

Come and See!

During worship throughout the last part of January, in the season of Epiphany, the gospel readings have moved from Jesus' Baptism in the river Jordan to him calling the first disciples to come and see. The question is; come and see exactly what? The disciples had no idea what would follow, as they followed Jesus from town to town. The disciples had no idea what Jesus would do when they got there. They didn't know what would happen to Jesus, or to themselves, as they followed. The disciples didn't know where the Holy Spirit would be leading them to continue doing ministry in his name. What they would come to see is what Jesus is all about in his life and his death. Jesus is about love, compassion, forgiveness, welcome, peace, salvation, and healing to and all. They would come to see what his mission was and continues to be, to reach into people's everyday lives and offer grace. What they would come to see is how they were a part of that mission too. I wonder where we have come to see ourselves in this mission of God to heal the world.

About a decade ago, there was a campaign here at First Lutheran to do outreach into our communities. At the time, you all adopted Jesus' own words from the gospel of John to "**Come and See**" (*John 1:39*). We would like to re-introduce this campaign again because we think and feel there is something to see here at FLC. We see you all as part of the mission of Christ. Pr. Laura and I feel that the Holy Spirit has been working here, and we want to explore how we can let others know and feel it here too. Much like Jesus' invitation to Andrew and Simon Peter to come and see, we are called to invite others to come and see what Jesus is about and how this community of faith follows in faithful service.

How do we follow in faithful service? Where do we see ourselves in the mission of Christ? As we look at ourselves what do we see? I hope over the course of our lives together that this vision will become clearer as we continue following Jesus into a new decade and beyond.

Here are some invitations we might extend as we follow Jesus into the future:

Come and See how we welcome others. Like Jesus, we strive to welcome all. All.

Come and See how we worship God. This church works to praise God in a variety of ways through a variety of people.

Come and See how we follow Jesus. This church reaches out and gives generously locally and globally. This church provides hospitality and grace. This church dwells in God's Word and is always looking to see where God is leading us next.

Come and See how we are called by Jesus. This church makes disciples who follow Jesus' example of love and grace. We continue learning about God's grace by studying scripture and serving our neighbors in need.

Come and See how we grow in and through faith in Jesus. This church is growing as we welcome new disciples into our church family.

At some point in your life you accepted the invitation to come and see. Maybe now is a good opportunity to share that invitation with someone else. Amen.

In Christ,
Pastor Matt Kamprath