

All Age Service for Sight Loss Sunday 2025



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Sight Loss Sunday

Equipping blind & partially sighted
people to contribute to church life.



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Overview

Welcome: Introduction to the theme

Opening Prayer

Song: A song(s) to draw people into worship

Confession: A tactile confession using sand

Dramatised Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Talk Part 1 - Who does God call?

Song: A song about hearing God's voice

Talk Part 2 - How do we know God is calling?

Response: A tactile response about saying yes to God

Song: A song about saying yes to God

Prayers: Praying for local and world concerns

Lord's Prayer

Final Blessing

Song: A final song to send people out





Detailed description

The words in bold are a script you could use or adapt

You will need

- Tactile objects in four trays with enough for one object per person - you may wish to use pebbles, jigsaw pieces, leaves, buttons etc - whatever you have available in your context
- A recording of a range of different voices and a way of playing it in the service
- Sand tray
- Pictures of Queen Elsa, George VI and Hulk (either on a screen or a printed copy)
- A treasure hunt clue that relates to your context

Before the service

As they come into the service, each person should choose one of the tactile objects described above which they will need later in the service. [Beware of choking/poison hazards, for small children]

Welcome

Today we are celebrating Sight Loss Sunday and we are looking at a passage from the Old Testament from the book of 1 Samuel. In this passage we meet a blind priest called Eli and his apprentice Samuel. We will think about how God calls each one of us to use the skills and gifts he has given us to serve Him and how God doesn't see anything as barrier to being able to serve.

Later in the service we are going to hear a conversation between Eli, Samuel and God where Eli teaches Samuel how to hear what God is calling him to do. In preparation for that we are going to begin with a little quiz. I wonder how easily you can recognize someone's voice when you are unable to see them?

For this activity you will need recordings of a number of famous voices - these could be people who are famous in the sense of celebrity or famous in a local context e.g.





members of the Church. As you play each clip invite the congregation to guess who the voice belongs to.

For people we know well, the sound of their voice is instantly recognisable but for those we don't know as well, or for voices we aren't expecting it might be a little harder. Keep that thought in mind as we hear more about our story later.

Opening prayer

This could be taken from regularly used liturgy or prayers that you would use, or you could use the prayer below:

Lord as we gather this morning in your name, help us to hear your voice, to respond to you and to glorify you in all we do. Amen.

Song

A song or set of songs to draw people into worship

Confession

For this confession you will need a sandpit at a height that all members of the congregation can reach.

Depending on the size and location of the sandpit, people can either come individually or more than one at a time.

Invite individuals, as they think about the things they want to say sorry for, to make a mark in the sand to represent their confession. This could be a word, a picture, a divot, a little mound or anything they choose. Once they have given this to God, they are invited to wipe the sand clean as a reminder of God's forgiveness.

You may wish to use a regular prayer of confession you would use in your context at the end of the activity or you could use the prayer below





Lord we come to you and say sorry for the things we have done wrong, trusting in your love for us. Help us in all we do to follow you. Amen.

Dramatised reading of 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Characters

Narrator

Eli - an older, blind priest

Samuel - a young (teenage boy) who is an apprentice to Eli

God - not seen but His voice is heard

The scene opens with Samuel tending to the lamp which sits next to the ark. Eli is lying down far away from Samuel trying to sleep.

Narrator: Here we are, centuries before Jesus is born. Eli has been a priest for many years - serving God in the sanctuary. It was here, years earlier that he met Hannah, Samuel's mum. She had prayed and prayed to have a child and when Samuel was born she was so happy. She wanted to give thanks to God in a special way and so Samuel went to work with Eli in the temple, being taught from a young age all about the work of a priest.

Today we meet Eli in his older years. He has experienced sight loss but this does not stop him from continuing to serve God - training Samuel as his apprentice. Samuel is now a young man and his role in this scene is to look after the lamp which stands next to the ark of God.

God: Samuel, Samuel

Samuel leaps up and runs to Eli

Samuel: Yes Eli. I heard you call? What can I do?

Eli: I didn't call you Samuel. Go back to bed

Samuel looks confused and slowly makes his way back to lie down next to the lamp and the ark





God: Samuel, Samuel

Samuels get up, more slowly this time, and walks to Eli

Samuel: Yes Eli. Here I am. You called me

Eli: No, I didn't call. Go back to sleep

Samuel goes back to lie down, getting more and more confused

God: Samuel, Samuel

Samuel gets up slowly, the doubt showing on his face. He tentatively approaches Eli, and speaks with an unsure voice

Samuel: Yes Eli, was it you I heard call this time?

Eli sits up and shakes his head

Eli: No Samuel, it is not me who is calling you, it is God. Go back to bed, lie down and if you hear this voice again respond 'speak Lord, your servant is listening'.

Samuel walks slowly back to bed and lies down.

God: Samuel, Samuel

Samuel sits up and looks around before boldly speaking

Samuel: Speak Lord, your servant is listening.

Narrator: That was the beginning of a long conversation between God and Samuel and the first of many conversations God would have with Samuel during his life. God went on to use Samuel to do many amazing things with God's help.

Talk part 1: Who does God call?

Show pictures of Queen Elsa, King George VI and Hulk [see below for help with who they are!] - these could be shown on a screen or using printed versions. Whichever you choose think about how those who are partially sighted can access the photos and when they are shown, provide a clear visual description for anyone who is blind.





Who can identify who these are pictures of? Can anyone guess what the link is between them?

The first picture is from a film called Frozen of Queen Elsa. For those who haven't seen the film, Elsa is introduced as a young child who lived happily in a castle with her parents, the King and Queen, and her younger sister Anna. But Elsa had a special power - she had the ability to turn things into ice with her hands. At the beginning of the film, she wasn't able to control her power properly and so when she was scared or angry things began to turn to ice. She accidentally hurt her sister who she loved and others too and so Elsa decided that because she was different and her hands worked differently to others, she wasn't worthy to be Queen and so she ran away.

Next we have King George VI. His story is made popular in the film The King's Speech. As you may know, George had a stammer and found public speaking very difficult. While this didn't stop him taking up the role of King, he has to go through a real process of dealing with his doubts and feelings about how his speech could stop him being a good king.

And finally we have Hulk, a superhero who is part of the Avengers. Hulk began life as a man called Bruce Banner but an experiment went wrong and resulted in his turning into Hulk - a large creature with green skin - if his blood pressure got too high. Hulk is a superhero who uses his super strength to help and protect people. But like the others we have looked at, while Hulk can see many positive aspects of his superpower, he also sees lots of negative aspects to being differently gifted and so he tries to run away and hide.

In each of the films or stories we have looked at, each of the people eventually takes up the role or position they are called to and does a very good job, but it is not without doubt and struggle on their part.

It can be very easy can't it, when we are told we have an important job to do, to find reasons why we aren't the right person for the job. We might think of all of the reasons that we are not the right person for the job. But God has a different view.

In our drama we met Eli, a priest whose couldn't see very well. It would have been very easy for Eli to think, that because he couldn't see he could no longer serve God. But God had a different plan. He called Eli to train Samuel and teach him all about God.

I wonder if there are things you think God might be calling you to but you're not sure about because you have list of reasons why you aren't the right person for the job. Perhaps, today, God is asking you to think again.





Song

A song about hearing God's voice

Talk part 2: How do we know when God is calling?

At the beginning of the service we tried to identify some famous voices but I wonder for you who is the easiest to identify by voice? Perhaps your mum or dad? Your husband or wife? Your best friend? Your brother or sister? Science tells us that babies start to hear and recognise voices from when they are still in the womb.

But how do we recognise when God is speaking to us? There may be some people who have heard an audible voice when God is speaking. In our Bible passage for today, Samuel hears a voice and, because it isn't a voice he recognizes, he thinks it is Eli - the only other person near him at the time. Even for Samuel, he needed someone else to help him realise that the voice he was hearing belonged to God.

So what about us? It's not that we can get our phone out and give God a call or send Him a text or follow God on Instagram to see what he wants us to do! Even postal mail and carrier pigeon are out! So how might we hear from God to know when He is calling?

I wonder if anyone has ever been on a treasure hunt where there are clues you have to find? ... Hang on, what's this? (*pick up piece of paper with 'clue' on from table*) I think someone has left us a clue here - let's read it out to see what it says [create a clue (or a few clues) leading to an item or location in your context e.g. "pour on some water and speak out my name, welcomed in to the family, I'm glad that I came" I wonder where in the church our clue is leading us? [the font!]] Sometimes we find instructions that are written down that we can read. Where do we have God's words written down for us to read? ... The Bible is a great place to start when we think about what God is calling us to do. As well as lots of promises, there are also instructions about things God would like us to do. Just before Jesus went back to Heaven, he gave his friends an instruction that is our instruction too - to go and tell people about Jesus - we know about the instruction because it was written in the Bible. So the Bible can be a good place to start when we are wondering what to do.





But you may ask, how do I know which instructions are for me and which are for other people? Often when the Holy Spirit speaks to us it is a sense we have inside like a feeling that we cannot shake. I wonder if you have ever had a really strong food craving. A craving is much more than just 'I would like a chocolate bar' a craving is a really strong, urgent need for something which just won't go away. Sometimes a craving could be for something we just really like, but other times it can be a bit more unusual. For those who have been pregnant it could have been a pregnancy craving for a very unusual food. If you have watched Peppa Pig, you might remember the episode where Mummy Rabbit is about to have a baby and she really, really wants to eat a potato with jelly, cheese and strawberry jam! God calling us can sometimes be like these cravings - a feeling inside of something we need to do that just won't go away. It may come as a bit of a surprise as we thought about earlier, but it can be a deep sense that we can't avoid.

Another way we can hear what God is calling us to do is through other people who are praying for us who will say things like "you are really good at playing the drums, have you ever thought about joining the worship band?" Or we might share that inner sense with them and they can talk and pray with us to help us hear God, a bit like Eli did for Samuel.

Response

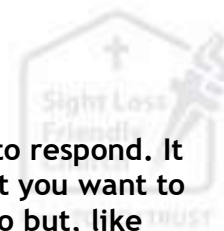
As we think about these things, I invite you to examine the object you chose at the beginning of the service and think about how unique it is. Even though some other people have a similar object, they are not exactly the same as each other.

In the same way, we are all individuals with our own gifts and skills and things we bring. Even though we may be similar to other people, we have been made unique and wonderful by God as Psalm 139 reminds us. God knows us inside out. And he calls us to serve him in all kinds of ways, using the unique gifts and passions he has given us.

Sometimes we may look at ourselves and find all kinds of reasons why God couldn't possibly have a job for me. Perhaps we think we are too young or too old, perhaps we see something we can't do and decide that God couldn't possibly use us.

In our story we have 2 completely different people who God used. Samuel could have ruled himself out because he thought he was too young or didn't know enough about God. Eli could have ruled himself out because he couldn't see. But instead both people trusted that God had a job for them and willingly answered when God called.





As we think about what God might be calling us to, we too are invited to respond. It might be that you feel that God is calling you to something specific that you want to respond to or it might be that you aren't sure what God is calling you to but, like Samuel, you want to be open to hearing God's call.

Placing your object at the front of Church is a way of saying yes God I am willing to be used by you however you choose.

Song

A song about saying yes to God

Prayers

For the prayer time individuals will need to remember the object they had earlier in the service as each object will relate to a different area of prayer.

Everyone who had object 1 will pray for the world

Everyone who had object 2 will pray for the Church

Everyone who had object 3 will pray for the those who are in need

Everyone who had object 4 will pray for those who are blind and partially sighted

Prayer can be structured in whatever way would work best in your context. It could be holding a time of silent prayer; spoken extemporary prayer or more tactile prayer using playdoh or something similar.

Lord's Prayer

Sharing the Lord's Prayer together in whatever version is usually used in your context.





Blessing

This could be taken from whichever liturgy or prayer you would usually use or the prayer below:

**Lord as we leave this place, help us to follow your call into the places you lead us.
And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit be with us and
all those we love this day and always. Amen**

Song

A final song to send people out



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from **TORCH TRUST**



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