**Hearing from God in 2016: listening in a world of noise and distraction**

**Message # 6: Listening as Word and Sacrament**

**Introduction**

1. These last six weeks we have explored how we can better listen to hear God’s Voice.
2. We explored seven different pathways that we hear him, we have learned from young Samuel how to say ‘speak Lord your servant is listening,” From Elijah how God might whisper, from Mary how to choose the better way, and last week we discussed how fear and shame often keep us from wanting to listen for God’s voice.
3. Our focus on listening over these last few weeks is part of our spiritual formation
   1. Spiritual formation is “increasing our capacity to experience the presence of God” (Ortberg 25).
4. This morning we read the story of two guys who experienced the presence of God the Son as they walked the Emmaus road with the Risen Jesus Christ.
   1. I believe we learn from their story two foundational avenues that we increase our capacity to experience Gods presence, to listen: Engaging the Word of God and The Sacrament of God.

**Text: Luke 24:13-35**

The traveler’s condition

1. No more Joy
   1. “they stood still, their faces downcast” (v 17)
2. No more hope
   1. *“We had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel” (v21)*
3. No more clarity, but confusion
4. *“amazed us…didn’t find His body...vision of angels, who said he was alive…went to the tomb... but Him they did not see.”  (Vv 22-24)*

* Reflect on a time in life when in your confusion you felt all joy and hope had left you. Didn’t you long to hear from God and feel the presence of Christ?

The reaction of Jesus

1. Became a companion on their journey
   1. *“Jesus Himself came up and walked along with them” (v 15)*
2. *Held them* accountable *for their understanding of scripture*
   1. *“How slow of heart to believe all the prophets have spoken” (v 25)*
3. Demonstrates grace and patience in explaining the scriptures (27)
   1. *“And beginning with Moses and the prophets, what was said in all the scriptures concerning Himself”*

* Reflect on the fact that Jesus was walking with them in their time of despair even though they were unware of it.
* Reflect that Jesus was tough on their inability to understand scripture BUT was gracious in their shortcoming and explained the scripture to them*.*

How they (we) come to recognize Jesus; traveler’s response

1. Through the Word
   1. Demonstrated an eagerness and willingness for more teaching (v29)
      1. *“But they urged him strongly ‘stay with us’”*
   2. Recognition of the risen Christ and impact of His teaching scripture (v 31 - 32)
      1. *…. were not our hearts burring within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the scriptures to us”*
2. Through the sacrament
   1. Jesus uses the same language has he did at the last supper. (V 30) (*Luke 22:19, Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22, )*
   2. *They’re eyes were open has they broke bread together (Vs 31)*
      1. *Participating in the breaking of bread together – the Eucharist, Lords Supper, Communion – is a vital practice of the Church.*
      2. *We experience and grow in Christ – our eyes are open- as we share the holy meal together*
      3. *Important Christian Practice (1 Corinthians 11:22-34)*

**How they responded**

1. An excitement and urgency to proclaim who they had met, how they had met, how their eyes were opened and their hearts burned, how they went from downcast to joyful (v 33)
   1. *“They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem.”*

**Conclusion**

1. Hearing from God happens in a number of different ways as we have learned in this series – we are all uniquely created to hear God uniquely
2. C.S.Lewis states it:  “Why else were individuals created, but that God, loving all infinitely, should love each differently…if all experienced God in the same way and returned Him an identical worship, the song of the Church triumphant would have no symphony, it would be like an orchestra in which all the instruments played the same note.”
3. Although the orchestra of the church as different instruments, the way those instruments are used to make the most beautiful music happens within the confines of a conductor who uses a score for the symphony that allows everyone to play together and make the most beautiful music. In the church, that score is found in the word and sacrament.
4. It is foundational to all the ways that we might hear from God is our participation in Word and Sacrament
5. May Pathway be a symphony of joy and grace as we grow in God’s presence and hear his voice.