

## “My Name Is ...” John 1:29-42

Saint Marks United Methodist Church 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany/Human Relations Sunday [January 19,] 2014

<sup>29</sup> The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! <sup>30</sup> This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.’ <sup>31</sup> I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel.” <sup>32</sup> And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. <sup>33</sup> I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>34</sup> And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

<sup>35</sup> The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, <sup>36</sup> and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!” <sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?” <sup>39</sup> He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. <sup>40</sup> One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. <sup>41</sup> He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ). <sup>42</sup> He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas” (which means Peter).

- “Call me Ishmael.” Perhaps one of the most famous first lines in any novel ever written. Right up there with “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.”
- What’s in a name?
- In some tribes of Native Americans, the parents give the child a name, until they reach their rite of passage into adulthood and then they pick their own name. What’s their life going to be about? I kind of like that.
- “You’re the church that gives out toilet paper.”
- What’s our Church name?

- Downtown Church that feels like home.
- Downtown church that gives out free clean water.
- Downtown church that provides air conditioning and battery charging for people and their pets in the middle of a derecho.
- Downtown church that provides sanctuary in this room on Sunday morning and in the courtyard Sunday through Saturday.
- We all have names. What we call ourselves. And names that other people call us.
- The problem with the Native American custom of which I spoke is that sometimes we don't always know right then, do we?
- e.g. Rosa Parks. Heard that name? Why? Because one day, "My feet's tired" and she wasn't going to take it any more.
- Sometimes it just sneaks up on us without warning.
- Simon became Peter.
- Andrew's friend's name? We don't know. It was lost. I've started calling him Michael" just as a reference point.

- Perhaps "Michael" didn't hear the call to follow Jesus because he was in a hurry to be someplace else? Have you ever done that?
  - Listen to the advertising that shapes us - for one week - just for how much "SPEED" is glorified.
  - One computer expert put it this way: "God is speed and the devil is time." The next time your computer temporarily locks up for 15 seconds, see how much it irritates you. Why not pray "The Lord's Prayer" meaningfully in the interim
- Maybe it was "ROUNDTOIT"
- All we know is that his name was lost because when it came JESUS TIME – he didn't say, "Here I am, Lord."
- **I wonder what was more important for him than Jesus.**
- **How about you?**
- I decided yesterday that my name was not going to be GO ALONG AND GET ALONG REGARDLESS OF THE TRUTH. I decided that SPEAKER-OF-TRUTH was more important.
- We emptied out a tractor trailer load of water last week – that took 20 people 2 hours to unload – and then gave it away AFTER THE WATER WAS DECLARED SAFE.

- I decided yesterday that it was time to step forward and say, “Hey Emperor, you’re not wearing any clothes.”
- No more. Time has come. SPEAK THE TRUTH. I believe Jesus said that it was His middle name: I am the Truth, the Life, the Way. ...What’s your name?
- What’s Jesus calling you to do?
- Don’t wait. Just do it. What Jesus calls you to do, God ALWAYS empowers you to do
- My name is ....