

**A Sermon for the 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
January 18, 2026**



Come to New Life!

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[Second Sunday after the Epiphany – The Episcopal Church](#)

John 1:29-42

Behold! The Lamb of God!

John the Baptist knew immediately who Jesus was. John baptized Jesus in the River Jordan, and he saw the Holy Spirit alight on Jesus like a dove. Look! The Lamb of God! He told his disciples about this event. He was the first to recognize the adult Jesus for who he truly was.

And the second person? That would be Andrew, one of John's disciples. Jesus walks by, and John says, Look! The Lamb of God! Andrew tells a third person, his brother Peter. Jesus asks the brothers, "What are you looking for?" Hmmm. A good question for all of us. But here's what Andrew said to Peter: "We have found the Messiah!" and then led him straight to Jesus. Jesus then recognized something special in Peter, and said, "You are Simon, son of John. You are to be called Cephas," which means Peter which means Rock. It was a low-key announcement, but it gave Peter a new direction in his life.

In Matthew's Gospel, Peter's recognition of Jesus as the Messiah is a bit grander scenario. In fact, it is called The Confession of St Peter, to which Jesus replies "You are the rock on which I will build my church!" Peter has come down through church tradition as the first among the Apostles and, according to Roman Catholic tradition, the first pope. This momentous event, the Confession of Peter, is actually celebrated today, January 18, and we take note of it because Peter is one of our patron saints.

But today's Gospel reading from John is a bit quieter than Matthew's version. It has Peter, arriving a little late, led by his brother, and basically clueless. We like that version of Peter too, as he seems a little more like the rest of us. He needed someone to bring him to Jesus.

I remember our previous bishop, Mark Hollingsworth, telling us again and again, that the best thing we can do for our parish is to personally invite someone to come to church. Some of you were personally invited, and you came, and you stayed.

How do we get to know Jesus, and about Jesus? I'm sure all of you can remember important events and turning points in your lives that ultimately brought you here. I've been thinking about my own unlikely history lately. Who brought me to Jesus? I think God may have had a hand in it from the beginning. I was born into a scientific family with no faith affiliation and no church experience. But somehow, I was blessed by next-door neighbors, twice, when my family moved next door to staunch Episcopalians, who took me to church each Sunday. They ended up being my godparents when I was 13, and they continued to shepherd me in the church. They were surrogate families for me who guided me for many years. They brought me to Jesus.

There were other people and events along my path, to whom I am forever grateful, because I was basically clueless like Peter. I needed a lot of mentoring!

How about you? Can you think of people who made a difference in your spiritual life? Perhaps they led by the example of their lives. I remember a certain priest in my parish growing up, named Dr. William Pollard, who was also a nuclear physicist. He told me he first got interested in the church by being on the building committee. Well, there are lots of ways to enter into

spiritual life. Dr. Pollard eventually read for holy orders and became an associate priest. I was fascinated that a nuclear physicist could be a priest. Well, my father was a nuclear physicist, and it never occurred to him! But Dr. Pollard showed me, through his path in life, that all things are possible for those who follow Jesus.

Who told you about Jesus?

I hope you see Jesus all around you. Behold the Lamb of God! Right here! This whole room full of people are all the Lamb of God! Everyone here has been led here, to follow Jesus, to be the Lamb of God to each other.

Let us not forget the strong examples from our heritage. I think of Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr, led by the Spirit to lead huge changes in our society, called to speak for justice and peace, who sacrificed his life for the people he held dear. Tradition says that Saint Peter was also a martyr, leading the early church in firm conviction that Jesus is Lord. Let them be examples for us all, to hear the call of Jesus, and to follow him. Behold, we are the Lamb of God!