

Answering the Call

Theme

Jesus calls us to follow him.

Object

A telephone

Scripture

And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. Mark 1:17-19 (NRSV)

What do you do when there is an emergency? Let's say, for example, that someone has a serious injury or illness, and if they don't get help right away, they might die. What would you do? Right! You'd pick up the phone and call 9-1-1! (Substitute the appropriate emergency number for your area.)

When you call 9-1-1 and tell the person who answers that you need help right away, it is their job to see that you get help. That person would never say something like, "I'm sorry, we are really busy right now, maybe some other time." No way! They drop whatever they are doing and make sure that you get the help you need.

In our Bible story today, Jesus was walking along beside the sea of Galilee preaching the good news of God when he made a call for help. He saw Peter and Andrew throwing a net into the water, because they were fishermen. He called out to them, "Come, follow me and I will teach you how to fish for people." You see, Jesus wanted Peter and Andrew to help him teach people about God's love for them. When Jesus called Peter and Andrew, they didn't say, "Not right now, we are busy fishing. Maybe some other time." No way! The Bible tells us that they left their nets and followed Jesus.

Jesus, Peter, and Andrew had gone a little farther when they saw James and John sitting in a boat mending their nets. When Jesus saw them, he called to them, "Follow me." They didn't

say, "Not right now, we're busy mending our nets. Perhaps some other time." No, the Bible says that they left their father sitting in the boat with the hired hands and followed Jesus.

Jesus is still calling for help today. He has called you and me to help him to bring others into God's Kingdom. Is it an emergency? It sure is! It's a matter of life and death! The Bible says, "Unless you repent, you will all perish." (Luke 13:3) Jesus has called us, what will we say? What will we do? I hope and pray that we will drop whatever we are doing and answer the call.

Heavenly Father, we want to be faithful in answering the call to discipleship. We want to fish for people — just like Peter, Andrew, James, and John. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Interactive Group Activities

by Carol Williams

Sermon Title: "Answering the Call"

Scripture Reading: Mark 1:14-20

BIG FISH CATCH: The teacher can have a large net hanging on the wall (any kind of mesh or netting material is fine). Children can be told to run and find some fish around a designated area (on the wall, under chairs, hanging from doors, etc) and after finding a fish, they can quickly run back to the fish NET and clip their fish onto the net with a small clothes pin, or if possible, just stick the fish into the netting and run to find more fish!

MUSICAL FISH: The children can form a circle and music will be played as the children quickly pass a FISH (cut out picture or a stuffed toy) around the circle. When the music stops, the child holding the FISH will leave the circle and go into a FISH TANK to the side. Continue to play until only ONE child is left as the winner of the FISH game.

FOLLOW ME: Children can take turns following the leader around an area that the teacher has roped off. The bigger the area, the better for children to spread out more and have a longer line. Children can pretend to swim with their arms, etc, if desired to act like FISH as they follow.

911 CALLING: The teacher can tell the children to sit in a circle and one child will be a 9-1-1 caller. This will be played like the old time game of "Duck, Duck, Goose". The "caller" will walk around the circle and gently tap each head and can just say "CALLING", but when the caller says "(9-1-1-CALLING), that child will jump up quickly and chase the original "caller" around the circle until the "caller" reaches the same place that the new runner had been sitting. If he is caught before he sits back down, then he will be the caller again but if he's able to run fast enough to find the place and sit down before being caught, then the new child will be the next one to walk around the circle. Continue to play as time allows.

FISH TAGS: Give children supplies to trace and cut out a large fish from heavy stock paper to decorate with glitter, sequins, markers, etc and tape or hot glue a small clothes pin to the back for children to wear. Children can write FISHING FOR MEN on their fishes to remind them of today's lesson.

FISH SEWING: Each child can be given 2 paper fishes to color and decorate. The teacher can have holes punched along the edges of each set of fish so after the children have colored the fish, they can use yarn to sew the two pieces of the fish picture together, using a small amount of cotton to stuff in the middle to make a rounded fish. Encourage children to write words from today's Bible lesson on their sewn fish.

CROSS FISH: Children can be given construction paper to tear out a CROSS and also to tear out a different colored construction paper FISH. Then write today's Bible verse or words from our prayer for today on the fish and cross and tape or glue the cross on top of the fish and hang by a string or yarn in the classroom to help children remember to FISH for MEN.

FISH LINES: Each child could be given a string as the fish line. Spread fish on the classroom table with a word on each fish from today's Bible verse. Children can take turns attaching one fish to their own fish line and hanging on the wall or a poster board in the correct order of today's Bible verse and let children recite the verse several times together. Then the teacher can turn a fish around so the word cannot be seen and children can recite the verse again. Continue to turn fish words around so the children will have fewer and fewer words showing and see how much of today's verse that they can learn by memory.

SING A SONG: I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN

SHARE A SNACK: Each child could have gold fish crackers, or if the teacher chooses, the children could have a real fish and buttered bread snack and hush puppies (fish bites from a fast food fish restaurant, if desired)!

Song: "Fishers of Men"

Words and Music (pdf)



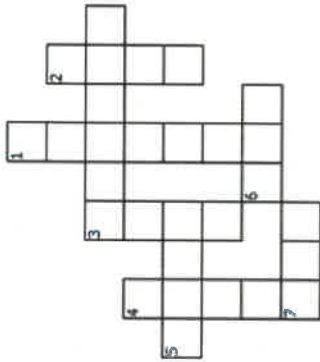
MP3 Accompaniment Track

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About Carol Williams

Carol and her husband have been in the ministry for over 35 years. They have served churches in Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, Michigan, and Indiana. Carol loves to work with children so you will find her teaching in Junior Church and children's Sunday School. She also has clowning ministry in which she is known as Bubbles the clown.

Crossword Puzzle



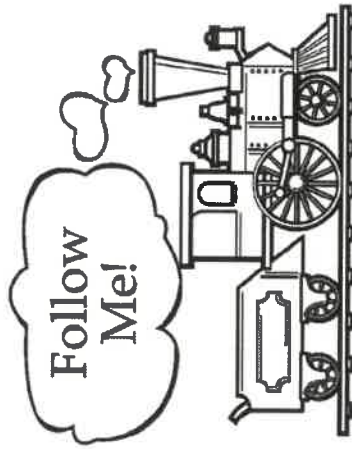
ACROSS

- To get behind someone and go where they go
- A report of recent occurrences
- An openwork fabric of cords used to catch fish
- A large area of salty water, smaller than an ocean

DOWN

- An area of Israel; the place of Jesus' ministry
- A small vehicle for travelling on water
- An animal which lives in water and is covered with scales
- The Son of God

GALILEE	NEWS	JESUS	FISH
FOLLOW	SEA	BOAT	NET



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Children's Worship Bulletin

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Mark 1:14-20

Word Search

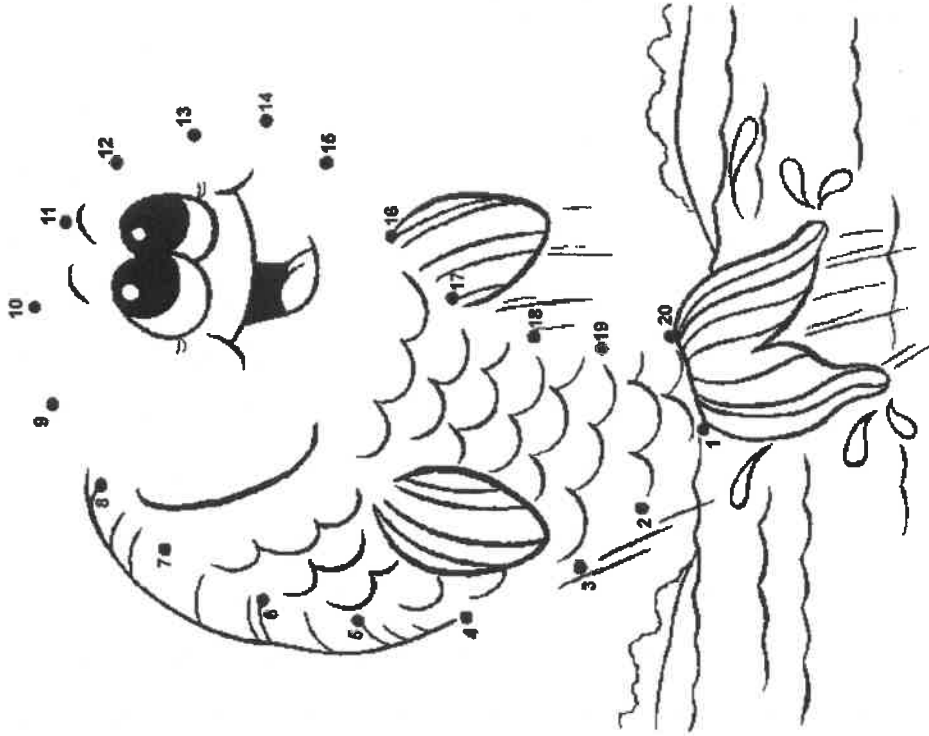
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JOHN	NEWS	CASTING	FISHERMEN	SIMON
KINGDOM	BOAT	GALILEE	NETS	BELIEVE
ANDREW	REPENT	SEA	BROTHER	FATHER
GOOD	COME	FOLLOW	JAMES	LAKE

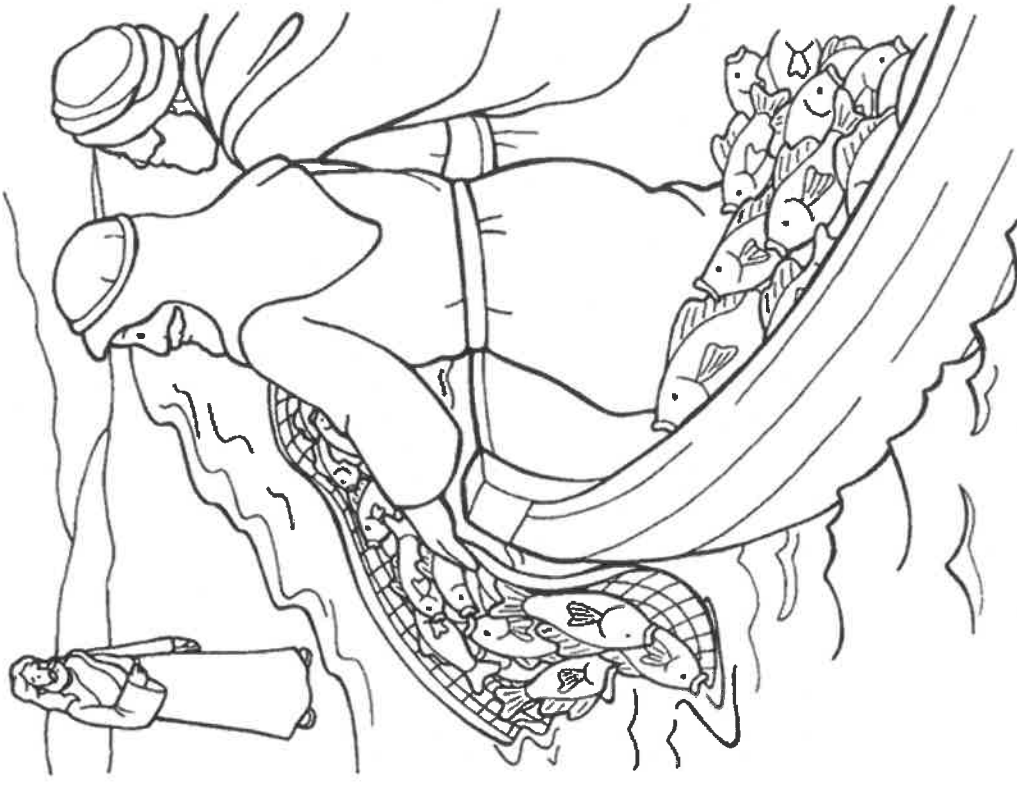
Your Church Name Here
Anytown, Anywhere

Dot to Dot Puzzle

Connect the dots to complete the picture.



Color Me



Jesus called out to them, "Come, be my disciples,
and I will show you how to fish for people!"

Mark 1:17 (NLT)

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FISHING FOR PEOPLE

Color Me



Jesus called out to them, "Come, be my disciples,
and I will show you how to fish for people!"

Mark 1:17 (NLT)