

more Apostles. Jesus entered Galilee and began preaching. The time that God had appointed for the Messiah's arrival had now fully come. Jesus proclaimed that the kingdom of God was at hand. (Which is sort of an interesting way to say that He held the kingdom in His hand. The time was fulfilled in Jesus, yet the time would not be fully realized until He was put to death.) There is an urgency in the call to the fisherman, "Come, follow Me...!" The fishermen respond in the urgency. Jesus the very Son of God came to Earth to rescue mankind from sin, death, and hell. He did it by catching people by total surprise and with miraculous success. What Jesus says, happens! The proclamation of the Word of God gathers others to Him.

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

© O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, among all nations and peoples You seek those to worship You in spirit and truth. We, who are gathered here for Your worship and praise, appeal to You.

Change us so that we may be so inwardly moved in spirit and so filled with Your Word and truth that You would find acceptable our imperfect sacrifices of thanksgiving, praise, and prayer. Bestow on us a sure faith in Your power and a perfect trust in Your Love, so that we, living out our short span of years in this world, may, by applying our hearts to Your wisdom, and by the exercise of brotherly love, peacefulness, and charity, show forth Your grace, goodness and glory. Defend us so that we are not overcome by evil and inspire us to overcome all evil with good. Preserve us, O Father, from all hazards to body or soul and against all temptations and trial, so that we may live to serve You in all godliness and humility.

Graciously help us wisely use the time You give us toward the building of faith in our hearts and the hearts of others. Stir up in us the gifts You have given us, that we may use them to the spiritual enrichment of our lives. Renew us in the spirit of our minds and turn our footsteps to the pathways of eternal life. Cleanse us of all sin and heal us of every disease.

For all who have the cares of the government in their hands, guide them in wisdom and understanding, that they follow Your will and govern us in peace and quietness.

Comfort all who are afflicted, guard our loved ones and shield us from the powers of wickedness. Give us each our daily bread that we are content in You. As we have been given Christ Jesus as Lord of all, so let us walk in Him, rooted and built up in faith and abounding in all good works.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. **(Time of silent prayer.)**

All these things we pray in the name of Him Who Loved the Church and gave Himself for her, even Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

© **Amen.**

## EPIPHANY THREE

### Chant Tone



**ENTRANCE PRAYER:** O Lord, steadfast Love is Yours, forever. You have shown us Your Love every day of our lives. We have seen it in the daily rising of the sun and in the moon and the stars, which You keep in their appointed courses. Your Love drops down on us in the snow and in the rain. In Love Your Mighty Power has brought us the Salvation of our souls in Your Son Jesus Christ. For all these mercies, accept our heartfelt thanks. Give us strength to overcome the weakness of our flesh, courage to stand up for what is right in Your sight and repentance that we will believe in the Gospel. All of this we pray in the exalted name of Jesus our Savior and king. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

**"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NEAR. REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS."** In our Gospel lesson today, Jesus continues to gather up His Apostles. Last week we heard of Philip and Nathanael, this week it is Peter, Andrew, James and John. It is clear that each of them knew of Jesus. It is likely they all were at the baptism of Jesus. Their willingness to give up their entire lives and livelihoods to follow after Jesus is a thing of simple faith. Everything we strive to gain, they left behind to follow Jesus. Perhaps they thought that some day they would go back to fishing. From what we read, there is only one time between the Resurrection and the Ascension of Jesus when that happened. Jesus took them from being fishermen and made them over into fishers of men. We are thankful they went so willingly for we are given the Words of our faith through the work they did.

**THEME OF THE DAY:**

Called By God

**INTROIT**—(Antiphon: Isaiah 113:3;) Psalm 113:1-2, 4, 7-8  
In Hebrew Psalm 113 uses "הַלְלוּ יְהוָה". We sing these words as "hallelujah." We translate them as "praise the Lord." "יהוָה" is "Yah" the name God used as His personal name (Exodus 3:14.) In this unattributed Psalm we give "praise," because the only true God gives us all the good things of our life. Using His personal name we say, "Hallelujah!"

**COLLECT**

God has made us His servants, His disciples, His followers. He did it by sending the Holy Spirit to live in us. To that end we have the gifts of grace and the gift of the knowledge of Jesus. We use this gift to benefit ourselves and to tell others about Jesus.

**OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**—Jonah 3:1-5, 10

The book of Jonah is unique within the Old Testament. Jonah was working in direct response to a command of God to preach. Jonah resisted. Jonah was an anti-hero, (someone we try not to emulate.) Jonah preached that in 40 days Nineveh would be destroyed (perhaps with more ferocity because He didn't want to be there.) God desires all to be saved and He will send the messengers. God sent His Son with the same message. God gave the Hebrew nation many more than 40 days to believe. He gave them 33 years with their Messiah. In 40 days the people of Nineveh turned and believed. The Hebrew nation did not.

**GRADUAL**—Psalm 117:1-2a, 96:8

Psalm 117 (a two verse Psalm) is a general song of praise for all God has done for us, in making us over into His people, His disciples. Psalm 96 was sung as the Ark was moved into Jerusalem. It looks beyond that event to the reign of the Christ when we are all called as disciples of Jesus.

**EPISTLE LESSON**—1 Corinthians 7:29-35

Paul described what could be called the last few minutes for a Christian. He encouraged Christians to recognize the fact that time is slipping away. It is easy for us to forget that the world as we know it has passed away in Christ and that the time to the end of the world is shorter than it was yesterday. God promises that even as we live, we no longer have to fear the end, because we have passed from death to life. We work to accomplish that which is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, Who wants all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

**GOSPEL LESSON**—Mark 1:14-20

Mark's gospel didn't waste time getting to the "good news." Jesus Christ is the One, the very Son of God. We barrel head long into the call of four