

“Callings Around: Called All Around Us”

Ephesians 4:1-7

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Rev. Dave Baldridge

Palm Harbor United Methodist Church, Palm Harbor, Florida

I have been called. I have been called: son, grandson, brother, cousin, nephew.

I have been called David. I have been called Dave. On occasion my mom would use my first and middle name and call me David Wayne (if you know what I mean). My grandma, bless her heart only had 2 grandchildren---me and my brother Dwain. She would get names mixed up and even combine names, so yes, I have been called Dwavid. So glad she only had 2 grandkids.

In elementary school I was on some very strong medicine that made my face swell, and my glasses looked like they sunk into my face---and yes, some classmates called me “Froggy.”

As a counselor at a Christian church camp, this will be hard for you to believe, but I was called “Muscles.”

I am called husband by Sarah. I am called Daddy or Dad. My grandchildren call my Pops.

When I taught school and also a college class, I was called Mr. Baldridge.

I am called Pastor Dave, Preacher, Brother Dave, Reverend, Rev. and even Father and Doctor!

I’m sure others have called me other names too---but I won’t get into that. Lots of callings.

The most important name calling I can have is being called a follower of Jesus. In 5th grade I felt God calling me---to ask forgiveness of my sins and accept Him as Lord and Savior of my life.

By the way many studies and surveys reveal that 83% of all Christians make commitments to Jesus between the ages of 4 and 14. (International Bible Society survey)

As so today especially as we recognize those called to the ministries to children through The Robin’s Nest, Stars and Comets, Westlake Christian School, and Camp Cubber they have the potential of making an eternal difference. They deal daily with children in this basic age bracket. Once again---thank you for your ministry that you have been called to. Special thanks to Dana Roeling, Business Administrator and Director of Education who gave our welcome and greeting this morning, Anne Martinelli, The Robin’s Nest Director, who read our scripture today, Jayanne Roggenbaum, Head of School at our Westlake Christian School who led us in prayer, and Chris Steurnagel who did the Children’s Moments who is Director of Stars and Comets and Camp Cubber (the largest Christian Day Camp in the state of Florida).

However, as I look around, I see all around me people that are called. Some may say “Well, I could never be doing what those in the Board of Education ministries are doing.

No perhaps not, but nevertheless you are called. One of the devotions I try to read on a daily basis is The Upper Room (a devotional by the United Methodist Church). They are available in the book rack just outside the Multi-Purpose Room. Earlier this week the brief prayer for the day was this: “Gracious God, help us not to focus on what we cannot do, but instead on what we can do to be useful in your service.” (Daily Devotional, Upper Room, August 13, 2019)

Look around how and find where is God calling you.

The Apostle Paul says “I urge to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.” First and foremost, you have been called to be a disciple and follower of Jesus Christ.

We are called to follow the way of the Cross. In one sense to assist in the mission of letting people know the Good News of Jesus. Found this picture that I love. **(Image of child helping Jesus with cross)**

Are you willing to be called to help Jesus with the mission of carrying the cross and making disciples? From the smallest child to the most chronologically gifted among us---we are all called.

Oh yes, we may be called many things, but what is more important is Who is calling and what are we being called to.

On my iPhone it tells me who is calling if I have their number in my contact list. If it just a number with not a name associated with it I will most likely not answer it and if it is not a robo-call then will let the person leave a voicemail.

If I look at the phone and see the name of a disgruntled member (of course not that we would ever have that), I have the choice to answer or not answer.

There have been times when my phone rings and it scrolls the name across the screen of Bishop Ken Carter. Uh, I usually answer that one right away.

Friends do we respond to when God is calling? Hear me say once again that all around us God is calling. I believe each and every person is called.

Called by God in Multiple Ways
 Called to Be Followers of Christ
 Called as We are
 Called from people, places, or situations.
 Called for service and work
 Called through each other.
 Called all around
 Called in Suffering
 Called by God within

How are we to be worthy in that calling that we have received? How are we to respond? Paul in verse ² **Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.** If that is a checklist, how 'ya doing?

The calling around this campus is to Love God and Love all as shared in the Great Commandment of Jesus. To not just be multi-generational, but intergenerational. What is your calling? Also know that your calling, first and foremost is to be a follower of Jesus, but that calling goes beyond these 4 walls and this campus.

The book that Jeremy mentioned that we will be studying in groups is written by Kathleen Cahalan and is entitled "The Stories We Live, Finding God's Calling All Around Us." She says this: "We are called by God; to be followers, worshipers, witnesses, neighbors, forgivers, prophets, and stewards; as the community we are, in the particularity of our context; from our losses to a new life together for each other and for God's world; through each other as agents of God's calling; in our suffering; and within God's dwelling place."

Look around...what is God calling you to? I know that one of the things He has called us to is prayer. In Matthew Jesus says, "My house shall be called a house of prayer..." (Matthew 21:13) Paul says in the book of **Colossians 4:2 New Living Translation (NLT)** ² **Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.**

I am going to ask that you devote yourselves to prayer for our Board of Education staff and classes. You will find outside the Multi-Purpose Room prayer cards with a teacher or staff person's name on it and what grade. I encourage you to take a card and devote yourself to praying all year for that person and their students. Perhaps even sending them a note of engouement throughout the year. You will also find outside of the Multi-Purpose Room tables with a foam core on it to express with a thankful heart an appreciation for their ministry. And then go inside the MPR and enjoy the cake provided to say thanks for the Board of Educational Ministries.

We should all be going beyond these walls and looking around our community to serve and share our story of the love of Jesus.

There is unity in this calling. ⁴ **There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;** ⁵ **one Lord, one faith, one baptism;** ⁶ **one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.** And as we would say in Kentucky---and for y'all.

PHUMC and the ministries of this campus are called to one hope and one faith. Our hope and faith is in Jesus. Church members, The Robin's Nest staff, Westlake Christian School staff, Stars and Comets/Camp Cubber staff, church staff, and those in the seats wondering what your calling is---it is the calling of Jesus to have hope and faith in Him.

Called to be a follower of Jesus. And therein lies our hope. Called to be a teacher, pray-er, witness, server---our faith and hope is in Jesus.

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⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. You have been called by God and Christ has given each one of you the grace to carry it out.

You heard Anne read our scripture from the New International Version. I often check other translations and paraphrases to perhaps get new insight. Let me re-read the scripture that Anne read earlier, our passage from Ephesians 4, but let me read it from Eugene Peterson's The Message Bible. It speaks clearly, directly and excitedly.

Ephesians 4:1-7The Message (MSG) **4** ¹⁻³ In light of all this, here's what I want you to do. While I'm locked up here, a prisoner for the Master, I want you to get out there and walk—better yet, run!—on the road God called you to travel. I don't want any of you sitting around on your hands. I don't want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere. And mark that you do this with humility and discipline—not in fits and starts, but steadily, pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences.

⁴⁻⁶ You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness. ⁷⁻¹ Out of the generosity of Christ, each of us is given his own gift.

J.D. Walt from Asbury Seminary writes The Seedbed Daily Text which I also use as daily devotions. It's amazing how God works. This week he said this in one of his daily devotionals. "We tend to think in the binary categories of "Called to Ministry" or "Just a Layperson." Nothing quenches the Holy Spirit like this kind of self-disqualification from the game....What if (instead) we thought more along the lines of being a "Sent One" who lives their daily life "On Call"?"

What if all the followers of Jesus present today (in this coffee shop) had this same self-understanding? I am a "Sent One" set apart yet right in the middle of everything, and living life today "On Call" present, attentive, and open to the Holy Spirit and ready to respond.

How about it?

Again, Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. (*John 20:21-22*) (J.D. Walt, The Seedbed Daily Text, 8-13-19)

We are on a mission *with* God. We are on a mission *from* God.

What assignment has the Holy Spirit given you? (J.D. Walt, The Seedbed Daily Text, 8-14-19)

