

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, February 15th, 2026
Rev. Gerry Gallant

The God of Ordinary Days
Sixth Sunday of Epiphany
John 21:1-14

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Come, let us draw near with hearts awake to the presence of the Living God.

We gather with longing, for the One who calls us is faithful.

Lift up your eyes—help comes not from our strength but from the One who formed all things.

Our hope is in the Lord, whose mercy renews every morning.

Come, let us worship in reverence and in joy.

With grateful hearts we offer praise to the God who welcomes us.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

O Lord, our gracious and sovereign God,
we adore You for Your majesty that fills the heavens
and for Your goodness that reaches to the very depths of our need.
You are the One who speaks and brings life,
who calls and we answer,
who sustains all things by Your unfailing power.
We praise You for Your holiness that humbles us,
for Your mercy that comforts us,
and for Your steadfast love that does not let us go.
As we gather before You,
draw near to us.
By Your Spirit,
open our hearts to Your presence,
quiet our distractions,
and shape our desires so that we may worship You in truth.
Be our light,

our refuge,
and our joy.
Receive the praise of Your people,
for You alone are worthy. **Amen.**

Call to Confession

Prepare the way of the Lord!
Let us make our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God,
we come as a people who have fallen short of Your ways.
We confess that our thoughts have wandered,
our words have wounded,
and our actions have too often been shaped
by fear, pride, or indifference.
We have trusted our own strength,
forgotten Your promises,
and neglected the needs of others.
Forgive us, O Lord.
Renew what is broken within us
and restore us to the path of obedience and love.
Have mercy upon us,
not because of our righteousness,
but because of Your boundless compassion.
Hear us as we confess our sin before You
and seek the grace only You can give.
Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news:
The God who judges is also the God who saves.
The One who calls us to confession
meets us with unfailing mercy.
In the kindness of the Lord,
pardon is given,
shame is lifted,
and peace is restored.
Receive this truth in faith—
you are forgiven,

you are cleansed,
 you are welcomed.
 Live now in the freedom of God's grace.

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.**

Hymn #479: "The Church's One Foundation"

The church's one foundation
 is Jesus Christ our Lord;
 we are his new creation
 by water and the word;
 from heaven he came and sought us
 that we might ever be
 his living servant people,
 by his own death set free.

Called forth from every nation,
 yet one o'er all the earth,
 our charter of salvation,
 one Lord, one faith, one birth,
 one holy name professing
 and at one table fed,
 to one hope we are pressing,
 by Christ's own Spirit led.

We now on earth have union
 with God the ThreeinOne,
 and share, through faith, communion
 with those whose rest is won,
 O happy ones and holy!
 Lord, give us grace that we,
 like them, the meek and lowly,
 on high may dwell with thee.

Responsive Reading**Psalm 103:1-14**

¹ Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name!

² Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits,

³ **who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,
⁴ who redeems your life from the pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,
⁵ who satisfies you with good
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.**

⁶ The Lord works righteousness
and justice for all who are oppressed.

⁷ He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.

⁸ The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

⁹ **He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger forever.**

¹⁰ **He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.**

¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;

¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

¹³ **As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.**

¹⁴ **For he knows our frame;
he remembers that we are dust.**

Anthem (Music Ministry): "Such Love"

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

John 21:1-14

21 After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. **2** Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together.

3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

4 Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. **5** Jesus said to them, "Children, do you have any fish?" They answered him, "No." **6** He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. **7** That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. **8** The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

9 When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. **10** Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught."

11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. **12** Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. **13** Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. **14** This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Sermon

After the proclamation of the resurrection which took place in Jerusalem, John brings us back to a quieter place, one that we are already familiar with, the shoreline of the Sea of Tiberias. There are no more big crowds, no more temple courts filled with religious leaders and guards at their beck and call, no more drama, and no locked rooms that are suddenly filled with the glory of God.

Instead we find the sounds of water gently lapping against the shoreline, we see the wooden frame of a boat, weary men whose hands are full of empty nets, and a stillness that follows confusion and hope.

John has shifted his narrative on purpose, He wants us to understand that the reality of the resurrection is not bound into times of tension, it is not limited to climatic peaks of divine intervention. Instead, it is meant to be a part of the life that every human in this world lives out each and every day. The risen Christ is not just the Lord in times of crisis and confusion, He is

the Lord of morning routines, unanswered questions, life's frustrations, and long lonely nights that yield nothing.

The knowledge of the risen Lord is not just for extraordinary moments but for the mundane aspects of everyday life. Which means that the resurrection of life we proclaimed over the last two weeks, and the resurrection life we will proclaim once again in just a few weeks on Easter Sunday is meant to stay with us Monday morning, as we get ready for our day, during our commute, while we are at work, when we face challenges of any kind and as part of any successes we cling to; Monday thru Sunday. The knowledge of the risen Lord is not just supposed to have an impact on our lives when we are going through something. We are called to live lives that are awake to His presence in everyday things every moment of our lives.

John is showing us that even when the initial wonder of the resurrection fades, when the mundane realities of this world once again begin to take over, Jesus should still be a central focus in our lives.

The disciples who had panicked after the crucifixion and marveled at the resurrection did not just need forgiveness; they needed to heal and be refocused on the purpose that God had chosen them to fulfill. Christ does not just appear and then allows his followers to drift along without purpose in this life. Instead, he teaches them little by little, often through those mundane day to day activities that they carry out.

John Chapter 21 shows us what Jesus does with those who truly believe in Him as the risen Lord, but do not yet understand what believing requires of them.

John 21:1-3

21 After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and he revealed himself in this way. ² Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together.

³ Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

Right here in the first verse of chapter 21 there is an important word choice. John uses the verb 'ephanerōsen' which we see translated as reveal. John is not telling a story of discovery; he is telling a story of revelation. Jesus is not found by the disciples; he manifests himself to them.

This revelation belongs to Christ himself, no amount of seeking by the disciples would have revealed him, they could not discover Him unless he intended for them to do so. This tells us that when Jesus appears in the lives of people it is not just random happenstance, it is with purpose, Jesus appears according to the needs of His people and His plans.

Also make note of where this revealing takes place. Galilee is where this all began, the first disciples were called from fishing boats along the sea of Galilee, it is where their earliest obedience to the Lord was formed.

The book of Matthew tells us that after his resurrection, he sent the disciples to Galilee.

Matthew 28:16

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

They obeyed him, they went to the region of Galilee, however they did not understand what they were to do once they had arrived. They were in the right place, right where God wanted them, but they had no idea what they were meant to do. Very much like the nation of Israel arriving at the edge of the Red Sea as they rushed to escape the Egyptians, in the right place and completely unaware of what God has planned.

And Peter does what Peter does, rushes ahead. With his familiar impulsiveness he proclaims, 'I am going fishing.' Many people debate whether Peter going fishing as a failure to be obedient to God, the truth is we do not know, we know that Peter is restored and forgiven, but has not yet been recommissioned by the Lord, and we know that whatever happened, it is all happening according to the Lord's plan. At this moment Peter stands between what he once was, and what he will become. And as he sits in these in-between times, the wait seems long, he has no purpose or clarity, so he seeks out the familiar rhythms of the work he once did and the comforts that they bring,

The gathered disciples' fish through the night and catch nothing.

John is not giving us a fishing report. He is teaching us an important theological lesson here! One that many modern churches seem to have forgotten as they chase acceptance by the world at the cost of the Word of God.

Labor undertaken without Christ's direction, no matter how diligent and how sincere, will be fruitless.

We are called to do the Word of God in God's name not our own, called to serve his purposes, not our own, to share His Word, even when it costs us personally, professionally, and socially.

Too many in the world today are busy doing good works, especially by worldly standards, but they have left Jesus standing on the shoreline, so they bear no fruit for the kingdom of God because their labor is not rooted in obedience.

The reality of this world is that we will have many fruitless seasons, we will have many long nights where all we do, all our hard work and dedication seems to yield nothing for the kingdom of God. We are never perfect followers of God, even when we want to be, because we get distracted by worldly things. And at these times we need to consider that we might be at a place in our lives where Jesus is preparing us to hear him once again as he calls us to obey his Word in our lives.

John 21:4-6

⁴ Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. ⁵ Jesus said to them, “Children, do you have any fish?” They answered him, “No.” ⁶ He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish.

Just as dawn was breaking, Jesus’s timing is perfect. The night of fruitless labor gives way to dawn and with that dawn comes grace. Jesus often waits until all our Human efforts have failed, waits for us to reach the point of desperation, so that we are capable of recognizing the divine. This is why so many people must hit rock bottom before they recognize that God is active in their lives. Jesus does not interfere with the striving, because they may not recognize His salvation, instead He waits for the stillness that comes, and then steps into it bringing salvation to those who humble themselves and recognize their need for a Savior.

As Jesus steps onto the shore his own disciples do not recognize him. Perhaps it is the distance, the haze on the water that morning, or simply their exhaustion that clouds their vision. John gives us no explanation as to why these men who had lived alongside Jesus for three years could not see that it was him, and that omission matters.

Christ’s presence is real in people’s lives, even when it is unrecognized. Just like Mary in the garden and the men on the road to Emmaus, recognition of Jesus does not come through eyesight, it comes through love and obedience.

Jesus calls out to them, ‘Children, do you have any fish?’ The Greek word here is ‘paidia’ and it is a tender and affectionate way to call to a child, Jesus is not rebuking them, he is acknowledging their hard work and their lack of success. Their answer is simple, ‘no.’ There is no embellishment, no excuses, just an admission of the truth.

This is the first step in receiving Christ in our lives. Admitting that we need him, admitting that we are sinners with no embellishment, with no excuses for our behavior, just with truth, ‘Father I have sinned against you, and I need you’.

This is one of the most difficult things for us to say in this world where we have been taught to be self-reliant and trust in our own hearts and intuition. Where the world makes us a thousand excuses and reasons why our sin is acceptable to society if it is unacceptable to God.

God does not want embellishment and excuses, he wants humility, love, and obedience. If you are struggling with sin in your life or struggling with your connection to God. Take a lesson from the disciples here and admit that you need him, no excuses, no worldly reasoning, just honest acceptance of your sinful nature and reliance on His goodness and grace.

When the disciples do this Jesus gives them a simple instruction, 'cast them on the right side of the boat.' There is nothing special about the right side of the boat, the power lies in their obedience to God's command. The key point we are meant to see is not the direction that the net was cast, but that the net was cast in obedience to God's Word.

The disciples obey, they cast the net over the right side of the boat as they have many times previously that night. Only this time something is different. The net is filled beyond capacity.

Same sea, same boat, same net, same fishermen.

This only difference in the direction they cast was given by God and they obeyed. L

This is an important message for you and I and for the church. In the post-resurrection world that we live in the work we do remains laborious, but the fruitfulness of that work is entirely dependent on our obedience to the Word of God.

And knowing that should shape our lives, not just on Sunday mornings but in everything we do. There is no work too ordinary or too mundane for a divine encounter with God. When we are living our lives in obedience to Him, Monday through Sunday, he will produce fruit in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

John 21:7-8

⁷That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. ⁸The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.

John recognizes Jesus first, his love for the Lord clears his vision. Augustine says that the love of God has its own spiritual eyesight, it sees the things that the mind alone cannot comprehend. John immediately recognized the meaning of the empty tomb as soon as he stepped into it, and now the moment the nets began to overflow he recognizes its meaning as well.

As John states the truth, Peter reacts with his holy impulsiveness. As John says, 'it is the Lord.' Peter throws on his outer garment and plunges into the sea. Logic and reason say stay in the boat it is safe, but Peter's love says jump in the water and rush to the Lord. Peter casts all his concerns aside, he does not care about the boat, the nets, the fish, the waves, the distance, because the presence of Christ rises above it all in his mind.

The rest of the disciples follow behind Peter in the boat, bringing their catch to shore. Their obedience to no less faithful, it is just different. Again, this is a lesson for each of us about how we are called to serve the Lord. The church needs both expressions of devotion. It needs people like Peter who leap toward God with abandon and unrestrained zeal, and it needs the steadfast disciples who stay with the work and carry the nets. Zeal and perseverance, both are necessary in a life of faith and at times we will be like Peter and at other times we will be the ones in the boat carrying on the work while others swim to God ahead of us.

The truth is that the love of God can appear in many different ways. Some run to Christ filled with emotion that overflows, others serve quietly and faithfully. What matters is not how the love of God appears in someone's life, but that He is the center of their life, he is the one that they recognize, the one that they run toward, the one for whom they labor, the one who they love and obey in their lives.

John 21:9-11

⁹When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. ¹⁰Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught."

¹¹So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.

When the disciples reach the shoreline, they are greeted by a fire already burning, with fish and bread cooking.

For Peter this would have struck a chord deep within his soul, the only other fire mentioned in the book of John was the one which he stood beside as he denied knowing Jesus.

Jesus does not erase that memory, instead he is going to redeem it. Jesus often meets us and heals us where the wounds in our life were inflicted.

Here, at this fire, Peter's place of denial will become his place of restoration.

Jesus does not question the disciples; he does not query as to why they were out fishing instead of awaiting His arrival. Instead he invites them to share a communal meal. He invites them to, 'Bring some of the fish' that they have caught and add them to the fire. They are not bringing

anything that is needed. Christ has already prepared all that is needed, he does not need their help, but just like when he fed the 5000, he wants them to take part in what is being done. God graciously involves His people in His provision.

John also makes note that they caught 153 large fish. This detail has fascinated commentators for centuries. As you read through the commentaries you will discover that Augustine found symbolism, Jerome saw a reference to zoology, Cyril managed to find a way to explain the trinity. However, I believe that Marcus Dods, a good Scottish Presbyterian reformer, is probably the most accurate in his interpretation of the number of fish caught and what it means. Dods cuts through all the speculation and says this is not a mystery but memory, it is part of John's testimony, John is simply remembering the biggest haul of fish in His life.

This whole scene is good news for you and me. Jesus does not meet the disciples and lecture them on their failures; he does not demand explanations for what they are doing. Instead, he meets them with fellowship, with breakfast, with what they need. And even if he can provide all that they need, he invites them to take part, bring what they can to the fire and adding it to what he has given.

John 21:12-14

¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. ¹⁴ This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

The risen Christ, the one who defeated death, who escaped the tomb, invites his disciples to share a simple meal. This is a pattern that we see repeated over and over in the book of John. Come and see, come, and learn, come, and rest and now come and eat. Life with the Lord is more than just spiritual, it is holy and it is nourishing, even when it is simple and ordinary.

They are in awe, they know who he is, his presence is familiar and majestic, intimate, and yet gloriously altered. The risen Lord is there in their presence, and he takes bread and gives it to them. The same way that he had shared bread in the feeding miracles, the same way that he had taken bread on the night of his arrest and shared it with the disciples.

Jesus is the bread of life, the one who feeds his people.

And this is where we will finish today. Before Christ sends His disciples, He will feed them. Before He commissions them, He communes with them. Everything we do in this world needs to come out of our relationship with Christ, out of our love and obedience to His Word. Our strength to serve is found at His table. This is why we are called to live lives filled with the love of God first, heart, soul, body, and mind, before we go forth and walk as the Salt and Light of his Word by loving our neighbors as ourselves.

Let us pray,

O good and omnipotent God,
you care for every one of us,
as if you cared for each alone,
and you care for all as if all were one!
Blessed is the one who loves you,
and who loves his friend in you,
and who loves his enemy for you.
For with you,
we lose none dear to us,
to whom all are dear.
You, our God,
who made heaven and earth and fill them,
and by filling them you create them.
Your law is truth,
and truth is yourself.
I see the things of this earth pass away,
and I see other things take their place,
but you remain forever.
Therefore, my God and Father,
to you I entrust all I have received from you,
for then, I can lose nothing.
You, O Lord, have made me for yourself,
and my heart can find no rest until it rests in you.
Amen.

Augustine

Invitation to Offering

Offering Prayer

Closing Hymn #425: "We Praise You, O God"

We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;

we bless your holy name; glad praises we sing.

We worship you; God ever faithful, we bless you;
through life's storm and tempest our guide you have been.
When perils o'ertake us, you will not forsake us,
and with your help, O Lord, life's battles we win.

With voices united our praises we offer,
and gladly our songs of true worship we raise.
Our sins now confessing, we pray for your blessing;
to you, our great Redeemer, forever be praise.

Pastoral Prayer

O Lord, our Shepherd and Guide,
as we prepare to go forth, we ask for Your sustaining grace.
Where our strength is lacking, grant endurance.
Where our hearts are troubled, grant peace.
Where our paths are unclear, grant wisdom.
Shape us into a people who reflect Your compassion,
who speak truth with gentleness,
and who walk in humility and courage.
Let Your Spirit go before us and within us,
that our work, our conversations, and our lives
may bear witness to Your redeeming love.
Keep us in Your care until we gather again,
and let Your blessing rest upon all who seek You.
Through Your mercy we pray. **Amen.**

Benediction

Go now in the peace of the God who calls you,
the strength of the God who sustains you,
and the joy of the God who walks beside you.
May grace guide your steps,
mercy guard your hearts,
and hope light your way—
today and always. **Amen.**