

“Who Is East Union Church?”

Exodus 3:1-6, 13-15, Romans 12:1-6a & 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 12-14
Rev. James C. Ramsey, January 26, 2014

Who is East Union Church?

I am East Union Church. My family and I have been worshipping here for 10 years now. I am privileged to serve you as your pastor, to preach, to care, to lead, to pray for you. I am East Union Church...and so are you!

East Union is people...individuals, families, teachers, mentors, Deacons and Trustees, musicians and singers, cooks and crafters, children and Elders, listeners and huggers and pull-up-your-sleeves-what-ever-it-takes workers.

We have great facilities here, buildings, grounds, play spaces, holy



places, new technology blended with age-old tradition – but East Union Church is not a place, it’s people: beautiful people, faithful people, people with direction, people set on knowing and welcoming and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.

When Moses was tending the sheep of his father-in-law, way beyond the wilderness, he met the strangest kind of angel. Behold, a burning bush, blazing, yet not consumed. He was fascinated by this



sight and so Moses studied it. When God saw that Moses turned aside he called to him:

“Moses, Moses.”

And Moses answered, “Here I am.” It was a watershed moment in Moses’ life and in the life of God’s people. When you see God and hear God and give him your attention and finally respond, “Here I am,” well, you begin a journey, or at least continue your journey in a different way.



God introduced himself to Moses. "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob...I am the LORD, the God of your ancestors."



When Moses asked for clarification, God seemed to bristle a bit. What shall I say to the people? Moses asked. I can't just say "the God of your ancestors. They're going to ask for a name."

The LORD would not be defined in such a way, and so answered, "I am who I am." ---

which is probably a poor translation of the Hebrew. In fact, scholars cannot agree on just what God said. The best guess is something like "I am whoever I please." As if to say, I am a God who is free and powerful and many things and you could not comprehend it, suffice it to say to the people...I am has sent me.



I am -- it's the beginning of a defining statement. Each of us is many things. Right now you might say, "I am -- tired, hungry, cold, warm, inspired, satisfied, anxious, hopeful."

You could say, "I am sad." OR "I am delighted."

You could say, "I am so looking forward to next week because..."

Or you could say, "I am growing inside because..."

You might say, "I am a mother, father, grandparent, cyclist, daughter, neighbor, engineer, social worker, business owner, dancer, football player, caregiver, hunter, truck driver, dish washer, gamer, physical therapist, programmer, gardener."



Everyone one of you can say, "I am East Union Church." East Union Church is people, people no other than you...well, no other than you and you and you and you...and me!"

Who is East Union Church?



Behind me is a smattering of pictures, a slide show of East Union Church. Snippets of our life together. We need more pictures, snapshots of our people, portraits of the variety of gifts God has gathered here. We, who are many and varied, make up the Body of Christ in this place.

I am East Union Church...
but so are you.

This will be a kind of campaign for us this year. What does it mean for you to say with confidence, "I am East Union Church..." What three sentences would you add to flesh that out? What is your favorite story, experience or memory? What is your niche here? What inspires you?



"I am East Union Church" is meant to be a Stewardship Campaign and a Marketing Campaign. This year we begin a strategic planning process where we will analyze data and take surveys and discuss our needs and our hopes for the future. All the time, remembering we are uniquely called together by God. You will have the chance to give your two cents, literally, and figuratively, too!

I would like to show you a start to our campaign...a brief video...which is inspiring, even though it is not completed. I invite you to add to it, to take a video of yourself or of your friend or family member. You can use a cell phone or a video camera, if you have one, or we can film you. Begin by saying, "I am East Union Church." – tell us what you love about East Union, what you do here that is important --- about three sentences...and then end with the words, "I am East Union Church...and so are you."



I imagine us building up a collection of these videos, tag ends to the video I will show you. I am East Union Church...and so are you!