Going Fishing: Parable of the Nets and Fish

First United Methodist Church, Sallisaw — Weekly Prayer & Study Guide 7/22/12

Prayer - Use this prayer to begin your time with God each day.
Jesus, you teach us that the kingdom of heaven is like a net that catches every kind of fish. As we fish for God, help us to cast our net deep and wide. Give us the humility to welcome all kinds of people into Your Church that they may come to experience the grace, love, and forgiveness of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Monday - Read Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23. Once again, we find Jesus teaching from a boat on the sea while the crowds gathered to hear him. Jesus told them a parable which was a story, and then he explained the story to them. Most of the hillsides around the Sea of Galilee were used for growing crops. Jesus might well have pointed to a farmer out broad-casting seed as he told this story. Notice how the sower cast seeds on all kinds of soil. Jesus was trying to show us that we are to share the Good News with all people even though we know that not everyone will be ready to hear it. Are you letting the Holy Spirit work through you? Do you free of God in people’s lives? Pray for Jesus to give you opportunities to share the Good News with someone you know and to invite people to come to church with you. Pray for the person you want to invite.

Tuesday - Read Matthew 13:10-17. The disciples wanted to know why Jesus spoke to people in parables. Jesus was the greatest storyteller the world has ever known. He told stories about things and experiences with which the average person could relate. His stories helped people understand the kingdom of God and God’s will for their lives. Spend some time thinking about the parables and stories Jesus told. What is your favorite parable? Why is it your favorite? How does it help you understand more about the kingdom of God? How does it help you understand more about God’s will for your life.

Wednesday - Read Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43. Jesus told this story about an “enemy” who deliberately filled a farmer’s field with darnel, a poisonous rye grass that looked just like wheat until the wheat heads formed. An important principle in studying Jesus’ stories is that they are not “exact allegory.” Some details have symbolic meaning, usually to make a point. Others are just part of the story. Read verses 37-39 again with care, noticing which details Jesus focused on, and what meaning he gave them. What do you think Jesus wanted us to learn from this story? Jesus used this story to help us understand that judgment is God’s job, not ours. Pray that Jesus would forgive you for judging others and for the Holy Spirit to give you patience in dealing with people who frustrate you.

Thursday - Read Matthew 13:31-35. With these two stories, Jesus helps us to consider the way the kingdom of heaven grows. A mustard seed might not look like much, but when it is planted it grows to become a mighty bush. The same is true of our hopes and dreams for ministry in our church. When we pursue God’s vision for ministry in our church, the Holy Spirit works in us and through us to do big things in the kingdom of God. As we invite people to come to our new Connect worship service we believe that people will find a church home that will bless them. The kingdom of heaven is also like yeast that causes the broad to rise. Similarly, God can use us to lift people up when they are down. Who is God calling you to reach? Spend some time praying for those who need a helping hand in their lives.

Friday - Read Matthew 13:44-46. In these compact stories, Jesus gave us two pictures of what it means to pursue the kingdom of heaven in our lives. He told of two people who “laid it all on the line” in order to have a one-of-a-kind treasure. What has it cost you to follow Jesus and serve him? Jesus said the man who found the treasure went “in his joy” to obtain the field. In what ways have serving Jesus and ministering to people brought you joy? How is this joy deeper than the surface happiness this world tends to offer? Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you the strength to continue to connect to ministry by serving in one of the ministries of our church.

Saturday – Read Matthew 13:47-53. A net catches anything that swims into it. Even today, fishermen seek to lessen how often they catch dolphins in nets along with the fish they mean to catch. Jesus story was based on the same reality. We can trust God to sort out the good from the bad. One reason people give for avoiding church is that “some church members don’t live up to high Christian standards.” But we all find light and dark in ourselves. How does remembering your own imperfections help you extend grace a fellow sinner in our church or our community? How might the Holy Spirit guide you to help someone else receive the grace, love, and forgiveness Jesus offers to us? Pray for God to help you offer grace to someone.

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Parable of the Nets and Fish
Dr. Trevor Smith

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; *when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. *So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous *and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” —Matthew 13:47-50

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon:

Prayer List

Growing Fishing Stories in the Gospels

Parable of the Nets and Fish

Going Needs*

Stacy Oliver, Rehab, Sam Walekar’s brother.

New/Short Term Requests*

- Greg Steele, during colonoscopy a mass was found, Guy Jones’ brother-in-law.
- Marion Thomas’s husband passed away.
- The Family of Frances Jones.
- Jim Nimmo, tests for cancer diagnosis.
- Floyd Turner, possible diagnosis of M.S., friend of Robert Glander.
- Amy Stephens, gall bladder surgery, Lynn, Carol, and Kathy Allsup’s friend.
- Kay Morris, health problems, cook at Woody’s.
- Carolyn Frazier, flu.
- Reba Cantrell, heart surgery, J. D. & Susie Harris’ neighbor.
- Lou Rogers, pace maker surgery.
- Avery Smith, acid reflux.
- Marla Foxgord, Diabetic, and infection she can’t get rid of.
- Debbie & Jim Spark’s home damaged by fire.
- Betty Worley, brain tumor, Lynn Allsup’s cousin.
- Ruthann Gacey’s daughter in-law needs a job.
- Hubert Blankenship, upcoming heart surgery, Missy Elliott’s friend.
- Jim McReynolds, heart attack, April Robins’ friend.
- Sandra Smith, recovering from foot surgery.
- Kevin Watley, symptoms of stroke.
- Shelby Hiser, rehab, Ruth Knight’s grandson.

Hospitalized/Continuing Treatment

- Emma Grace Fridy, 7 year old diagnosed with brain tumor and rare form of cancer.
- Chelsea Stearns, lymphoma, Debbie Barto’s niece.
- Jan Green, cancer metastasized, Reba Green’s niece.
- Kim Edwards, lung cancer.
- Jim McIntyre, rehab.
- Derek Frazier, rehab, Ruth Allsup’s friend.

On-Going Needs

- Pris Bartman
- Doris Smithson
- Jackson Probst
- Edice Elswick
- Kogi Christians
- Freda Cooke
- Janet Luttrell
- Gary Griffin
- Janice Kissinger
- Nancy Wheeler
- Gil Lyons
- Our Service People
- Jared Rame
- Greg Luttrell, Texas
- Jack Hodge, Afghanistan
- Samantha Carter, Ohio
- Jessica McMillian

Namens on this list will remain for three weeks.
Call Anne Bottorff at (918) 775-2072 to start the Prayer Chain.

Prayer List

- Steve Stephenson, cancer.
- Samantha Carter, Ohio
- Beth塑料, lung cancer.
- Greg Luttrell, Texas
- Jack Hodge, Afghanistan
- Samantha Carter, Ohio
- Jessica McMillian

*Names on this list will remain for three weeks.

Prayer List

Going Needs*