

Just as Jesus asked Peter, Jesus enters into our lives and asks us to push out into deeper water. For Peter and us, it's about trusting Jesus' invitation to do something new, even something that we haven't tried before.

Peter was from a fishing family, and he knew that after fishing all night, he was not going to catch more fish by going out again. But there was something about Jesus that Peter responded to, so he gave it a go... probably thinking that it was a waste of time. He took his boat out as Jesus asked, and he caught so many fish his boat began to sink.

Peter seemed overwhelmed and compared to Jesus, he has little to offer - he's just a fisherman. Peter says "Go away, Jesus. I can't be near you; I'm a sinner." Jesus responds with don't be

afraid, you might not think you have what it takes, but don't be overcome by that type of thinking.

Peter gets out of the boat and leaves it all behind—the nets, his livelihood, and that unbelievable catch of fish and he simply follows Jesus. Like his invitation to Peter, Jesus invites us to trust and follow him.

Many translations of this piece of scripture say “fish” for people. The Greek word used means to “catch living ones”. This isn't about catching fish for dinner, Jesus wants Peter to catch people who want a different life. Jesus is inviting Peter to bring people in as his followers, so they too can participate in the life-giving work of his kingdom.

Jesus invites all of us to go out into the deeper water and to take a chance with him. He wants to bring us to new places full of life, if we just have the faith to trust and leave what we think is

'the' way to live our lives. "Don't be afraid" Jesus says, from now on you'll be catching people, bringing them back to a life of doing the work of my kingdom, living for the greater good of all people.

What about us? Can we hear that call and give our lives to change the world with God's love? Can we leave behind our fears and our reluctance, our fondness for the familiar, and follow Jesus as his disciples? We can when we share our stories of what our faith is and what it means to us. There really is good news when we follow Jesus and work for the common good of all.

Yes, we are busy and distracted. It's easy to get caught up in fear. We have important work to do, and it requires we turn from what the media says to catch our attention. Jesus says there are people to be caught, people to love, loving and healing work to do. And as Jesus says, "Don't be afraid."

Let's not give in to fear or give up because it's scary or that there's so much to do. God is always with us and wants us to be a part of creating his kingdom right here. The invitation to follow Jesus is always before us. The challenge is - will we choose to follow him, or will we stay where we've convinced ourselves its comfortable and safe?

I have a framed quote, "A ship in harbor is safe, but that's not what ships are built for." As followers of Jesus Christ, we are built for sharing the good news of being in a relationship with God and built to leave what feels familiar and safe, to go out to love and serve others.

In a few minutes Ariana and Rachel are going to be baptized, to be officially welcomed into the family of the church. They were looking for something more, something deeper, a place to feel acceptance and God's love. You were all a part of making them

feel that way here at St. Anne's. Not many will make it so easy for us by walking in the door like they did.

We are invited by the source of love to walk out the door and share our lives, our faith, and God's love with all others. There is work to be done, people to be caught up in love when we see, accept, include, forgive, heal, feed, house and befriend the other, the stranger, our neighbor.

Amen