

## I Feel A Sermon Comin' On

Something remarkable happened this week and I would be willing to bet that almost every person here, man, woman and child knows what that is. Of course I am talking about the inauguration of the first African American President. What a moment in history and we were all a part of.

Now, we could make comments about how the Americans are always over the top with their pomp and circumstance but you have to admit, many of us proud Canadians, who don't always have the best things to say about Americans, sat in awe and wonder at the event that took place before our eyes, as we sat in our front row living room chairs. The best seats in the house really! Some of us may have thought, "**why can't we find a leader like that!**" Or, we may have thought, "**this will definitely help the rest of the world.**" Whatever our personal thoughts it would have been very difficult not to take notice.

The power of the media to bring us every angle of the inauguration was unprecedented. Cameras were in almost every corner of the world. The Canadian news commented that traffic on the virtual highway slowed to a crawl, emails slowed, phone calls ceased, **the world paused to watch...** The crowds roared, people hugged, sang, danced, cried and laughed; one and a half million people there and millions more at home, in movie theatres, on street corners, in the electronics departments of stores; **paused and watched.**

This was truly a moment not to be forgotten...**where were you when a black man named Barak Hussein Obama became President** of the most powerful country in the world? **Where were you when that shift in collective consciousness happened? Where were you when fear mongering became living in hope?** Obama didn't give a speech, he preached a sermon, and so did the minister who did the benediction. They preached to people desperate to have someone lead them out of their collective troubles.

You might think that preaching is reserved for Sunday morning commentary from a minister or lay person but preaching is more than that. **It provokes conflict**, it is **political in nature**, it has a **hard edge** to it; it is **not just about personal happiness, and happily ever after.** Jesus came preaching about **a new world, a new realm, a new time, a change in administrations and the way we run things, a shift in power.**

Jesus doesn't just talk about the latest trend or come with a tidbit of interesting information for our lives. He comes **calling us by our names**; he has **an expectation that we will respond**, in fact he demands it. **Radical, intentional, turning around** of our lives and the lives of those we come in contact with.

Does this story sound familiar? Do you find yourself running parallels in your mind of **people who were called by name to react** and who have been received by the

masses as leaders who will lead them out of their collective troubles...**Abraham, Moses, David, Deborah, Ruth, John the Baptist, Jesus, Paul, Abraham Lincoln, Sir John A MacDonald, Harriet Tubman, John Diefenbaker, John Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., Pierre Trudeau;** like them or hate them, the masses **flocked** to them, **listened** to them, **found hope** in what they said and did **and in turn responded** with action and momentum for change.

Our scripture this week is about one of these people, and I bet you know which one; a man in ancient times, who stood before crowds of people and gave them hope, a man who stood before crowds and told them the work was hard and the rewards on earth were few but great in heaven; told them that they would have to believe in their own capabilities in order to thrive; told them they must remember where they came from in order to reach their promised land. And along the way, he asked people to join him; come and follow me he said and without hesitation, without second thought, they did it. **They dropped what they were doing and they followed Jesus.**

Simon, Andrew, James and John; and last week Phillip and Nathaniel; all called to serve God without knowing what that really meant. Come and follow me Jesus said and they did.

In the next few weeks we will once again ask seemingly regular, everyday people to take on jobs within the church on our boards and committees. People will say, **“but I don’t know what I’m doing, I don’t have the skills, I don’t have the time or the energy. I’m too old, I’m too young.”** In some cases perhaps you are right. Perhaps you are too busy already with equally important things to do. But I want you to consider this; we are on the cusp of something new, a new ministry together; a new way of being in the world today. This is an exciting time to be involved with your church and your community.

Jesus is calling you by your name **to respond** with action, **to believe** in what you cannot see and **to produce** something greater than what you currently may have. This sermon from Jesus is not all fluff and stuffing, it is a call for repentance which means, turning around. It is a call for you and me to **turn ourselves around and to look in other directions** and then to sign up for discipleship. Join in with others who are in the same boat.

The Hopi Nation of Arizona sent out a message a few years ago; it is still applicable and still needs to be fulfilled as far as I am concerned and it certainly applies to us today.

### **A Message of Hope from the Hopi Nation**

To my fellow swimmers,  
There is a river flowing now very fast.  
It is so great and swift that there are those  
who will be afraid.

They will try to hold on to the shore.  
They will feel that they are being torn  
apart and will suffer greatly.

Know that the river has its destination.

The elders say:  
We must let go of the shore,  
Push off into the middle of the river,  
Keep our eyes open and our heads above the water.

And I say, "See who is in there with you and  
celebrate!"

At this time in history,  
we are to take nothing personally,  
least of all ourselves.

For the moment that we do, our spiritual  
growth and journey comes to a halt.

The time of the lone wolf is over.

Gather yourselves!

Banish the word "struggle" from your vocabulary.  
All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner  
and in celebration.

**WE ARE THE ONES WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR.**

Yes, we are the ones we have been waiting for. Jesus is not a lone wolf, he has called  
each of us to do our part and today we are being called again, come and see; come and  
do, come and follow me. We are the ones who have been asked by Jesus to continue  
the work of love and peace and understanding.  
The wait is over, we are it!

Amen

Reverend Robin Sherman  
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