

# Listening and Talking . . .

The Gospel of John encourages us to experience the risen Jesus Christ for ourselves, and then, “know that this is truly the Savior of the world” (John 4:42). Jesus much preferred to call himself the *Son of Man* (or *son of humanity*). There are many layers of meaning to this term. But the simplest is this: The term “*son of*” means *the essence of* or perhaps *a new generation of*. Jesus is saying that he represents the essence of humanity, a new kind of human being. In this light, his constant invitation, “*follow me,*” means *imitate me* and *join me on my journey toward a new way of being human*.

The journey itself has led me to a deepening sense of holiness, freedom, and wholeness. God is for everybody (that is, all people), and the divine DNA is somehow in all creatures. Somehow, I am staying in Christ, remaining with and through Christ, who is united to God and the Spirit. The good news is that the Communion of God, Spirit and Christ embraces (loves) each one of us, and calls us to be in that Communion.

How do we follow Jesus in the resurrection during this lifetime? Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are shown that Jesus is humble, and Jesus shows us that God is all forgiving, all loving, and all life-giving. I hope you will follow Jesus in at least being a humble human being. I hope you will desire to be a kind human being, because that person you call your enemy, that person is part of your family, part of your species, part of your story, part of your culture, and kindness is teachable.

And in addition to being a humble and kind human being, I hope you will aspire to being a righteous human being. By righteous, I mean don't seek power over others to control or exploit them or harm them. Instead, use whatever power that comes your way to love the common good, so that all people everywhere can share equal justice and equal dignity. Jesus' message is simple: Love God, love neighbor, love self – Love period.

Because we are a religious family of human beings living in God with the Risen Christ, we are to *intentionally* seek out practices that promote justice, kindness, and humility. We need to *collaboratively* join or build communities or networks that promote these practices. We are to *reverently* see each person *with a sense of sacredness and re-consecrate each person*.

We live in union with God who helps us practice humility, kindness and justice. I have great faith in God and I have great faith in you – together we can listen for God's voice and follow God's lead. I know there are wonderful adventures ahead for us as the Centennial church family, and I thank God that you remain part of it.

Blessings on all as we Journey together,

Pastor Tom Cici