

Here We Come!

Set up a fishing activity. Cut out paper fish and punch a hole near one end. Fold the end up so that when the fish is lying flat, the hole can be snagged by swinging a bent paper clip on a string. This can also be done with magnet strips available at a craft store. The magnet strips can be cut with ordinary scissors. With the backing removed, the magnet will stick to the paper fish. Attach a magnet to the end of a string on a fishing pole and catch the fish.

Scripture Words and Worship

Print the words, "Follow me" on an outline or image of Jesus. The rest of the verse can be printed on fish shapes.

Leave Your Nets

You can follow Jesus by doing what he says.

Scripture Words

Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.
—Matthew 4:19

Story Talking

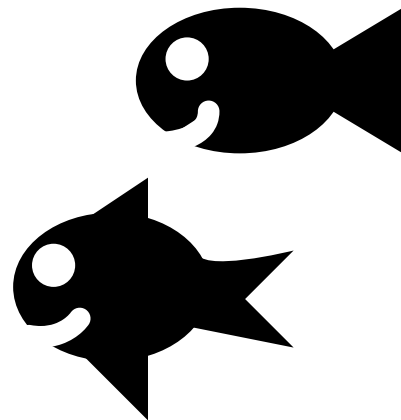
What does a follower of Jesus do? The disciples called by Jesus went where he went, ate what he ate, listened to what he said, watched what he did, and eventually did what he did. Play a game of Follow the Leader to give the children an idea of what it could be like.

People today choose to follow Jesus in many different ways. Whenever you do something like Jesus would, you are being a follower or disciple. Take a walk around the church and let the children ask people they meet, "What do you do for Jesus?" The answers can be simple. "I teach classes." "I play the piano/organ/guitar." "I take food to shut-ins during the week." The children can give answers such as "I share my toys." "I help my family." "I come to church and learn."



Sense-ations

Give each child a picture of the fisherman from the pattern section, page 44. Provide an assortment of fish in different sizes and colors. Use a glue stick to attach fish to the water in the picture.



Up and at 'Em

Play fishing some more. Use the tools from the opening activity or throw nets over stuffed animals, pretending they are fish.

Live and Learn

Jesus gathered his disciples from many walks of life. They were all busy working when he called them to follow him. Not everyone must leave a job or home to follow Jesus. But some were called to do just that. Help the children imagine what it must have been like for the disciples. The Sea of Galilee today is about thirteen miles long and seven miles wide. The text for the story is taken from Matthew 4:18-23. (Note: Check out a Web site using the search words Sea of Galilee. Photographs are available and can help the children better understand the setting.)

- Jesus grew up in a place not far from the Sea of Galilee. He liked to go there and look at the water.
- People who lived around the Sea of Galilee were often in the fishing business.
- If you were going to fish, you needed a boat, fishing nets, strong arms, and patience.
- The fish were out there, but they were under the water. You had to take your best guess about where to throw your fishing nets.
- If you caught fish, the nets would be heavy when you pulled them back to the boat.
- Sometimes the nets would tear or get something caught on the lines. They might have to be repaired and cleaned. This was done on the shore with the nets spread out on the sand.
- Jesus walked by one day when some of the fishermen were mending their nets, and some casting for fish.
- Two of them were brothers, Simon and Andrew. Jesus called to them. "Come with me. I will show you how to fish for people."
- The brothers thought that was strange. They went fishing to catch fish. Fish lived in the water and could be caught with nets. How would you catch people?
- Jesus was motioning to them to come with him. It was true, there were more people on the shore in boats than on the water. But what did Jesus mean about catching people?
- The two brothers followed Jesus as he walked along. Soon he came to another group of fishermen. He waved to the father, Zebedee, then called to Zebedee's two sons. "James. John. Come with me. We are going to fish for people."
- James and John thought that sounded odd too, but they noticed Simon and Andrew had left their nets to follow Jesus. James and John said goodbye to their father, and went with Jesus.
- "Where are we going?" the new disciples asked. "Come and see," Jesus said, smiling at them.
- And Jesus and his disciples went all through the country, teaching people about God, healing those who were sick, and making them happy by telling them the good news.

Fishes

by Marge Nelson

Swimming fish go swish, swish, swish,
(Rub palms together for swishing sound.)
Splashing in the water like me.
(Splash hands.)
Up and up and up they go,
(Make climbing motion with hands.)
Then down to the bottom of the sea.
(Bend down and touch the floor.)
Swimming this way, swimming that,
(Make swimming motion with arms.)
Turning all around.
(Turn in place.)
The fishes live in the water God made,
(Make rippling water motion with hands.)
And I live out on the ground.
(Walk around the floor in a circle.)

Moving Music

- "I Hear Jesus Calling Me" (page 40)
- "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"
- "This Is the Way We Go to Church"
- "Fishes," finger play

There We Go

Give each child the fishing picture they made and ask them to share the story with their families.

