We come to this service aware of the weather & the ways it shapes our lives. Snow is coming, & we have adjusted our plans. Some are here in person; many are joining from home. That, too, is part of our life together now. The fact that we gather across distance, through screens & speakers, already shows our faith. It says that the church does not stop when conditions are difficult. We adapt, we wait if needed, we make phone calls, but we stay connected.

In the Gospel, Jesus begins his ministry at a moment of tension & uncertainty. John has been arrested. The situation is unstable. And yet Jesus does not retreat or delay. He goes out, walks along the shore, & calls people in the middle of their working lives. He calls them as they are, where they are, & draws them into something larger than themselves.

What is striking about that Gospel scene is how ordinary it is. Jesus does not begin with a grand speech or in a holy place. He meets ordinary people in their daily work, doing what needs to be done. He does not promise them ease or certainty; he offers direction & companionship. That is often how the Gospel meets us now—not as a dramatic interruption, but as a steady invitation to live faithfully where we already are, with all our limits and responsibilities.

Jesus' call is simple, but not easy. It takes great faith to answer. Leave what you are doing. Trust that God is already ahead of you. Follow me…

Paul's letter to the Corinthians shows us what can happen when that shared call is forgotten. The church begins to pull apart, focusing on personalities, arguments, & differences. Paul brings them back to the centre—not to himself, not to any leader, but to Christ, and particularly to the cross.
By ordinary standards, the cross represents powerlessness. But it tells the truth about how God works. God meets us in weakness. God builds community not through power, but through faithfulness. What looks small or limited to the world is often exactly where God is at work.

Many in this congregation live with real limits. Mobility is harder. Energy is not what it once was. Winter narrows the world even further. And yet, again & again, you choose to remain engaged—to pray for others, to offer care, to give what you can. That is mature faith.

There is a temptation, especially when we can no longer do what we once did, to believe that our usefulness has ended. The Christian faith says otherwise. Our worth does not come from productivity. Our calling does not depend on strength. God calls us

by grace & sustains us by the Spirit, according to the season of life we are in.

As we look toward our vestry meeting next week, this matters. Vestry is not about pushing through at all costs or pretending we have no limits. It is about discernment—about paying attention to where God is leading us now, in these conditions.

The coming storm is a reminder that we are not in control. But the same Christ who called fishermen on an uncertain shoreline holds this congregation together now—across age, ability, & distance. So whether you are here in the room or joining from home, whether your days feel full or constrained, hear this clearly:
God's call has not been withdrawn.
The strength of God's saving hand has not diminished.
And your place in the life of the church remains.
Together, with patience & care for one another, we continue to follow. Thanks be to God. Amen.