



Jesus and the fishermen

MEETING AIM

To explore what it means to follow Jesus.

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 5:1-11

KEY VERSE

"So they pulled their boats up on the shore, left everything and followed him"

Luke 5:11.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP ACTIVITY

10 OPTION 1

You will need: strips of crepe paper; sticky tape; Bibles

As people arrive, divide them into small groups and encourage them to make pompoms by sticking strips of crepe paper together with sticky tape. They should then create a 'cheerleader chant' in praise of God using Psalms for inspiration if needed. Once everyone is ready, invite the groups to show them to the rest of the congregation.

5 OPTION 2

You will need: mobile phone; reflective music and the means to play it

Before the service, choose one person's phone to receive messages from the congregation. Display the phone number on a screen and invite people to text a thank you. Give them time to think about what they would like to thank God for, then send the text. Play your reflective music and read the texts aloud, inviting everyone to say or shout "Amen" at the end of each text.

10 STORY

You will need: inflated balloons; marker pens

Give everyone an inflated balloon and a marker pen. Ask them to draw a face on it (encourage people to help those around them who might not be able to do this).

Choose two or three people to be 'net makers'. Arrange everyone into one big circle and give each person a number from one to 18, but make sure the numbers are mixed up. If you have a large congregation, you can have several circles, or you could have lots of people with the same numbers around the circle.

The 'net makers' have a ball of string each. As each numbered point of the story is read out, they must run around the net, find the person with the right number and give them some string to hold onto. This continues with each point, so that by the end of the story everyone is holding onto the string, which has created a large net in the centre of the circle. When you reach point 14, everyone throws their balloon into the 'net'.

01. The crowds were huge! Jesus was standing by Lake Gennesaret and could hardly be seen or heard because of all the people!
02. Jesus spied a boat belonging to one of the fishermen, Simon.
03. Jesus pushed his way through the crowd of people and climbed into Simon's boat.
04. "Will you push us out a little further, Simon?" Jesus asked.
05. When he was far enough away but still close enough to be seen and heard, Jesus sat down in the boat and started teaching the people.
06. He finished speaking but he certainly hadn't finished working!
07. "Simon," he said, "let's go out deeper and catch some fish."
08. Simon looked a bit sheepish.
09. "Master," he replied, "we've been trying all night to catch fish and haven't caught a single thing."
10. Jesus said nothing. He just waited.
11. "OK," Simon said, shrugging his shoulders. "Because you say to do it, I'll do it."
12. So they rowed further out into the deeper water.
13. Simon let down his nets.
14. Suddenly, the nets became very heavy. They were so full of fish that it was almost impossible to haul them back in again.
15. Simon had to call for help from James and John, his fishing partners, just to drag the nets in. The boats almost sank!
16. They were all overwhelmed. Simon fell to his knees before Jesus. "Get away from me! I'm too sinful for you to be anywhere near me!" he said.
17. "Oh, Simon," Jesus said, looking at him. "You don't need to be afraid of me. From now on, you will fish for people instead."

18. At that moment, Simon, his brother Andrew, and James and John left their boats and their lives as fishermen and decided to follow Jesus.

When the story is finished, ask each group to carefully lay the net on the floor.

REFLECTIVE RESPONSE

5 OPTION 1

You will need: balloons and marker pens from 'Story'

Ask the congregation: "If Jesus was in your boat, what would you want him to do for you?" Invite people to take a balloon from one of the nets on the floor and write their answer on it. It could be something or someone you are praying for right now. Find a few other people and share your answer to this question, then pray for one another.

10 OPTION 2

You will need: signs saying 'FISHING', 'NET', 'FOLLOW' and 'BOAT'; sticky tape or Blu-tack

Display the signs around the room. Divide everyone into pairs or small groups. Give each group a piece of paper and ask them to think through the story and write an 'acrostic poem prayer' with the words displayed. An acrostic poem uses every letter of the word. It can be one word for each letter, or just making sure the letter is in each sentence of the prayer. For example, for BOAT, you could write:

You are my **B**est friend
I am **O**verwhelmed by your power
There isn't **A**nthing you can't do
So I want **T**o follow you with my whole heart.

10 GROUP DISCUSSION

Divide into mixed-age groups and discuss these questions:

- What was your favourite part of the story?
- How do you think Simon felt when Jesus began telling him how to do his job?
- What would you have done in this situation?
- What would have happened if someone in the circle had let go of their piece of string?
- Why do you think the fishermen left everything to follow Jesus?
- Does any part of this story relate to your life today?

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