

JANUARY 2017

The Name of God

My dear friends,

On January 1st many people are making (and perhaps already breaking) resolutions, gathering with family to eat Hoppin' John (see our Recipe Corner), still celebrating or trying to recover from celebrating. In the church, however, January first is the eighth day of Christmas and is the **Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus**. In Jewish tradition a male child is named and circumcised on the eight day after birth, and Jesus was no exception. When he was eight days old he was given the name Jesus. The English name Jesus comes to us from the Hebrew through Greek and then Latin. The Hebrew name is best translated as Yeshua or Joshua or Jeshua. It means "**God Saves**". In his very name we are given the essence of who and what Jesus is. Jesus described himself in other ways:

Son of Man – he is fully human and shares our life, struggles and joys

Bread of Life – he is the food that never perishes, never runs out

Good Shepherd – he is our constant guide and care giver

In the scriptures he is given other names:

The Gospel of John describes him as "**The light of the world**"

Revelation describes him as the "**Alpha and Omega**", the beginning and end of all things.

We are called, invited and encouraged to give Jesus many names: brother, friend, counselor, guide, and savior. We can give these names to Jesus because in his infinite love, we have been named. Jesus has named each and every one of us, individually and uniquely. Our names have been written in the scroll of the book, on the very palm of the hand of God.

Your sister in Christ,
Mother Bonnie+