

Dwelling in the Word, February, 2018

1) Setting the Context for the Reading

God speaks to Samuel, calling this young person to announce God's judgement and God's justice. God speaks to Samuel, but Samuel neither recognizes nor understands. His youth, his inexperience is contrasted with Eli, who has grown old and whose sight has grown dim. Samuel does not recognize God's voice. Oddly, neither does his mentor Eli. Not at first. Then Eli does understand. He then instructs the boy to answer, not by saying, "Here I am," but instead, "Your servant is listening." Samuel's response is to be attentive to the word of the Lord. At this time in our discernment process, lots of people need to be attentive.

2) Dwelling in the Word - I Samuel 3:1-10 (20 minutes)

(Hand out Bibles so all can follow along. Appoint two different people to read, once with a male voice and once with a female voice. After the lesson is read the first time, ask the following questions)

- a) Where did you find yourself stopping? What words, phrases or ideas stuck out for you? Or what did you find yourself wondering about, questions you might like to ask of this story?
- b) Why did these particular words, phrases, ideas or questions capture your imagination?

(Have the passage read a second time)

- a) What surprises you as you heard the reading this time?
- b) What does this seem to say to our process of choosing our next bishop?
- c) Where do you find hope in this story for our process?

3) Close with Prayer *(discuss what thanksgivings and what concerns need to be lifted up in your congregation at this time. If comfortable, ask the individuals to give voice to these things in your prayer time. And then conclude with prayers for the discerning process using these or similar words).*

O God, as you chose your Son Jesus and as you chose apostles and leaders for your church through the ages, help us now as we discern your will for the leader you would choose for our synod. Bless our conversations and our discernment. This we pray through Christ, our Leader. Amen.