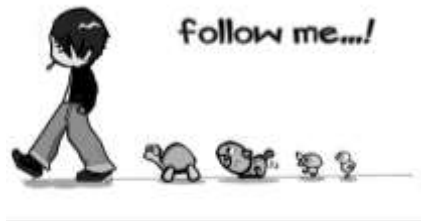


WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David

February 05, 2017



FOLLOW ME

“Your career is what you are paid for, and your calling is what you are made for.”

Steve Harvey

“Worship of Jesus is rather harmless and risk-free; following Jesus changes everything.” Richard Rohr

Gathering: *You call us to follow, you who wanderer seashores and sidewalks, inviting us to sail out of our smug harbours into the uncharted waters of faith to wander off from our predictable paths to follow you into the unpredictable footsteps of the kingdom; to leave the comfort of our homes and accompany you into the uncomfortable neighborhoods we usually avoid. As we wait, in our simple, sometimes crazy, constantly uncertain lives, speak to us, Spirit of Grace: of that hope which is our anchor; of that peace which is our rock; of that grace which is our refuge.*

Hymn: Lead me, Jesus 646

Prayer to begin worship: *Holy God, we come before You acknowledging our brokenness. We have been broken by the ways of the world. Greed and selfishness of others have hurt us; our own desires for wealth and success have harmed others. Forgive us for not looking to Your ways, to seeing that our greatest need is to love You and to love our neighbours as ourselves. May we feel Your love and care, and Your forgiveness, as we are challenged to forgive and love one another. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

Hymn: Lead us, heavenly Father (1-2) 647

Prayer: *You are the God who calls people like us, and the long list of mothers and fathers before us, who trusted the promise enough to keep the call. We give you thanks that you are a calling God, who calls always to dangerous new places. We pray enough of your grace and mercy among us that we may be among those who believe your promises enough to respond to your call. We pray in the one who embodied your promise and enacted your call, even Jesus. Amen.*
~ written by Walter Brueggemann

Scripture: **Matthew 4: 17-23** From that time Jesus began to proclaim, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who

is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him. Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

David Lose says, "calling is less about what we *do* than who we understand we are." "Think about it for a moment: God's call isn't simply to do something, but rather to be something, a child of God. Maybe being comes before doing. Maybe being even makes doing possible." Maybe that's what summoned such an immediate response from Peter and Andrew, James and John: that they felt called to be more than they had imagined. "They probably have no idea what being 'fishers of people' even means at this point in the story, but they do know that Jesus sees something in them, something of value and worth. They have no idea where they will go, or what they will do, but they do know that Jesus is calling them to be his disciples, and they trust that the rest will become clear in time."

Hymn: Lead us, heavenly Father (3) 647

Invitation: *Come to this table, not because you must but because you may, not because you are strong, but because you are weak. Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come, but because you need mercy and help. Here is the table of the Lord, we are gathered to celebrate his supper, a foretaste of things eternal.*

Hymn: Be present at our table Lord 456

There are different kinds of callings,
yet each is from God.

Jesus calls two sets of brothers to be his followers (Matthew 4:18-22). They are fishermen, embedded in the imperial economy. Rome asserted control over the land and sea, their production, and the transportation and marketing of their yields with contracts and taxes. Jesus disrupts these men's lives, calls them to a different loyalty and way of life, creates a new community, and gives them a new mission (fish for people). His summons exhibits God's empire at work, this light shining in the darkness of Roman-ruled Galilee.

The men's immediate positive response in following Jesus is stark. Readers have imagined previous and extended conversations but such "solutions" destroy the dramatic urgency of the scene. More compelling is to recall the presentation of Jesus in previous chapters. As God's agent, he is to manifest the light of God's saving presence and empire/reign. Such initiative and gift are appropriately welcomed with an instant response.

Their call and accepting response anticipate other people who join Jesus' followers (Matthew 10:1-4; 12:46-50). The Gospel's almost-exclusive focus on male disciples is troubling. We must remember that women were also among Jesus' followers.

Oftentimes, we get to know a person at a particular time in their lives. Then, that person is called in some way to some specific task – most likely, something completely different from what they were doing before. And, in doing that new task, the person discovers passion, or purpose, or a wellbeing, or wholeness.

Sometimes God's call completely changes our life's plans and takes a dramatic turn, showing us a different set of vocation possibilities. Sometimes God's call uproots us from the communities that have shaped who we are and the communities that we have grown most comfortable with and puts us into the midst of new communities to show us

additional possibilities to whom we can be. Always, God's call, at its core, is about hearing God's word within us, all around us, and following where God leads. That is the essence of being a disciple.

.Hymn: Lord whose love

722

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise. Holy and Loving God, we give thanks that we, who have walked in darkness, are surrounded by your great light. We are thankful for the life of Jesus of Nazareth who offered love and justice in his time. We are grateful for your surprising Spirit living within us and blowing among us. We offer gratitude for your church, the community of those who have heard your call and now seek to be Christ's followers in the world of today, offering love and justice in our time. With all the host of heaven we sing the song of salvation. Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.* (Continue in prayer) *By your Spirit, make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to the world, Come, Holy Spirit, upon us and what we do here that these your gifts of bread and wine may be for us the body and blood of Christ so that we may bring life, hope, and love to all your world. Through Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honour and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever more. (Our Father...)*

Hymn: The son of God proclaim (4-5) 558

Communion

Prayer following communion: God of joy, you have called us to serve you. Grant that we may walk in your presence: your love in our hearts, your truth in our minds, your strength in our wills. Until, at the end of our journey, we know the joy of our homecoming and the welcome of your embrace. In Christ's spirit, Amen

Benediction: *What am I to do? All life is a call and a response. I pray for grace to hear God's voice and a heart to respond. I am ready to listen. O God, I know that vocation is truly a gift of your love. What am I to do? I am ready to listen.*