

Sunday Sermon – 14 June 2026

Rev. Samuel Yengi

Text: Matthew 9:35–10:8

Theme: Volunteers for Jesus

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Today I would like us to think about the theme: "Volunteers for Jesus."

Across Australia and New Zealand, volunteers play a vital role in community life. They serve in schools, hospitals, sporting clubs, emergency services, charities, and churches. Without volunteers, many organisations would struggle to function.

Volunteering takes time, commitment, and sacrifice. Yet people continue to serve because they see a need and want to make a difference. Many of us have benefited from the kindness of volunteers at some point in our lives.

The same is true in the church. Much of what happens in congregational life depends on people who willingly give their time and talents in service to others. So today, I want to say thank you to all who serve faithfully in this congregation and in the wider community. Your service is valued, and it is seen by God.

Our Gospel reading shows us that Jesus is also looking for volunteers not merely to fill positions, but to join Him in His mission.

Matthew tells us that Jesus travelled through towns and villages, teaching, preaching, and healing. Jesus did not remain distant from people's struggles. He entered their lives. He met people where they were and brought them God's love and mercy.

Then Matthew tells us something important: when Jesus saw the crowds, He had compassion on them because they were "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."

Jesus saw more than a crowd. He saw people. He saw their pain, confusion, fears, and spiritual needs. His heart was moved with compassion.

That same compassion remains today.

Many people in our communities are searching for meaning, hope, and direction. Some carry burdens of loneliness, grief, anxiety, or broken relationships. Others may appear successful on the outside but are spiritually empty within.

Jesus still sees people who need a Shepherd.

He still sees people who need His grace.

And then Jesus changes the picture. Instead of speaking about sheep, He speaks about a harvest.

He says, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."

In other words, there are many people who need to hear the Good News, but there are not enough workers to bring it to them.

Then Jesus says, "Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest field."

Notice that it is God's harvest. This is God's mission. The church participates in what God is already doing.

And so Jesus tells His disciples to pray.

Prayer comes first because God's work depends on God's power.

But what happens next is fascinating. After telling the disciples to pray for workers, Jesus immediately sends them out.

The people praying for workers become the workers.

The answer to their prayer begins with themselves.

That remains true today.

When we pray for God's mission, we should also be prepared for God to use us. Sometimes the very people asking God to send help are the people God is calling to serve.

The disciples themselves were ordinary people. They were not perfect. They made mistakes and often misunderstood Jesus. Yet Jesus called them, equipped them, and sent them.

That should encourage us.

God is not looking for perfect people. He is looking for willing hearts. The question is; Are you willing?

The same Jesus who called those first disciples still calls His people today. Some are called into specific ministries and leadership roles, but every Christian is called to serve and to bear witness to Christ.

For most of us, that calling begins right where we are.

In our families.

Among our friends.

In our neighbourhoods.

In our workplaces and communities.

God has placed people around us who need encouragement, compassion, hope, and sometimes simply someone who will listen.

And perhaps God has placed us there for exactly that purpose.

Finally, Jesus gives us the reason we serve. He says, "Freely you have received; freely give."

These words take us to the heart of the Gospel.

We do not serve to earn God's favour. We do not serve for recognition or reward.

We serve because of what we have already received.

Through Jesus Christ we have received forgiveness, grace, salvation, and the promise of eternal life.

Jesus freely gave Himself for us. He went to the cross for our sins. He died and rose again so that we might have life.

Freely we have received.

Therefore, freely we give.

As we reflect on this Gospel today, may we hear Jesus' call to join Him in His mission. May we serve with compassion, generosity, and gratitude.

And may God use each one of us as faithful workers in His harvest field.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.