, trained everyone on technique and practiced the skills and then sat and waited for the fish to come to the boat. It does not work! No matter how much we talk about witnessing to people, no matter how well developed our services are and how many programs we run, no one will magically appear in the congregation. It takes some action on our part, we need to be willing to do as Jesus instructed to go out into the deep and cast our nets!

Just like on that day that Jesus appeared to Simon and his crew, Jesus knows where the fish are swimming. He is trying to send us out to where they are, and he is telling us to fish. And just like Simon's crew if we listen to him and cast out into the deep and drop down our nets, He will fill the nets. All of our plans, all of our programs, all of our efforts are useless unless they are designed and directed by God. When they are focused on Christ and they follow his will and we stop expecting people to come to us and instead head out ourselves into the deeper water to cast our nets, then God will fill them for His Glory.

We know that this is the truth, yet how many of us are just like Simon was in this instance?

Peter's first reaction is not to obey, but to question.

**Luke 4:5**

**<sup>5</sup> And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets."**

They had been at it all night. Every fisherman knew the best time to catch fish was at night, because they would come up out of the deeps and be easier to catch. Furthermore, they had worked hard, toiled which means 'to labor with wearisome effort.' Over and over all night long Simon and his crew had cast their nets over the side of the boat and hauled them back into the boats in hope of a catch. All night long they had toiled and caught not even a single fish! Imagine how exhausted and frustrated they felt, all that hard work and nothing to show for it, they probably just wanted to finish cleaning up and go home, get some sleep, and forget the night's work.

Does this sound like the church at times? We look at the programs we have tried in the past and we forget them thinking, we tried that, it did not work, even though we knew how to do it,

so let us not try that again. Or we always try things the same way, thinking that it is our will that will make things succeed. Not giving opportunity or thought to God's will. Maybe we do not support someone else's efforts because we think these things, because like those fishermen we are tired and just want to go home and rest and forget the unsuccessful night we have had fishing.

When we are doing things outside of God's command, we may not see success even if all of the other things are in place. Those fishermen knew everything they needed to know, they had all the right equipment, they knew the correct place to go, and they failed, because they were missing the most important part, God's command.

In spite of his exhaustion, feeling defeated, frustrated, and filled with doubt, Simon chose to obey Jesus's command. He chose to listen and obey, without the promise of anything. He did not know there would be a miracle, from his response he expected nothing but another failure. Yet he gathered the crew and set out into the depths for another cast of the nets.

#### **Luke 4:6-7**

**<sup>6</sup> And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. <sup>7</sup> They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink.**

If they had not obeyed Jesus, they would have missed out on the miracle. They caught so many fish the nets were at the point of failure, almost ready to burst. So many fish that they had two boats full to the point of sinking. They were fishing in the wrong place, at the wrong time of day and they still experienced a great success. This is a statistical impossibility, it cannot be true, it makes no sense, yet here they were with the proof lining the holds of two boats. God can do amazing things even when we doubt. Simon doubted they would catch anything, and God ensured they had a huge catch. Even if we doubt the success of something we should go along and participate, because God can make anything a success and we might miss out on the miracle if we place our trust in our doubt instead of God's Glory.

This is evangelism, casting our nets into the deep even if we doubt our success. When we get involved in the community this coming year, 'when we launch out into the depths and cast our nets into the deep.' I am confident that some people will recall something similar that was tried in the past and was not successful. Some may doubt at the possibility of that form of evangelism working, however, I am hoping there will be a few people like Simon who say, 'We tried, and it did not work then, but you know what let us give it another shot.' And maybe, just maybe, we will get top experience a miracle of the Lord as we see his hand at work.

The world is full of people seeking God's word. This pandemic has created a world in which people are seeking the meaning of their lives, people are questioning their faith and people are looking for answers. Churches have been swallowed up in financial holes and pastors have

given up in exhaustion leaving believers wandering in the wilderness looking for bible believing churches to attend.

If we want God to fill out nets to fill these pews, we need to be willing to go out into the depths, into the places outside these walls and cast our nets. We need to be willing to go out and cast the nets where He calls for us to, even if we think it might fail or might see little success. We need to trust in him, that is the secret to success.

### **Luke 5:9-11**

**<sup>9</sup> For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, <sup>10</sup> and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.” <sup>11</sup> And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.**

They were astonished! When they recognize the impossibility of what had just occurred, they realized the deity of Christ. They had just taken part in a miracle; they were amazed by his power and they began to glorify him.

Jesus has the power to do the impossible. He can amaze everyone of us with the things he can do. He can fill this church to capacity and beyond if He chooses too. However, we need to be willing to go out to the depth and cast the nets. We need to be willing to support anyone with any idea. When we see God at work in our church, our home, and our communities we are filled with excitement. It is easy to get on board when there is success, but the ones who are most fulfilled were the ones who cast out into the depths even in their exhaustion, they are reinvigorated by the miracles they witnessed.

Ask yourself are you willing to fulfill the great commission, to bring his name to everyone you meet. Everywhere you go, with everyone you meet, in everything you do, Glorify His name. Talk to people about Christ, about faith and invite them to church, invite them to Bible studies! Even when you have tried in the past without success do not give up, keep heading out into the depth and casting out the net, you never know when they will come back full, and you will experience that same sense of amazement that Simon's crew did that day. Cast your nets every day and let the Lord be at work in your heart, he will fill you with Joy and you will Glorify him in everything you do.

Jesus told them that day that they would become fishers of men. They trusted in Christ, they pulled their boats ashore, put away their nets and became followers of Christ. These simple fishermen, common workers, not nobles, not educated men, not teachers and preachers, simple fishermen are the reason you and I are here today. Common everyday workers were the start of the Church. Think about it, it's often easy to forget when we read the Bible that Simon was a fisherman, Simon-Peter the man who in Acts on the day of Pentecost stood and proclaimed the Word of God to the masses, he cast out his net into the depths and 3000 souls were saved.

That fisherman proclaimed the word of God, and it was heard, and then someone else proclaimed it and it was heard, and that has been happening over and over throughout the centuries until finally you and I heard the word of God proclaimed and we became believers. For some of us it might have been a pastor, but for others it could have been a parent or a friend.

This is how our faith has been passed down for the last 2000 years. Common people casting the net of the gospel far and wide, new believers taking up the nets and casting it out, new believers coming to the faith and then casting out through witnessing, testimony, and the way they live. Each generation of Christians passes the nets to the next and reminds them that they are to go out into the deep and cast down their nets, bringing Christ to the world.

Today this church is our vessel, it is our boat. Jesus is telling us to launch out into the deep, out into the community that surrounds us, out into our workplaces, the places we have hobbies, the places we play sports, the places where we eat and drink and let down our nets. Bring the Gospel with us everywhere we go and share it with everyone we meet. Invite them all to come to church, whether they are believers or not. Cast the nets into the deep and trust in Christ. Are you willing to do that? Are we willing to fulfill the great commission and do that? If we are, we might just get to experience the miracle when we obey God and go out into the depths and cast out our nets?

From the moment we are saved, until the moment we are taken home to heaven we are to be casting out our Gospel nets. We are all fishers of men. We are all like Simon and his crew, we will have moments of frustration and failure, but they will be far outweighed by the successes that Christ will bring our way.

Let us pray,

### **Our High Priest and Shepherd**

We thank you with our whole heart,  
 O beloved Father,  
 for the precious blood of your dear Son,  
 which he shed for our sake,  
 and by which you daily cleanse, quicken, and sanctify us  
 in your holy Church,  
 and make us partakers of your divine nature.  
 We thank you for the great and unspeakable love,  
 though we were not worthy of it,  
 when you redeemed us by your own Son,  
 who is our High priest and Mediator,  
 the true Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep of his flock,  
 who now sits on your right hand  
 and intercedes for us.

O good and faithful God, Friend of all mankind,  
 give us your grace and your great compassion,  
 that we may praise you with your Son and the Holy Spirit  
 in every act of our lives evermore.  
 Amen.

**Source: Unknown, attributed to St. Augustine (d. 430)**

**Communion Hymn: "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" by Rob Noyes**

**Communion**

**Declaration of God's Invitation and Promises**

*Hear the words of the institution  
 of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ:  
 The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,  
 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said,  
 "This is my body, which is for you;  
 do this in remembrance of me."  
 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying,  
 "This cup is the new covenant in my blood;  
 do this in remembrance of me."  
 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup,  
 you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Opening**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**  
*Lift up your hearts.*  
**We lift them up to the Lord.**  
*Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*  
**It is right for us to give thanks and praise.**

**Thanksgiving to God**

*Generous God, overflowing fountain of good,  
 you who lived from all eternity in trinitarian abundance  
 and yet made room for creatures, creating life*



*through the mediating Son and the hovering Spirit,  
pouring out value on all that you made—*

*You honored us human beings with the breath of your life,  
making us in your image and likeness,  
to care for the earth in stewardship and love,  
to live together in hospitality and zest  
as a daily reminder of your trinitarian abundance.*

*You crowned us with virtue and honor  
and are now renewing us in your image through the work of your Son.  
Magnificent you are, strong God, giver of splendors.*

*You bless inside a world of curses.  
You heal inside a world of wounds.  
You save inside a world bent on being lost.  
We thank, praise, and honor you,  
generous God, overflowing fountain of good,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen***

#### **Acclimation of Praise**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

#### **Thanksgiving to Christ**

*Holy God, you are mighty in power yet abounding in mercy.  
While our world was marred with sin,  
so much so that we had no hope of redemption,  
you made a covenant with your people.  
You promised to renew your creation.  
You promised to give hope amid the sorrow,  
healing in place of sickness, wholeness in place of emptiness.*

*You stepped into our darkness in the person of Jesus Christ.  
Our Lord and Savior lived among us.  
He, God before the beginning of time,  
willingly came to live at a specific place in a specific time.*

*He came quietly to a young unwed mother  
through the power of your Holy Spirit.  
He experienced our human joys and sorrows.  
The Lord of the universe became a helpless boy.  
He ate, he drank, he grew.  
He was like us but without sin.*

*Then the King of kings showed us how to live.  
He healed the sick, cared for the least of society,  
and took time for children.  
He forgave sins and performed miracles.  
He loved, and he served.  
He gave up his very life for his friends.  
He died the excruciating, disgraceful death of a criminal for us.  
Yet you raised him out of the tomb.  
He triumphed over death so that we too may live.*

*On the night before our Lord died, he ate with his disciples.  
As we so often do, Jesus began with prayer.  
He took the bread and the cup,  
and he shared them with his friends,  
saying, "This is my body given for you. This cup is poured out for you.  
My body and my blood are given for the forgiveness of your sins.  
Do this in remembrance of me."*

*So, loving God, we do, in obedience to your command,  
eat the bread and drink from the cup.  
As we do, we remember with awe and gratitude  
the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
King of all, Savior, Anointed One.*

*We rejoice that your great love through our Redeemer's sacrifice  
has set us free and given us hope for a future with you.*

*Until our Lord Jesus returns to establish his kingdom without end,  
we will joyfully proclaim his death and resurrection.*

**We shall do as our Lord commands.  
We proclaim that our Lord Jesus  
was sent by the Father into the world,  
that he took upon himself our flesh and blood,  
and bore the wrath of God against our sin.  
We confess that he was condemned  
to die that we might be pardoned,**

**and suffered death that we might live.  
 We proclaim that he is risen to make us right with God  
 and that he shall come again in the glory of his new creation.  
 This we do now and until he comes again.**

*Heavenly Father, show forth among us  
 the presence of your life-giving Word and Holy Spirit,  
 to sanctify us and your whole church through this sacrament.  
 Grant that all who share the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ,  
 may be one in him and may remain faithful in love and hope.  
 And as this grain has been gathered from many fields into one loaf  
 and these grapes from many hills into one cup,  
 grant, O Lord, that your whole church may soon be gathered  
 from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.*

**Through him, with him, in him,  
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 all honor and glory are yours,  
 Almighty Father, now and forever. Amen.**

Let us now affirm our faith through The Apostles Creed

**The Apostles Creed (Affirmation of Faith)**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
 creator of heaven and earth.  
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the Virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died, and was buried;  
 he descended to the dead.  
 On the third day he rose again;  
 he ascended into heaven,  
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
 and 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.**

### **The Passing of the Peace**

*Thanks be to God: Christ makes us one.*

*The peace of Christ be with you all.*

**And also with you**

### **Preparation of the Bread and Cup**

*We celebrate this feast in obedience to Christ's example and mandate.*

*(Bread Breaking)*

*The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread,*

*and after giving thanks to God,*

*he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,*

*"Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.*

*Do this in remembrance of me."*

*(Cup Lifting)*

*In the same way he took the cup, saying,*

*"This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,*

*shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.*

*Whenever you drink it,*

*do this in remembrance of me."*

*Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup,*

*you proclaim the saving death of the risen Lord*

*until he comes.*

**Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, grant us your peace.**

**Amen**

### **Invitation**

*The gifts of God for the people of God.*

*Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you*

*and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.*

### **Taking of the Elements**

*Take, eat, remember, and believe*

*that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given*

*for the complete forgiveness of all our sins*

*Take, drink, remember, and believe  
that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed  
for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.*

**Response of Praise and Prayer**

Praise the LORD, my soul;  
**all my inmost being, praise his holy name.**  
Praise the LORD, my soul,  
**and forget not all his benefits—**  
who forgives all your sins  
**and heals all your diseases,**  
who redeems your life from the pit  
**and crowns you with love and compassion.**

*Loving, glorious, gracious God,  
you have fed us at your table.  
In your mercy you have nourished us,  
and we are grateful.  
This day, in this time and place,  
we connect through the centuries  
with the church everlasting,  
those who before us broke bread and took the cup.  
Help us now, as we leave this place,  
to continue the work of the holy catholic church,  
to practice the communion of the saints,  
and, with hearts and souls refreshed, to seek your will.  
Help us, now that we have been fed,  
to feed those who are hungry,  
invite in the stranger,  
and visit the imprisoned.  
You have met us where we are, O Lord,  
and filled our needs yet again.  
May we do the same for all of your children;  
may we leave this place to love abundantly.  
May we love you with all our hearts.  
May we love our neighbors as ourselves.  
In Christ's name we pray. **Amen***

## **Invitation to Offering**

### **Offering**

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3). We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer:

**E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. [standrewspert offering@gmail.com](mailto:standrewspert offering@gmail.com) If you have an Offering Envelope #, please include it in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (eg. Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.**

### **Offertory Prayer**

God of surprising generosity,  
 Jesus encouraged his disciples to keep fishing when they thought their nets were empty.  
 Encourage us to keep giving even when needs seem overwhelming and resources scarce.  
 We entrust our gifts to you with the faith you can surprise us and others through all they can accomplish in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **Closing Hymn # 186: "The Old Rugged Cross" (V 1,4)**

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,  
 The emblem of suff'ring and shame;  
 And I love that old cross where the dearest and best  
 For a world of lost sinners was slain.

Refrain:

So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,  
 Till my trophies at last I lay down;  
 I will cling to the old rugged cross,  
 And exchange it someday for a crown.

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,  
 Its shame and reproach gladly bear;  
 Then He'll call me someday to my home far away,  
 Where His glory forever I'll share. [Refrain]

**Pastoral Prayer**

God of grace and compassion,  
 we bring before you the widening circles of our lives.  
 We lift up those closest and dearest to us  
 and name them before you with affection and gratitude:  
 Thank you that your love reaches into the very depths of their needs  
 and gives them strength for their journeys.

Spirit of healing and hope,  
 we remember before you the many communities and individuals  
 experiencing ongoing conflict and violence,  
 widespread drought or severe flooding,  
 crowded quarters in refugee compounds,  
 a yearning for education and a struggle for freedom.  
 We join our prayers with those of desperate people everywhere,  
 trusting in your gifts of courage and resilience to grapple with these steep challenges.  
 In a world of so much abundance,  
 inspire generosity and hope among those who give and those who receive.

Holy and loving God,  
 We are in awe of your goodness.  
 We know in our hearts the tug of our common humanity,  
 as well as the boldness of your Spirit to respond to those who suffer  
 and make a difference wherever we can.  
 We offer these prayers and the unspoken prayers of our hearts  
 in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

**Benediction**

May the grace of God,  
 freely given through Christ, our Lord,  
 and sufficient for all our needs, and may the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,  
 who testifies with our spirit  
 that we are God's children,  
 guide and sustain us this day  
 and forever. Amen.