

First Federated Church, Peoria, Illinois

Sunday, December 11th, 2016

3rd Sunday in Advent



*Who Are You Looking For?*

**Matthew 11:2-11**

The Rev. Dr. Forrest Krummel, Jr.

“How to be happy.” “What makes a good life; Lessons from the longest study on happiness.” “What is fulfillment.” “The Paradox of Fulfillment.” “How to Find Fulfillment.” Those are just a few of the hundreds of Tedtalks on fulfillment and happiness. There are countless more books. I didn’t even bother to look at “contentment.” A thousand years from now, though, if archeologists look at our reading and viewing habits they may come away with the belief that we are an unhappy lot. And this may be true. It seems that we are always looking for something else, someone else, something more.

In the gospel lesson John the Baptist is in prison, and he wonders if he missed something; if he didn’t understand what God called him to do? He wonders what will happen and who this fellow Jesus is? He’s kin, somehow. But what else is he? So, he sends his disciples to Jesus asking, “Who are you? Are you the One we’ve been expecting as Savior for so long or should we look for another?” “Are you the One who will give our life purpose and meaning or not?”

Jesus’ reply seems to be a bit cagey, a bit noncommittal. “Go and tell John what you see and hear. The blind are given their sight. The crippled walk. The outcasts are brought in. The deaf hear. The dead are given new life. The poor have hope. Who I am is revealed in what I do. Do you even know what you are looking for? Are you looking for someone from Central Casting—someone who “looks the part,” looks like the Savior? Really? It’s not about appearances or dress or style or manners or speech or anything else. It is in the doing. The test is in the tasting.”

It is still true today. At our second service (10 a.m.) we will receive new members into our active communion and baptize their children. They decide to join our fellowship because in our community of faith they see that the Risen Lord is active in the lives of others, this community, and the world. They take Jesus seriously. They promise to seek the fellowship of the Church wherever they may be.

Here, at First Federated Church, they see a church community that speaks to their spirits at this stage in their life journey. Here they see that the least, the last, and the lost are ministered to in the name of Jesus Christ and to the glory of God and they want to be a part of such a community of faith. Here they see that the spiritually dead are awakened to the reality that they are a Child of God, precious in the sight of God. Here they see hope given to the poor, whether it be materially through our snack packs, intellectually through the Study Buddy program, or through our local and world mission support. We help people gain independence through programs like PAWS and the other valuable local ministries that we support through our Christmas Offering.

Families bring their children to be baptized because they take Jesus' commission to "make disciples" seriously. They promise to raise their children within the community of the Christian faith wherever they may be and we, as a local branch office, if you will, of Christ's Great Church promise to partner with them and with all of our families in our life together.

John's disciples asked Jesus, "Who are you?" "Are you the One who is to come or should we look for another?" St. Augustine once wrote that our hearts are restless until they come to rest in Thee. Jesus invited his disciples to put down our burdens - our mindless searching - and to wear his yoke because His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Put your restless heart in Christ's hands. Set down the burdens that life and this world wish to place upon you and replace it with Christ's yoke. Walk with the Risen Christ and know that you are a Child of God, beloved and cherished and that nothing can ever, ever, ever separate you from that Eternal Love.

Amen.

# First Federated Church of Peoria



***Making disciples through  
Worship,***

*as we praise and glorify God;*

***Teaching,***

*as we explore what it means to be a follower of Jesus;*

***Fellowship,***

*as we love and care for one another;*

***Missions,***

*as we embody God's love in the world around us.*

[www.ffcpeoria.com](http://www.ffcpeoria.com) | [info@ffcpeoria.com](mailto:info@ffcpeoria.com)  
Office Hours: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday - Friday  
3601 N. Sheridan Road, Peoria, Illinois, 61604  
Phone: 309-685-5258 | Fax: 309-685-5451