

## Coop's Scoops # 153 Sunday Sermon and Prayers for January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021

### **Second Sunday after Epiphany: Jesus calls His first disciples**

**Sentence:** We have found the Messiah; Jesus Christ, who brings us truth and grace ( see John 1)

**Readings:** 1 Samuel 3: 1-10    Psalm 63: 1-8            1 Corinthians 6: 12-20

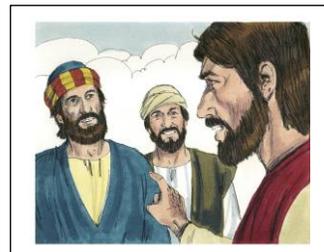
#### **Collect:**

Almighty God, your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world. May your people, illumined by your word and sacraments shine with the radiance of his glory, that he may be known, worshipped and obeyed to the ends of the earth; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

#### **The Holy Gospel: John 1: 35-42**

<sup>35</sup> The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, <sup>36</sup> and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" <sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.

<sup>38</sup> When Jesus turned and saw them following, he They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" <sup>39</sup> He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.



It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. <sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. <sup>41</sup> He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed<sup>[a]</sup>). <sup>42</sup> He brought Simon<sup>[b]</sup> to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter<sup>[c]</sup>).

## Sermon: COME AND SEE...GO AND TELL

In our Gospel reading today, John the Baptist is pointing his own disciples toward Jesus. I think, facetiously if you'll allow me, that John the Baptist could have more aptly been named "John the Finger" as he is always and everywhere continually pointing people not to himself, but to Jesus. Listen to His words: "Behold ( look, see, pay attention) the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." "He comes before me, I am not worthy to untie His shoelaces". "I have baptized with water, but He will baptize with the Holy Spirit" And later in his life John points again to Jesus and says " He must increase, I must decrease". There is no doubt whatsoever the John the baptizer placed his entire faith and confidence and life and death entirely upon Jesus. What an example John set!

The day after Jesus baptism, John, standing with two of his own disciples by the river, saw Jesus walking by and said "Look, here is the Son of God!" No sooner were the words out of John's mouth when Andrew and the other disciple left John in the dust and set off to follow Jesus. And then some truly amazing things happen:

- Jesus **noticed them** and turned around. They didn't call out to Him, He stopped and turned for them.
- He **asks** "what are you seeking?" Not want do you want, or what do you need, but what are really looking for?
- when they reply " Um, where are you staying?", Jesus **invites** them simply to "come and see". He doesn't just give them an address. He says :We'll go together". "Come and See" doesn't sound preachy or scary or challenging

at all. But those words will soon change everything. **Come and see invites an experience**, not just information. Like this -

In 2011, Kelly gave me a retirement gift that took my breath away. A trip to Las Vegas with a friend. All expenses paid. “Sin City”, I thought, “Well, here I come!” She also highly recommended a trip to the Grand Canyon, something which I had in fact always wanted to see. I’d read lots of books about it, looked at gorgeous pictures, and decided that yes, it was time to go. And the experience of it was so much more than information. Pictures don’t let you smell the cleanest freshest air you’ve ever smelled, or “HEAR” the silence that seems to stretch into

eternity, or feel the electric thrill of edging closer and closer to the edge, until I was finally sitting down on a rock, with one foot dangling and another foot clinging and just **“BEING”** at



and with the Canyon. I sat on that ledge and actually sang out loud “How Great Thou Art”. **Coming and Seeing** made all the difference. It actually impelled, compelled me to “Go and Tell”, and many people could tell you I didn’t shut up about the Canyon for months.

Take a moment and try this: visualize a picture of a time when “seeing” was like that...maybe the Northern Lights, or the vast galaxies filling the sky on cold, crisp country nights, or looking into the eyes of your newborn child, or the smile your spouse gave you on your wedding day....You’ll find you don’t just “see” it...you can still smell it and feel it and notice your heart beat is stronger... “Come and See” is an invitation to transformation rather than only to information. It sure changed Andrew!

He immediately went and found his brother, Simon, and told him “We have found the Messiah!” Wow. Andrew didn’t just go and see; he immediately went and told. Then he brought his brother to where Jesus was staying, and Jesus Himself told Simon about the changes coming his way, starting with a brand new name, a new identity and a new mission.

What then does this mean for us today as we worship in our homes, together while apart? I think it shows us the pattern for how to make new disciples of Jesus. We all know that the Anglican Church is in great decline. I recall one story in the Anglican Journal that really startled me. It was titled “Anglicans down to no members by 2040!” Well, we can hear that as information and grieve about it, or we can hear that news as an experience to change us. Historically, Anglicans are very good at the “Come and See” thing; they love to gather to worship and sing and pray. But then Anglicans have a general tendency to “Hide and Hoard” what they treasure rather to “Go and Tell” others . There’s an old joke that asks “What to you get when you cross an Anglican and a Jehovah’s Witness? You get someone who knocks on a door and says nothing”. Makes me smile, but there is some truth there. If we follow the pattern of our Gospel this morning, we could, I think, get better at the Go and Tell part. We could do more:

- turning and **noticing** others in our daily lives
- asking “What are you really looking for?” in the kindest, and most comfortable way when the time seems right and the Spirit prompts us.
- listening to whatever they say they are truly seeking. No judgement, nothing but “hearing” what their longings are.

- Offering in your own words that you have found what you were always seeking in Jesus. And that you get to know Him better by belonging to a faith family.
- And then, when such things are possible again, asking if they'd like to come and see. And offering to bring them. To let them come through the "door" with you.

This sermon on basic honest evangelism may seem a little out of place when we aren't actually meeting new people, or socializing with folks outside of our own families, but one thing many of us do have right now is a lot of "time". We could practice how we might start such a conversation, or how we might respond if someone else asked us about hope or peace or comfort. And we could adopt the natural, freely chosen attitude of children. When Gregory was about five, I asked him: "So Gregory, if I asked you to come and see something really awesome, what would you do?" His immediate answer was "I'd come and see, and then I'd try to take some of it to "Show and Tell" at school".

I'm sure that the new disciple Andrew would have liked Gregory! And Simon, newly (Cephus) Peter would have too!

Come and see; Go and tell.....let us do likewise, God being our helper!

-Judie+

**Prayer for Discipleship: From the Lutheran Evangelical Churches of America**

**Call:** On this day, we unite in the name of the One who calls, gathers, and sends.

We pray as a community of Christ.

**Response:** On this day, like each day of our lives, we are called to live our baptism. Holy Spirit, be our guide, inspiration, and encourager.

**Call:** On this day, open us to the gift of discipleship—to live among God’s faithful people.

**Response:** Expand our commitment to live faithfully. Stir us to boldly share love, forgiveness, and support. Holy Spirit, encourage in us a willingness to share each other’s joys and sorrows.

**Call:** On this day, open us to the gift of discipleship—to hear the word of God and share in worship.

**Response:** Place your word in the depths of our being where it might become a beacon of light for our path. Holy Spirit, give your people strength.

**Call:** On this day, open us to the gift of discipleship—to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed.

**Response:** Help us to claim the promises of the good news of God in Christ for our own lives. Holy Spirit, empower us to witness boldly to God’s grace, love, and hope.

**Call:** On this day, open us to the gift of discipleship—to serve all people, following the example of Jesus. **Response:** Help us not to be so busy with our own importance that we no longer see the humanity of our neighbor—especially our neighbor in need. Holy Spirit, awaken in us compassion which is mobilized into action and allows us to serve joyfully.

**Call:** On this day, open us to the gift of discipleship—to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.



**Response:** Since there cannot be peace on this earth until there is justice, let us strive for justice. Holy Spirit, stir in us a striving spirit for justice and peace for each person made in your precious image and for all of creation.

**Call:** On this day, open us.

**Response:** On this day, be present.

**Call:** Amen.

**Response:** Amen, again, we say amen.

**The Prayer for the Feast Day of St. Andrew ( from the Book of Common Prayer)**

Almighty God, who gave such grace to our apostle Andrew that he readily obeyed the call of your Son Jesus Christ, and brought his brother with him: Give us, who are called by your holy Word, grace to follow him without delay, and to bring those near to us into His gracious presence; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**Blessing:**

**May the peace of God which passes all our understanding keep your hearts and minds fixed on the love of God and his Son, Jesus Christ, and the blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit be upon you and with you always!**