

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

What are you looking for?

Rabbi, where are you staying?

Come and see.

In this brief exchange between Andrew and Jesus

the Gospel of John presents us with the cycle of faith.

These words speak to us across time.

What are you looking for?

Or to put it a different way, Why do you come to church?

This church.

Or any church for that matter.

Why are you following Jesus around.

Is it because someone older than you told you to?

That's a good reason to start, but it won't hold up for long.

Is it because someone you respect, a peer, told you to?

That will stand up a little longer, but it too will eventually fail.

It really is a good question. What are you looking for?

It's such a good question in fact,

that I am going to give you time to answer,

and to offer that answer to God.

Your answer, like Andrew's, may be a question.

Or it might not.

Either way, that's OK.

In the following two minutes of silence,

I invite you to look within yourself

for the answer to the question Christ is asking us this morning,

“What are you looking for?”

(Pause)

Now that you have had the chance to spend some time in Andrew's shoes, so to speak,
let's see how Andrew, and his unnamed companion do.

Before we go on

I want to remind you that this week

we have stepped out of the Gospel of Matthew,

where we have been journeying for the last month and a half,

and are now in the Gospel of John,

sometimes called the Fourth Gospel.

The Gospel of John is the last of the four gospels to be written.

It is the most metaphorical and poetic of the Gospels.

You can always count on there being a lot more going on than meets the eye.

Andrew and company reply, "Rabbi, where are you staying?"

As often happens in the Fourth Gospel, this is a two part answer.

Just in case we have missed this point,

the author of the Fourth Gospel makes it obvious

by translating the title "Rabbi" for us, bringing it to our attention.

Why do they call Jesus rabbi/teacher?

He hasn't really done any teaching yet.

John has been doing all the teaching.

John has called Jesus, the Lamb of God,

the Son of God,

and he on whom the Spirit descended and abides,

but nowhere has he called him Rabbi.

How do they know he has something to teach them?

Was it the question that he asked them?

Perhaps.

For the author of the Fourth Gospel, this is how we all come to Jesus at first;

intrigued by what he may have to teach us?

And what about the second half of their question, “Where are you staying?”

On the one hand this is a very practical inquiry.

But let’s not forget that this is John’s Gospel.

Can you hear the metaphorical side of this question?

“Where are you staying?”

Where do you live?

Where do you come from?

Who are you really?

This is the real question.

The biggie.

The question that we all wrestle with at one time or another.

We can put it off for only so long.

Who is this Jesus, really? To us.

The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world?

The Son of God?

A man?

A God?

The one God?

It’s easy to say that Jesus was a teacher who lived a long time ago

and had a lot of important things to say

and taught a way of life that was fulfilling.

But sooner or later you get around to the point

of having to accept that Jesus is God.

Fully human and fully divine.

This is a much tougher proposition.

How can we get there?

Well, there’s only one way, really,

and it’s risky.

It’s risky because *we* have to make the first move.

Being the good evangelist that he is,
the author of the Fourth Gospel puts the answer right there
in Jesus' answer to Andrew and his companion.

“Come and see.”

Again notice that the answer has two parts.

The first part is an invitation.

Come.

Come to where I live.

Come to where I am.

Come into the reality of Jesus.

Act like Jesus.

That is the risky part.

It feels risky because it is action before faith; behaving before believing.

The faith comes later.

The belief comes as the result of doing.

In the Gospel of John, seeing is believing;

hearing is believing;

doing is believing.

And so the answer to the question of faith

is answered in the doing of God's will.

If you are coming to church only on Sunday in hopes of finding your faith,

you will sit there in your pew a long time and find nothing.

This is God's house only because it happens to be filled with God's people.

God doesn't live here.

Sure, it's a great place for people who believe to come together to celebrate,

and when we do, God is certainly present,

but if you want to find your faith,

you need to come and see where God lives,

not where God celebrates.

And to do that, you need to be out in the world doing God's will.
If you wait until you believe before you act, you may be waiting forever.
Get involved.

Now!

Do something.

Get involved in one of our outreach opportunities.

Teach an Adult Ed class.

Join the Altar Guild.

Help out the Vestry.

Heck, join the Vestry.

Make a pledge or increase your pledge.

Get involved with a charity group.

Or start a prayer group.

Or a Bible study group.

Donate your time.

And on and on and on.

I could go on forever.

If you don't know what needs doing, ask.

There are countless things that you can do to help the Church,
our church here in Jefferson City, as well as Christ's Universal Church,
to be a faithful, committed, and active Christian community.

If you have doubts,

if you're not sure you believe,

I can't make you.

Faith comes from the Holy Spirit.

But I can invite you.

Come and see.

The interim period is a great time to be more intentional
about inviting others to join us in this life changing ministry,

so you too will be inviting others.

Make the time... and the effort.

Take the risk.

Do something.

Invite someone.

Remember the simple words of Jesus.

Come and See.

It only took Andrew a day

before he ran to his brother Simon Peter and said of this teacher,

“We have found the Messiah!”

How long will it take the Spirit to work a miracle in you, or through you?

Amen.