

Epiphany 3

January 21, 2024

Epiphany 3 (Year B)

The call of God is serious business. It is rooted in God’s desire for all people to know Him and be in a loving relationship with him. Those who are called are sent out to fish for people, the people God loves. This call is an urgent one. It cannot wait. And it’s not about us — it’s about Jesus reconciling the whole world to the Father, who sent his Son to usher in the Kingdom of God in the here and now.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Jonah 3:1–5, 10

A Foreign City Repents

Jonah was commanded by God for a second time to go to the city of Nineveh and call the Ninevites to repentance. His message to them was that in forty days’ time, the Lord would overthrow their city unless they turned from their evil ways. To Jonah’s surprise, the Ninevites responded by fasting and putting on sackcloth and ashes.

Psalm 62

My Hope is From Him

The psalmist proclaimed that the Lord God was his rock and salvation; for him alone did the psalmist’s soul wait. Even though he was being crushed by his oppressors, attacked by his enemies, he waited for the Lord to act on his behalf.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29–31 (32–35)

Free From Anxieties

St. Paul instructed the Corinthian Christians that the world as they knew it was passing away and the time of the Lord’s return was very short. In order to be free to respond to the call of Christ, if one could be free of anxieties caused by family responsibilities, it was wise not to take them on. Paul was not anti-marriage or anti-family. He was simply being realistic about the cost of discipleship.

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:14–20

Follow Me

As Jesus traveled in the region of Galilee proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand, he stopped and invited two fishermen, brothers Simon and Andrew, to come and follow him. They would no longer be fishing in the way they were used to; now they would fish for people.

Suggestions for the Day:

- Liturgical Color: Green
- Use the Kyrie or the Hymn of Praise
- Use the Apostles’ Creed.
- Imagine the four fishermen who, upon meeting Jesus for the first time, dropped their nets and walked away with him. Have you ever hoped you would have done the same if you were Simon, Andrew, James, or John? Why do we hear this story of the call of the disciples, marvel at their faithfulness, and then fail to follow Jesus ourselves? Jesus gives us the faith we need to drop our nets and follow him. He will take care of what we leave behind as we venture into life with him. He will quell our fears and give us what we need if he is the one who is calling us!

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
God Whose Almighty Word	400	---	---	673	---	---
Jesus Calls Us; O’er the Tumult	494	---	---	696	184	184
O Jesus, I Have Promised	503	---	---	810	79	79
You Servants of God	252	---	---	825	---	web
The Church’s One Foundation	369	---	644	654	88	88
We Are All One in Mission	---	755	---	576	---	---
Will You Come and Follow Me	---	---	---	798	---	---
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us	481	---	711	789	205	205
My Life Flows on in Endless Song	---	781	---	763	253	253
O Jesus, Blessed Lord to Thee	220	---	632	541	87	87

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW= Lutheran Book of Worship, WOVS= With One Voice, ELW= Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB= The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC= The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and “web” means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles:

- Build My Life
(CCLI# 7070345)
- Fishers of Men
(CCLI# 2942773)
- Fishers of Men (You Said Go)
(CCLI# 7002940)
- Go Forth
(CCLI# 10790)
- Follow Me
(CCLI# 7016097)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.