

John 1: Speak, Lord

Blessings as you lead your people to hear God's voice.

Mk

Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ is the light of the world: Grant that your people, illumined by your Word and Sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory, that he may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

LOOK

Do you believe that God calls people in our time to do God's work? Why or why not?

BOOK

Samuel 3:1-10(11-20)

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me."

Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." [Then the Lord said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever."

Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." He said, "Here I am." Eli said, "What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you." So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, "It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him."

As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the Lord.]

1. What were the problems of the day when this story begins? (Eli and sons, priests are corrupt, Eli's 'sight was dim'.)
2. Samuel was growing up in the temple. Discuss the implications that he 'does not yet know the Lord'. What does this say about the temple?
3. Eli was very slow to recognize that the Lord was speaking to Samuel. Why, do you think?

4. Read further in the story to see what God was asking Samuel to do. How did that turn out?

TOOK

Have you ever felt a call to something that didn't make sense, or that seemed incongruous? Did you entertain the possibility that God was calling you?

God gave Samuel a hard task - to condemn his elders and the way things had been going. What kind of message might God be giving to us, his people now? In what ways are we called to speak truth to power? To make change that will be uncomfortable and risky?

We often wonder how we will know God's voice when God calls. Offer one another examples of how God has spoken to you, or observe how you see God working in one another's lives.

Where might God be leading St. David's in this chaotic, challenging time?