

BLESSINGS ALWAYS
April 30, 2025
Association Minister Message
Rev. Daniel L. Busch

FOLLOW ME. When I was in elementary school, a game we played was “*Simon Says.*” Someone was chosen as Simon who instructed others in the line to do something. After hearing “*Simon says,*” players did what was instructed. If someone did not *FOLLOW* the instructions and moved without hearing “*Simon says,*” that person was out of the game. The last player standing was the winner.

There are fishing stories in the Gospels depicting *FOLLOWING* Jesus. In John 21, it is noteworthy that about ten days after the resurrection, seven of the disciples are together probably pondering what had just happened to their leader Jesus. “*Simon Peter told them, ‘I’m going fishing.’*” (21:3). Resurrection still hadn’t made a difference in their lives, and they returned to their occupation of fishing. Throughout the night they fished and caught nothing—*SCARCITY*. Their livelihood depended on catching fish, and after putting in long hours without any success fishing, disappointment and weariness prevailed.

Jesus appears to them on the shore, but they did not know it was Jesus. Jesus asks, “*CHILDREN, have you caught anything to eat?*” (21:5). *CHILDREN(!!!)*: New to the faith, beginners as disciples, and not yet fully accepting their call to resurrection ministry. As children of faith they had not yet realized the unlimited possibilities before them. Fear. Confusion. Who was this Jesus that they *FOLLOWED* for three years and they still were not comprehending their call to ministry? Then the man on the shore tells them, “*Cast your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some. So they did, and there were so many fish they couldn’t haul in the net.*” (21:6). *ABUNDANCE*. Then Jesus and the disciples had a meal together, reminiscent of the Passover Meal.

We, too, have gotten into our boats of comfort, not hearing Jesus ask us, “*Do you love me?...FOLLOW ME.*” We are called to be the Body of Christ, a community of faith, hope, and love. Jesus calls us, like Peter, to “*feed my lambs...take care of my sheep...feed my sheep.*” Jesus calls us be His minds, voice, hands, presence, and feet to make this world as God would intend it to be. *FOLLOWING* Jesus is transformational as we share our gifts and graces with one another. *BLESSINGS ALWAYS.*