



“I’m Getting a Call...”

A five-week worship series to Raise The Question: How is God Calling?

There is power in a well-timed question. In early September of 2025, the Great Plains Board of Ordained Ministry and the Office of Clergy Excellence are releasing resources for an initiative to invite pastors, ministry leaders and church members to *Raise the Question: How is God Calling You?* You can find some information on our website for pastors and ministry leaders [here](#) and for those who are seeking to answer that question [here](#).

The following 5-week sermon series can be used to introduce aspects of calling to your congregation or community. A pastor could use one, two, three, four, or all five sermons in the year ahead as a series focusing on discipleship or even as a lead up to your stewardship campaign. “I’m Getting a Call...” will include sermon helps, music selections, children’s messages, interview questions for church members, and a video for each week. For questions, reach out to Emily Spearman Cannon, ecannon@greatplainsumc.org or Ashlee Alley Crawford, aalleycrawford@greatplainsumc.org.

Week 1: “Raise the Question, Answer the Call”

- *Scripture:* One or more of the following, depending on what resonates with the pastor—Exodus 3:1-14, 1 Kings 19:1-18, Luke 24:13-25
- *Theme:* This is the “Vocation 101” sermon; an introduction to the rest of the series wherein the pastor shares her/his own call story. The goal of this sermon is to introduce the concept of calling as an invitation to follow God in everyday life at home, at work, at church, and in the world. Teaching points will include our identity as God’s beloveds (*who we are*), myths about calling (*what we think we’re supposed to do*), and truths about calling (*what we’re actually meant to do*.) This will also be the pastor’s chance to introduce the “Pray. Seek. Go.” resources from the Conference.
- *Hymn Suggestions:*
 - 413 A Charge to Keep I Have
 - 398 Jesus Calls Us
 - [Goodness of God](#) by Bethel Music

Week 2: “I’m Getting a Call...But Who’s On the Other End?”

- *Scripture:* 1 Samuel 3:1-10
- *Theme:* God has placed a call on our lives—and sometimes it takes a while for the message to get through! Like Samuel, we can experience confusion or uncertainty when we begin to hear the voice of God, and can benefit from the wisdom of others (like Eli) to help us to discern what’s next. But the Good News is this: God continues to call even when the message is fuzzy on our end/even when it takes a while for us to figure out what’s going on. There’s no such thing as being “too late” to answer the call!
- *Hymn Suggestions:*
 - 405 Seek Ye First
 - 582 Whom Shall I Send? (LM – could do to the tune of Gift of Love is this tune is unfamiliar)
 - [There are Many Ways of Sharing](#) by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Week 3: “I’m Getting a Call...But What If I Don’t Want to Answer?”

- *Scripture:* Genesis 12:1-9
- *Theme:* God has placed a call on our lives—and sometimes it takes us by surprise and upends our entire lives! Abram and Sarai had lived in Ur for decades, and packing up their entire lives to become desert

Series Overview

nomads was probably *not* on their bucket list for retirement. Similarly, we sometimes find ourselves gently nudged (or rudely yanked) out of our comfort zones when we become aware of God’s call on our lives. But the Good News is this: God goes before us, and God prepares the way. There’s no such thing as being “too old”, “too settled”, or “too stuck in your ways” to answer the call!

- *Hymn Suggestions:*
 - 598 Here I Am, Lord
 - 2242 Walk with Me
 - [Our God, You Called to Moses](#) – By Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Week 4: “I’m Getting a Call...But What If I’m Happy Where I Am?”

- *Scripture:* Luke 5:1-11
- *Theme:* God has placed a call on our lives—and sometimes it’s a call that can be lived out alongside our existing “day job.” Many of Jesus’ disciples were fishermen by trade, and when they dropped their nets to follow Christ they were really transitioning into a *different* kind of fishing! Many of the skills that would have been useful out on the water—patience, persistence, teamwork, flexibility—would have translated well to the work of discipleship. Similarly, we often find that the gifts and talents that we currently use on a daily basis (leadership, administration, hospitality, prayer, music, teaching, etc.) are the same gifts that God will call us to use in Christian service. There’s no such thing as being “too basic”, “too ordinary” or even “too busy” to answer the call...because some forms of call can be lived out in the midst of our most ordinary moments!
- *Hymn Suggestions:*
 - 344 – Tu Has Venido a la Orilla (Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore)
 - 2152 – Change My Heart, O God
 - 584 – Lord, You Give the Great Commission

Week 5: “I’m Getting a Call...What’s The Next Step?”

- *Scripture:* Esther 4:1-14
- *Theme:* God has placed a call on our lives—and eventually we realize that the call is impossible to ignore! When we recognize, as Esther did, that God is calling us “for such a time as this”, what do we do next? Esther’s next steps—discerning with trusted mentors, prayer, and intentional fellowship with a faith community—can provide us with some guidance as we navigate our response to God’s calling. (This would be a great week to highlight Conference, District, and “Culture of Call” resources and how anyone can access those!)
- *Hymn Suggestions:*
 - [Perhaps You Have Been Chosen](#) – By Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
 - 583 Sois la Semilla (You are the Seed)
 - 2243 We All Are One in Mission

This sermon series is a collaboration of the Great Plains Board of Ordained Ministry Call Team and the Office of Clergy Excellence. The creators of this material are: Emily Spearman Cannon (primary author of sermon series), Ashlee Alley Crawford (project manager, secondary author, and editor), Jeanne Koontz (music selection), Amanda Baker (children’s messages), plus other members of the Raise the Question Task Force: Christie Kipp, Stephanie Seth, Stefanie Hayes. Other aspects of the Raise the Question Initiative were developed in conjunction with the [Desert Southwest Board of Ordained Ministry](#). Special thanks to Todd Seifert (videos) and the GPUMC Office of Communications for support and distribution.

Learn More about the Raise the Question Campaign [here](#). Invite others to ask, “How is God Calling?” [here](#).