



**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**Psalm 57: 7-11**

My heart, O God, is steadfast, my heart is steadfast; I will sing and make music. Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn. I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

**HYMN – Will you come and follow me (StF 673)**

**Watch on Youtube** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2AmzpkOSMVg>

Will You Come And Follow Me  
If I But Call Your Name?  
Will You Go Where You Don't Know  
And Never Be The Same?  
Will You Let My Love Be Shown,  
Will You Let My Name Be Known,  
Will You Let My Life Be Grown  
In You And You In Me?

Will You Leave Yourself Behind  
If I But Call Your Name?  
Will You Care For Cruel And Kind  
And Never Be The Same?  
Will You Risk The Hostile Stare  
Should Your Life Attract Or Scare?  
Will You Let Me Answer Prayer  
In You And You In Me?

Will You Let The Blinded See  
If I But Call Your Name?  
Will You Set The Prisoners Free  
And Never Be The Same?  
Will You Kiss The Leper Clean,

And Do Such As This Unseen,  
And Admit To What I Mean  
In You And You In Me?

Will You Love The 'You' You Hide  
If I But Call Your Name?  
Will You Quell The Fear Inside  
And Never Be The Same?  
Will You Use The Faith You've Found  
To Reshape The World Around,  
Through My Sight And Touch And Sound  
In You And You In Me?

Lord, Your Summons Echoes True  
When You But Call My Name.  
Let Me Turn And Follow You  
And Never Be The Same.  
In Your Company I'll Go  
Where Your Love And Footsteps Show.  
Thus I'll Move And Live And Grow  
In You And You In Me.

*(John L Bell b 1949 and Graham Maule b 1958)*

**PRAYER**

God of all creation, we thank You for the message of Your Gospel and the opportunities to share it with others. We ask for your guidance in spreading Your Word. Give us the courage to stand firm in our faith and proclaim Your message of love and hope. Give us the wisdom to discern how best to approach others and share Your truth. Help us to remember that no matter the response we may receive, Your message remains the same and is never diminished. Grant us the humility to accept criticism and the confidence to proclaim what we know to be true. Let us be beacons of Your light so that those who hear Your Word may be saved. Amen.

**READING: 1 SAMUEL 3: 1-10**

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So, he went and lay down. The Lord called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore, Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

**HYMN – I the Lord of sea and sky (StF 663)**

**Watch on youtube** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UA2fMeXEKLA>

I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard My people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin,  
My hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear My light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

*Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart*

I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have born my peoples pain.  
I have wept for love of them, They turn away.

I will break their hearts of stone,  
Give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak My word to them,  
Whom shall I send?

I, the Lord of wind and flame,  
I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them,  
My hand will save  
Finest bread I will provide,  
Till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give My life to them,  
Whom shall I send?

(Daniel L Schutte b 1947)

**READING: MATTHEW 4: 18 – 23**

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

## ADDRESS

The reading in Matthew tells us the story of the first disciples being called to be fishers of people, each one being personally called to serve in one capacity or another.

The theologian Frederick Buechner says this about a calling to serve **‘the place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet. God does not call us to misery, but to sacrifices and offerings we can make joyfully. God does not call us to trivial things, but to answer the deepest hungers of our crying and despairing world in whatever way we can. Your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger’**

The reading we heard from Samuel seems to bear out exactly what Buechner was saying. Samuel, as we all know, was only a boy when he was called by God. But he did not have any idea it was God until the third time of calling, and even then, it took Eli to understand what was going on. It wasn’t the fact that Samuel didn’t want to hear; he really had no expectation of that call. The main thing about the Samuel story is that when he did understand, he continued to listen to God, putting all his trust in what God was asking him to do. He knew that God was calling him to deep gladness, and to meet the concerns of Israel at that time. Samuel through his calling was to answer the deepest hunger of his despairing world.

When God calls, He calls us to do something; but that calling does not need to be to ordained ministry or a lay preaching; it could just as well and as importantly be a call to be alongside someone who is struggling, assisting in a hospital, or looking after the church in some way or another. That voice keeps pestering us; it won’t let go of us; it demands our attention. It is a voice that cannot be ignored.

The Reverend Susan Durber from Oxford says **“to answer the call is to do what you were made to do, what you cannot resist doing out of Joy and gladness or deep irresistible commitment. It is like the seed towards the light and to bear the fruit of your faith”**

It is strange, but the voice/feeling/stirring, call it what you will, does not always tell you what it is it wants you for. Sometimes there are no definites, no certainties, just a call to follow. Where it is leading is the most exciting, fascinating frightening thing ever, yet we are told time and again in the bible ‘do not be afraid’.

John the Baptist, Paul, Peter, Andrew etc. were all called to the Lord; and they were all called to serve in their different ways. In the gospel of John, John the Baptist was sent by God; in Acts Paul saw a bright light and was spoken to directly by the risen Jesus; Peter as in all gospels was personally requested to become a disciple by Jesus. The point of this is that there are many ways of being called; most probably not as dramatic as the above, but we need to expect the unexpected.

In the gospel of John we hear of the call of Philip. Jesus said to him “Follow me”, and he did. No questions asked as far as we know; just a trust that goes beyond friendship and family; it is a trust to step into the unknown. The story continues that Philip could not keep this to himself, and had to tell someone, so he told his friend Nathaniel. As one theologian called it, **‘one lighted torch serving to light another’**.

And that is what we should be doing when we believe we have been called; tell people, be the person that lights their flame, a flame that will help them meet Jesus, and prepare them for their call.

You know, just being church is like a call. You go for a reason, your own personal reason, and yet within that God is within you, asking you to meet Him where He is.

Being there is asking God into your heart and into your head, and in moments of silence you listen; listen for that unmistakable voice that calls you.

So far, we touched upon the call of God to undertake many things within his church, and within his world, but there is another call, and it is the call of every person to return to God through Jesus Christ, and that is where we all have a similar task, a similar vocation. We are the voice of Christ here on earth, and together we need to reach out to everyone, and say welcome, the love of Christ awaits you. As Paul says in Romans Chapter 10 **“so faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes from the preaching of Christ.**

There comes the first call to everyone to come back to salvation; then there is the second call, the call to God’s purpose. And God call and purpose may be for many things, large and small; all significant to the life of the

Church and our mission in serving Christ. So, I ask you to listen to your heads and your hearts; listen to what God is telling you; and then acknowledge it without fear or purpose.

As the Reverend `Susan Durber sees it **“God calls you – not simply to tasks – but God calls you with a loving voice, a beautiful voice, a voice that is all yours and you can little but respond with love and thankfulness and praise – that you are loved, accepted, held for now and for ever”**

To be called to serve is not just about doing, it is about listening; listening to God’s voice, so that whatever we are asked to do, we do it with love, with faith and with a smile that says to everyone around us, that in Christ we are free, free to receive his love, and free in the knowledge that we too will have everlasting life. **AMEN**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSIONS**

*(Please pray in your own way)*

We pray for the Church and for a new revival

We pray for our country; for our government and all leaders who make the vital decisions.

We pray for the World and the turmoil it is in at present. We pray for peace, especially in the Middle East and the Ukraine/Russia. May they come to their senses and move away from war.

We pray for our family and friends.

We pray for ourselves.

## **We say the Lord’s prayer together**

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

## **HYMN – Have you heard God’s voice (StF 662)**

**Watch on youtube** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzJr9T5JYRU>

Have you heard God's voice; has your heart been stirred?

Are you still prepared to follow?

Have you made a choice to remain and serve, though the way be rough and narrow?

Will you use your voice; will you not sit down when the multitudes are silent?

Will you make a choice to stand your ground when the crowds are turning violent?

*Will you walk the path that will cost you much and embrace God's love and sorrow?*

*Will you trust in One who entrusts to you the disciples of tomorrow?*

Will you watch the news with the eyes of faith and believe it could be different?

Will you share your views using words of grace? Will you leave a thoughtful imprint?

In your city streets will you be God's heart?

Will you listen to the voiceless?

Will you stop and eat, and when friendships start, will you share your faith with the faithless?

*We will walk the path that will cost us much and embrace God's love and sorrow?*

*Will you trust in One who entrusts to you the disciples of tomorrow. (Jacqueline G. Jones)*

## **BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. **AMEN**