

6 June 2021
Christ Church New Southgate
& Friern Barnet

Welcome

Psalm 138 reading

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart;
I sing praise to you before the gods.

²I face your holy Temple,
**bow down, and praise your name
because of your constant love and
faithfulness,**

**because you have shown that your
name and your commands are
supreme.^[b]**

³You answered me when I called to you;
**with your strength you strengthened
me.**

⁴All the kings in the world will praise
you, Lord,
**because they have heard your
promises.**

⁵They will sing about what you have done
and about your great glory.

⁶Even though you are so high above,
**you care for the lowly,
and the proud cannot hide from you.**

⁷When I am surrounded by troubles,
you keep me safe.

**You oppose my angry enemies
and save me by your power.**

⁸You will do everything you have promised;
**Lord, your love is eternal.
Complete the work that you have
begun.**

SONG:

In the name of God the Father,
for the glory of the Son,
in the power of the Spirit,
now in faith we come.

We are gathered in your presence
as the people of the King
and you raise our hearts to heaven as we
sing.

*We lift up your name, O God,
you are worthy of our praise,
so great in power
and glorious in grace,
so high and holy
the mighty three-in-one:
in your name we come.*

We will call upon your mercy
as we celebrate your grace,
and we'll bring our joys and troubles
as we seek your face.

We will share the peace you've given
as we feast upon your word;
and you make us into light
for all the world.

Open our lips, open our lips,
and we shall declare your praises.
Open our eyes, open our eyes to you.
Open our hearts, open our minds,
we're trusting you to change us,
open our lives, let Jesus shine anew.

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Reading: 1 Samuel 8.4-10, 19-22

⁴Then all the leaders of Israel met together,
went to Samuel in Ramah, ⁵and said to him,
“Look, you are getting old and your sons
don't follow your example. So then, appoint
a king to rule over us, so that we will have a
king, as other countries have.” ⁶Samuel was
displeased with their request for a king; so
he prayed to the Lord, ⁷and the Lord said,
“Listen to everything the people say to you.
You are not the one they have rejected; I am
the one they have rejected as their

king. ⁸ Ever since I brought them out of Egypt, they have turned away from me and worshiped other gods; and now they are doing to you what they have always done to me. ⁹ So then, listen to them, but give them strict warnings and explain how their kings will treat them.”

¹⁰ Samuel told the people who were asking him for a king everything that the Lord had said to him.

¹⁹ The people paid no attention to Samuel, but said, “No! We want a king, ²⁰ so that we will be like other nations, with our own king to rule us and to lead us out to war and to fight our battles.” ²¹ Samuel listened to everything they said and then went and told it to the Lord. ²² The Lord answered, “Do what they want and give them a king.” Then Samuel told all the men of Israel to go back home.

Praying for our global leaders



Image source: <https://news.sky.com/story/g7-summit-2021-when-is-it-whats-happening-and-where-is-carbis-bay-12322236>

Image:(L-R) French President Emmanuel Macron, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for the story of the Israelites asking God for a King. Thank you that even though we make mistakes you can still use us as leaders in the world.

Help us to listen to you and be guided by you, recognising you as the King of Kings!

We pray for all those who are leaders in our schools, workplaces, churches, nation and world. Would you be with them and help them to live for you and serve you this week.

Praying for new Baptist ministers

Newly Accredited Ministers

Jo Phillips (Kingsbury BC)
Armend Qehaja (Brownhill Road BC, Catford)
Martin Allen (Finchley BC)
Winston Bygrave (LB / West Hendon BC)
Nick Graves (Old Lodge Lane BC, Coulsdon)
Meldine Chambers (itinerant)
Louise Polhill (The Grove Centre, Sydenham)
Sally Mann (Bonny Downs BC)
Hanna Sintim (Camden Road and Upper Holloway Baptist Churches)
Jonathan Findlater (Brighton Road BC, South Croydon)
Tony Ashley (Stoke Newington BC)
Richard Marzetti (Chatsworth BC, West Norwood)
Josiah Anyinsah (Boston Road BC, Croydon)
Jim Sutton (Balham BC)
Denzil Larbi (Selsdon BC)
Gemma Dunning (Mitcham Lane BC, Streatham)
Dan Copperwheat (Greenleaf Road BC, Walthamstow)

Mark Humm (Purley BC)
James Findlow (Mill End BC,
Rickmansworth)
Rich Blake-Lobb (Yiewsley BC)
Vania John-Baptiste (Underhill BC, Barnet)
Michael Lovejoy (Northolt Park BC)
Alex Newens (Sidcup BC)

Nationally Recognised Pastors

Roger Cook (West Drayton BC)
Bervin Hedman (Penge BC)
Mericia Hedman (Penge BC)
Mark van Cuylenburg (Fulham BC)
Adolphe Boyaka-Ikanga (Edmonton BC)
Dave Mann (Bonny Downs BC)

Preacher

Judith Gallimore (Oakwood BC)

Sermon – Listen to God
Rev. Ruth Moriarty

In these warmer days with our windows open, we can hear more of outside life, can't we? We hear birdsong super early in the morning, traffic, children playing, noisy phone calls, ambulance or police sirens. We hear these things and they become a background noise to our lives. Listening is something different. Listening is being attentive, stopping still and waiting to hear the next word or sound.

Listening to the elders of Israel is what Samuel did. He heard their request for a king, he listened to their worries. 1 Samuel 8 is a pivotal point in the history of the people of God. Before it the people were local, tribal, and scattered. Every now and then the elders would gather before the judge to make decisions together. Since Moses had received the 10 commandments on Mount Sinai back in Exodus 20, the people followed a covenant not a king. God asked the people to follow the law, and he agreed to love them, care for them and protect them. But now the elders argue that it isn't working, the system is

broken. With Samuel's sons not up to the job and Samuel too old, they needed something new. They asked for a king. They no longer wanted to rely on God who had just delivered them in battle from the philistines in 1 Samuel 7.

And Samuel listened to them. How important it is to listen to others. To truly hear and take on board the worries and concerns of others. This may be a gentle reminder to each of us to listen more to each other. One of the benefits of meeting on zoom is that you have to listen to the person speaking, perhaps technology is teaching us more than we realise.

But the thing that I want to encourage us to do today is to join Samuel on the next part of this story, listening to God. Today we have space and time to listen to God. Listening to God does not mean asking him for help and saying a quick amen. It means asking for help and waiting for an answer.

A critical part of listening to God is stillness. Samuel is disciplined in this story by leaving the elders asking for a revolution and praying. See v22 - he listened to everything they said and then went and told the lord. He seeks time alone with God in stillness, away from the difficult conversation. He dedicates time to pray, and not to fret on his own.

As we begin to emerge hopefully out of lockdown, our lives will become busier again. So let us now take some time to be still before God and to listen to him. In the early days of the church there were a group of monks who lived in the desert – known as the desert fathers. They used to do this to demonstrate the importance of stillness to listen to God. They would take a jar of water and pour in some sand. They would shake it and notice that it made the water murky. But allow it to be still, and the sand will settle at the bottom and the water will become clear. We need to settle ourselves into God's stillness so that the

water of perception becomes clear again, and we can listen to God and follow God's agenda.

So I invite you at home – please find a piece of paper, pen and your bible. Here at church please find the psalm we gave out as you arrived and pencil.

Now take the piece of paper and write down everything that comes into your mind, maybe you are worried about something, stressed at work, relationship problems, or maybe you're thinking about lunch – write it down. Use full words, or just one letter that's fine.

Now take a look at Psalm 46. Read each verse one by one. Take a breath inbetween. Pause and listen to God. What might he be saying to you? How might he be leading you? What is the Spirit saying to you?

We'll take 5 minutes together to do this now.

What have you heard? How have you listened to God? If we make listening to God a regular practice, if we are disciplined in returning to God he will help us and lead us.

Henri Nouwen said, 'Thro the discipline of contemplative (listening) prayer, Christians have to learn to listen again and again to the voice of love and to find there the wisdom and courage to address whatever issue presents itself to them.... when we are securely rooted in personal intimacy with the Source of Life, it will be possible to remain flexible without being rigid, willing to confront without being offensive, gentle and forgiving without being soft, and true witnesses without being manipulative.'

In all honesty, the story of 1 Samuel 8 seems odd to me, here are the people of God wanting something else, not following the covenant, not following the God who just saved them. But I don't understand why God agrees to it. Here is the wisdom of God that

we cannot comprehend, but in his gift and power he allows us some of what we ask for. This God is one who wants his children to follow him, and offers the best path, but allows us to walk on others too. Here is a God of freedom, care and love. Here is a God who listens to his people and offers a way for us to follow his wisdom. Here is the God we should spend time listening to, just as Samuel did. May we listen to God.

Prayer

O God our ruler and shepherd,
you anointed Jesus
as the king and servant of your people.
Make us attentive to your word,
that we may accept your reign over us
and serve you alone. Amen.

Communion

**Holy, Holy, holy Lord
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Prayer

Share bread and wine

Lord's prayer

Song: We seek your kingdom

We seek your kingdom
throughout every sphere
We long for heaven's demonstration here
Jesus your light shine bright for all to see
Transform, revive, and heal society

Before all things,
in him were all things made
Inspiring culture, media, and trade

May all our work serve your economy
Transform, revive, and heal society

Peace, truth, and justice reigning everywhere
With us be present in our public square
Fill all who lead with your integrity
Transform, revive, and heal society

Forgive us Lord, when we have not engaged
Failing to scribe your heart on history's page
Make us again what we were made to be
Transform, revive, and heal society

Faithful to govern ever may we be
Selfless in service, loving constantly
In everything may your authority
Transform, revive, and heal society

Notice

Betty Manning passed away recently, her funeral will on Tue 15 June, 10 am New Southgate Crematorium. Please do remember her friends and those who loved her as they mourn.

Blessing

The blessing of God Almighty
The Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Be among you and remain with you always.
Amen