



**OCT 24, 2021 | SUNDAY MORNING MESSAGE**

**REVEREND EDWARD DUNN**

If I weren't a pastor, I think I'd choose to be a second grade teacher. My choice of second grade is based on experience as a regular parent volunteer when my own kids were second graders. These children, typically seven or eight years old, have an exuberance for learning, are developing certain critical thinking tools for problem solving and for social interaction, and still hold adults in a bit of reverence and respect.

This year, I'm going to be a pen pal to several second grade students at Palma Sola Elementary School. It's been a while since I was a pen pal and I'm excited to read and share correspondence.

The story of Bartimaeus isn't about a second grader or about pen pals however, there is an attitude of exuberance I hear in the narrative of his encounter with Jesus. The author of Mark uses verbs that denote activity – Bartimaeus shouted out; he threw off his cloak; he sprang up; and he followed Jesus. As I read those sentences I become aware of and feel a bit of the same excitement.

It seems to me that the ideal of intentional authentic evangelism as a mark of a vital congregation is to embrace a similar excitement and exuberance in faith. The stereotype of a street corner preacher might come to mind when you think about evangelism. This is not what we mean by authentic evangelism.

Intentional authentic evangelism is sharing the good news of Jesus Christ because we have experienced it; are excited about it; and want other to know and experience it too. It is telling our story and the story of God's love in ways that meet the needs of those with whom we share.

As we consider being a vital church let's look to those second graders who are excited to learn and to share.

Blessings,  
Edward