

Called Together

Jesus calling the fishermen to leave their nets to fish for people has always been lifted as a call for evangelism. No matter what time or place, the message from pulpits has been the same: Be like those fishermen. Put aside what you are doing and hook more people for Jesus.

While we are all called to share the Good News of the excluded finding inclusion, the sick finding healing, and the poor finding riches, there's a part of this story that often gets ignored in favor of the captivating imagery of lapping waves, bobbing boats and Jesus standing on the shores of the Sea of Galilee with windswept hair. It's the part where we must truly unpack — and understand — why we're being asked to fish for people. Hint: It has nothing to do with growing the church numerically.

Before Jesus walked the shores recruiting followers, he had retreated to Capernaum after hearing about his cousin John's arrest. His choice of location wasn't by chance. He was there to fulfill what the prophet Isaiah had written centuries before about that being the region where "the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light." They don't even have the strength or courage anymore to "walk in darkness." The troubles and trials of life have paralyzed them. The rolling clouds of gloom have immobilized them. Perhaps you can understand how this can happen.

Today, across the globe, there are still people sitting in darkness, in need of the renewing and revealing light of Christ. When we remember this part of the "go fish for people" narrative, we start to understand on a deeper level what is being asked of our congregations. It is time to cast our holy nets of welcome wide and start helping those sitting in darkness to stand and start walking again.

Jesus is calling our name to put aside what we think is important, set aside our schedules, reprioritize our to-do lists, and reach out to others. For Jesus doesn't care about bolstering membership rolls or increasing pledge cards. He only cares to rescue those he sees sitting in darkness.

Merciful God, help us hear the all-to-familiar "fish for people" story with new ears. Help us see how we are called together to cast nets of hope and healing to those who are suffering losses, who are in despair, and who battle depression. May our Christ light shine into the darkness this day. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

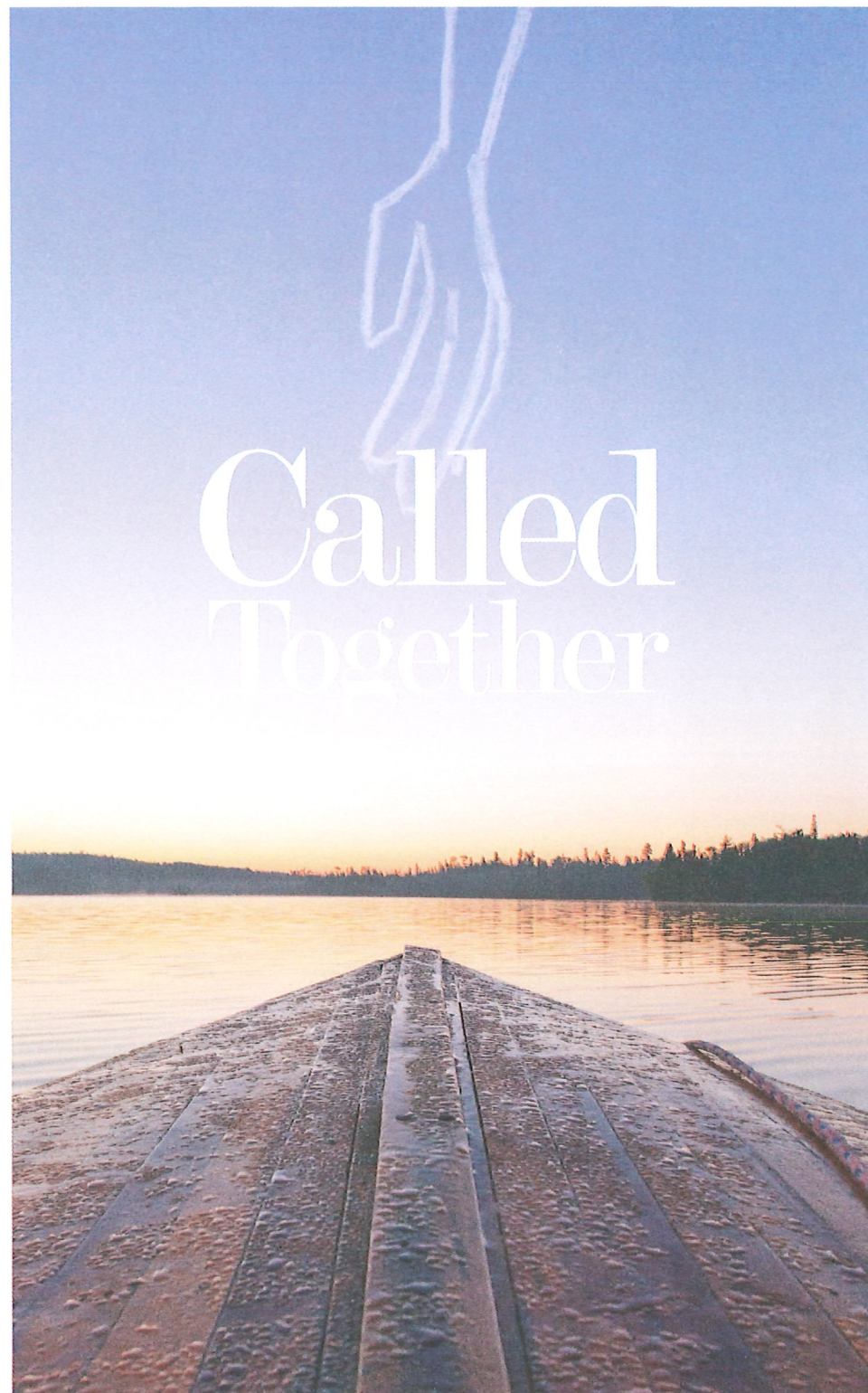
(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

8 1/2" x 11" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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Bismarck-Mandan Area
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



1200 E Highland Acres Rd, Bismarck, ND 58501

701-223-2915 www.uccbismarck.org



January 25, 2026 at 10 AM Worship

Pastor: Rev. Gretchen Deeg | Liturgist: Tamara Waters-Wheeler

Music: Boram Chern | Video: Jordan VanBerkum

*Rise in body or in spirit.

***NO MATTER**

Sing! 35

No matter who, no matter what
No matter where you are on the journey of life;
You're welcome, welcome in this place.
Accepted and welcomed by God's grace.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

All: One thing I seek.

***OPENING PRAYER**

***HYMN** Hear the Voice of God, So Tender NCH 174

SCRIPTURE Psalm 27:1, 4-10

TIME WITH CHILDREN

Children are invited to remain in worship or attend Sunday School after the Offering.

OFFERING

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, our heavenly host;
Creator, Savior, Holy Ghost. Amen.

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Almighty One of Light, we confess that we often cling to shadows. We can let fear guide our steps instead of Love. We sometimes ignore Your call to follow, hesitating to leave behind nets of habit and self-interest. Forgive us and shine your light upon us, that we may see Your beauty and walk in Your ways. Lift the burdens we carry, and teach us to live as your children. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

***GLORIA**

Glory be to the Creator, and to the Christ, and to the Holy Ghost:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:1-4

CHOIR ANTHEM

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 4:12-23

SERMON

HYMN Here Are Our Hearts Sing! 178

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

***HYMN** O Jesus, I Have Promised NCH 493

***CARRY GOD'S LOVE**

Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from [ONE LICENSE](https://www.onelicense.com), License #732302-A.



Thank You for Worshiping with Us!

Your offerings are essential for the ongoing ministry of this congregation. Donations can be made using this QR code, online at www.uccbismarck.org/donate, mailed to the church, or placed in the offering box.

Sponsor a Sunday

The 2026 is up with most Sundays still available. If you would like to sponsor a future Sunday, contact the church office at 223-2915 or visit uccbismarck.org/donate. Sponsorships are \$500.

Bismarck UCC Annual Meeting - Feb. 1 at 11 AM

Annual Reports are available for pickup and online. We still have one opening on the Christian Education, which oversees educational events for all ages and one opening on the Stewardship & Mission committee, which plans service and FUNdraising events for mission.



Dine 'n De-stress - Today @ 5:15 PM

Stressed out about our divisive political climate? Join for conversations and support as we build connections and community. Held at Lucky's 13 (915 S 3rd St, Bis.)

Paint Party - Feb. 8 at 2 PM

Learn to paint your own Northern Lights masterpiece. The class is led by Nina Loeks with Art from the Heart. Sign up by the bulletin board to reserve your spot. The cost is \$30 per person and includes all supplies. Due at time of class.



Lenten Worship Schedule

Wed, Feb. 18 thru Mar. 25 – Wednesday Worship

6:30 pm Worship (Soup Supper at 5:30pm)

Sun, Mar. 29 – Palm Sunday

10 am Worship

11 am Pancake Breakfast

Thurs, Apr. 2 – Maundy Thursday

6:30 pm Tenebrae w/ choir & orchestra (Soup Supper at 5:30pm)

Sun, Apr. 5 – Easter Sunday

6:30 am Sunrise worship at Hay Creek, 1144 College Dr

10 am Worship at UCC

11:15 am Easter Egg Hunt at UCC



THIS WEEK'S OPPORTUNITIES: Jan. 25 - Feb. 1

Sunday:	11 AM Fellowship 11:30 AM Council (in-person & online) 12 Noon Online Fellowship 5:15 PM Dine 'n De-Stress (Lucky's 13)
Tuesday:	10 AM NPC Clergy Zoom 1 PM Quilting/Knitting 6 PM Girls Scouts
Wednesday:	1:30 PM Edgewood Ministries 6 PM Youth Group & Confirmation 7 PM Choir Practice
Thursday:	6 PM Bible Study (in-person & online)
Friday:	8:30 AM Bible Study (in-person & online)
Sunday:	10 AM Worship 11 AM Annual Meeting (in-person & online)

Lent Worship & Soup Suppers

We will be having soup suppers through Lent at 5:30pm followed by Worship at 6:30pm. There is a sign-up sheet below the bulletin board to bring soup, bread, dessert, and help with clean-up.

Bismarck Interfaith Potluck - Feb. 7, 11:30AM - 1PM

Held at Lord of Life Lutheran (1143 N 26th St). Join friends and neighbors for good food, connection, and a hands-on lesson in making plarn mats for individuals in homelessness in our community.

OUR PRAYER LIST

Sandy Kirby (Autum's sister), Matthew Nitschke, Family of Sandra (Dan Domagala's mother), Nolan Myles McLemore (Amanda Wilson's grandson), Emerson & Lennon (Wanda & Jeffery Benson's grandsons), Bonnie Frederick, Kathy Rudolph, Sheyla Munoz (Autum's sister-in-law), Tasha Hausauer (John Sauter's cousin), Hayes & Cooper (Brandon & Tasha Domagala's sons), Diana, Amanda Wilson, Frank Picard, Carla Christenson (Monica Klein's mother), Pam Crawford, Fredrick Krause (Kerri Kraft's grandfather), Leona Staiger (Helen Lindgren's sister), Colby (Janice & Gary Sather's son), Robyn Richter (Kyle Eisenbraun's aunt), Doretta Reule, Howard Etson, Camille Grothier, East Timor, Refugees

*Contact the church office to be added to our weekly prayer list.

Introduction *Unison*

1 Hear the voice of God, so ten - der, gath - ering
 2 God is heal - ing and for - giv - ing crea - tures
 3 Lis - tening to the Spir - it's guid - ing, breath be -
 4 Shed the old wine - skins of war - fare for the

us in righ - teous - ness, Giv - ing, as our sure de - fend - er,
 who are sore dis - tressed, O - pening doors to hope - ful liv - ing,
 yond the writ - ten code, We, in cov - e - nant a - bid - ing,
 fresh new wines of peace, Know - ing God sus - tains our wel - fare

stead - fast love and faith - ful - ness. Bless God's ho - ly name to - geth - er,
 as, by love, we're dai - ly blessed. Bless God's ho - ly name to - geth - er,
 seek to write our let - ters bold. Bless God's ho - ly name to - geth - er,
 with a love that will not cease. Bless God's ho - ly name to - geth - er,

as the Spir - it brings new life. Giv - ing, as our sure de -
 as the Spir - it brings new life. O - pening doors to hope - ful
 as the Spir - it brings new life. We, in cov - e - nant a -
 as the Spir - it brings new life. Know - ing God sus - tains our

fend - er, stead - fast love and faith - ful - ness.
 liv - ing, as, by love, we're dai - ly blessed.
 bid - ing, seek to write our let - ters bold.
 wel - fare with a love that will not cease.

Here Are Our Hearts

178

$\text{♩} = 100$

C G/B Am Em/G F C/E Dm G

Here are our hearts._____ Here are our hands._____

C G/B Am Em/G F C/E G G⁷ C G/B

Here are our lives._____ Use them as You can._____ Show us those who hurt.

Am Em/G F C/E Dm G C G/B

_____ Show us those in need._____ Show us how to serve.

Am Em/G F C/E G G⁷ C

_____ Teach us how to see._____

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O Jesus, I Have Promised

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*John E. Bode, 1868; alt.**Luke 9:57; John 14:1-4*

1 O Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;
 2 O let me hear you speak - ing in ac - cents clear and still,
 3 O Je - sus, you have prom - ised to all who fol - low you

re - main for - ev - er near me, my Sav - ior and my Friend:
 a - bove the storms of pas - sion, the mur - murs of self - will!
 that where you are in glo - ry your ser - vant shall be, too;

I shall not fear life's strug - gles if you are by my side,
 O speak to re - as - sure me, to has - ten or con - trol!
 And, Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;

nor wan - der from the path - way if you will be my guide.
 O speak, and make me lis - ten, O guar - dian of my soul!
 O give me grace to fol - low my Sav - ior and my Friend!