

## Easter Sunday

**John 20:16      4-1-18**

### WHEN JESUS CALLS YOUR NAME

*“Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabbouni!’  
(which means teacher).”* John 20:16

There are few things more compelling than when someone calls our name. We each know this from personal experience.

Mary experienced this too. In fact, as Jesus personally addressed Mary there were some additional things that became part of her experience. Mary:

- Recognized Jesus as the living Lord
- Was filled with Joy
- Was compelled to witness

The same three things become our experience as Jesus calls us by name at different points in each of our lives.

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*“I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort  
believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him.  
But the Holy Spirit **has called me** through the Gospel...”*

*Martin Luther’s Explanation to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Article of the Apostles’ Creed,  
The Small Catechism by Martin Luther  
Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1979, p. 14*

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## Second Sunday of Easter

**John 20:19-31      4-8-18**

**“The Disciples Rejoiced When They Saw the Lord!”**

- A. Despair**
- B. Blazing joy!**
- C. Jesus did not disappoint them...nor does he disappoint us today...**

***A Luther Sermon Quotation:*** [Commenting on Jesus' Word, "Let not your heart be troubled".] *If then you would be a Christian like the apostles and the saints, arm yourselves, and be certain that someday an hour will come when your heart will be terrified and shaken. This is said to all Christians to make them realize that their present security will not last long. Today is tranquil, tomorrow will be different. The devil can strike a javelin into the heart, or some other distress will overtake you. See to it then that you are armed and take comfort from God's Word. (From Martin Luther's Easter Book, Ed. Roland Bainton p. 27)*

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### **Third Sunday of Easter**

**Luke 24:36b-48      4-15-18**

**Jesus said, "Peace Be With You."**

- A. At the heart of the new life with the Risen Christ and the Easter message is the word of forgiveness**
- B. The Church has proclaimed that the testimony of the Scriptures underscores that...**
- C. Jesus directs the work of the church in the preaching of forgiveness and the absolution**
- D. Jesus here gives his disciples a great missionary task**

***A Luther Sermon Quotation:*** [A comment from one of his student's notes in 1531, on the subject of absolution from the gospel reading for the day. See esp. v. 47] *Absolution is nothing else than the preaching and proclamation of the forgiveness of sins, which Christ here commands us both to preach and to hear. But because it is necessary to preserve such preaching in the church, absolution too should be retained. For there is only this difference between the two. While through preaching the Gospel we publish this forgiveness everywhere and tell it to all in general, in absolution we tell it specifically to one or more desiring it (Plass, What Luther Says, p. 3)*

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### **Fourth Sunday of Easter**

**Psalms 23      4-22-18**

## A SONG FOR THE AGES – AND FOR ALL AGES

### A Psalm of David

23 The Lord *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

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(Speaking of Psalm 23)

*“Do more beloved words exist? Framed and hung in hospital rooms, scratched on prison walls, quoted by the young, and whispered by the dying. In these lines, sailors have found a harbor, the frightened have found a father, and strugglers have found a friend.”*

*“And because the passage is so deeply loved, it is widely known. Can you find ears on which these words have never fallen? Set to music in a hundred songs, translated into a thousand tongues, domiciled in a million hearts.”*

Lucado, Max, *Safe in the Shepherd's Arms*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, p. 9

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### Fifth Sunday of Easter

**Acts 8:26-40      4-29-18**

### **YOU'LL BE SURPRISED!**

At his Ascension Jesus told his disciples, *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* In the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch found in our First Lesson, we see the witness to Christ doing just that, growing beyond Jerusalem and Judea into the wider Roman world.

There are some surprises in this story, surprises that can instruct us:

- Surprise #1 – Where and to whom God shows up
- Surprise #2 – Who God used to share the Gospel
- Surprise #3 – What God called Philip to do

As disciples of Christ in today's world, we can expect God to surprise us in the same way.

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*“The salvation of a single soul is more important than the production or preservation of all the epics and tragedies in the world.” C. S. Lewis, azquotes.com*