

# Sanctuary First

A PLACE TO BE

## Voices Reshaping the World - September 2018

(2 - 29 September)

This month we begin to think about the many voices that seek to shape our world. The problem is no one seems certain about the future or what voice to listen to. We are living in a world where oppression continues to dominate the lives of so many. Where wisdom has been lost to the voices of fools and generosity is seen as a weakness and greed is counted as virtue.

Taking a different word each week we aim to explore their significance as our writers reflect upon hope, freedom, wisdom, and generosity.

We will be encouraging our writers to highlight contemporary voices that speak to these themes each week.

*Each week of the theme runs Sunday-Saturday and has its own subtheme, which contains daily Bible readings and thought triggers.*

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
02 September	The voices of Hope in a world of Uncertainty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Song of Solomon 2: 8-13</li> <li>2. Psalm 45: 1-2, 6-9</li> <li>3. Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9</li> <li>4. Psalm 15</li> <li>5. James 1: 23-27</li> <li>6. Mark 7: 14-23</li> <li>7. Romans 5: 5-6</li> </ol>	<p>Seven prayers and reflections on the subtheme using the various voices listed below to stimulate your thinking. Use the voice of the prophet or pastor to speak to an uncertain world.</p> <p>Feel free to add your own choice of voices. Who do you feel might be speaking to the uncertainty of our world with words of Hope?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen to the <b>poet</b>. Assuming hope is coming to the longing heart.</li> <li>2. Listen to the <b>politician</b>. When is it right to praise a leader to bring the best out?</li> <li>3. Listen to the <b>people</b>. We have a responsibility as community to live hopefully.</li> <li>4. Listen to the <b>prophet</b>. A liturgical question asked by pilgrims going to worship.</li> <li>5. Listen to the <b>painter</b>. The honesty of the self portrait - looking in a mirror.</li> <li>6. Listen to the <b>preacher</b>. Hope is discovered not in manmade traditions but in the presence of love.</li> <li>7. Listen to the <b>pastor</b>. Every type of suffering in the end produces character. Character produces hope.</li> </ol>

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
09 September	The voices of Freedom in a world of Oppression	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proverbs 22: 8-9</li> <li>2. Psalm 125</li> <li>3. Isaiah 35: 4</li> <li>4. Psalm 146</li> <li>5. James 2:1-17</li> <li>6. Mark 7: 24-30</li> <li>7. Mark 7: 31-37</li> </ol>	<p>Seven prayers and reflections on the subtheme using the various voices listed below to stimulate your thinking. Use the voice of the prophet or pastor to speak to a world where oppressors never seem to get their just desserts.</p> <p>Feel free to add your own choice of voices. Who do you feel might be speaking to the oppressed of our world with words of Freedom and Justice?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen to the <b>poet</b>. You reap what you sow.</li> <li>2. Listen to the <b>protector</b>. The unseen army of God.</li> <li>3. Listen to the <b>prophet</b>. You'll see and hear things that will give you courage.</li> <li>4. Listen to the <b>politician</b>. Don't put your trust in political celebrity - there's no freedom.</li> <li>5. Listen to the <b>preacher</b>. Faith that does not bring about transformation is not real faith. Freedom gives us the faith to believe the impossible.</li> <li>6. Listen to the <b>pastor</b>. Verse 26, not a pastoral verse or is it? What is happening in the subtext? Gentiles are admitted to the table of Grace because of their faith?</li> <li>7. Listen to the <b>people</b>. Sometimes the people see it and freedom comes to those who have been oppressed and the songs of freedom are the people's songs.</li> </ol>
16 September	The voices of Wisdom in a world of Fools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Job 23: 1-9</li> <li>2. Psalm 22: 9-10</li> <li>3. Amos 5: 10-15</li> <li>4. Psalm 90</li> <li>5. Hebrews 4: 12-16</li> <li>6. Mark 10: 17-22</li> <li>7. Mark 10: 31</li> </ol>	<p>Seven prayers and reflections on the subtheme using the various voices listed below to stimulate your thinking. Use the voice of the prophet or pastor to speak to a world where fools are listened to and wisdom is debased.</p> <p>Feel free to add your own choice of voices. Who do you feel might be speaking to a world that is in pursuit of madness?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen to the <b>protestant</b>. Everything is crazy, God has hidden himself - His absence speaks of his presence. He knows where we are even if we think we have lost him. Wisdom speaks in the silence</li> <li>2. Listen to the <b>poet</b>.</li> <li>3. Listen to the <b>pastor</b>. In a world of fools God can still be gracious.</li> <li>4. Listen to the <b>people</b>. If only we applied our hearts to wisdom in the way so many apply their hearts to becoming rich and famous. Nothing last except the grace of God. The steadfast love of the Love endures for ever.</li> <li>5. Listen to the <b>preacher</b>. True wisdom is found in the Word of God. His wisdom confounds the mighty, turns the perceived understanding upside down.</li> <li>6. Listen to the <b>politician</b>. Here is a ruler - a politician - looking for meaning. God's way seems crazy to the world - putting the poor first, and more than that wisdom says worship God not possessions.</li> <li>7. Listen to the <b>prophet</b> Mark. God's wisdom turns the tables on the wisdom of wealth?</li> </ol>

Date	Subtheme	Readings	Notes
23 September	The voices of Generosity in a world of Greed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proverbs 31:10-31</li> <li>2. Psalm 1</li> <li>3. Jeremiah 11: 9, 18-20</li> <li>4. Psalm 54</li> <li>5. James 3: 18</li> <li>6. Mark 9: 30-32</li> <li>7. Mark 9: 33-37</li> </ol>	<p>Seven prayers and reflections on the subtheme using the various voices listed below to stimulate your thinking. Use the voice of the prophet or pastor to speak to a world where for many generosity works if it's in conjunction with a tax break.</p> <p>We are living in a world where people talk of 'generosity fatigue'. Generosity is of course the sister of gratitude. When we are generous it is, and should be, out of gratitude for what we have received from the hand of God.</p> <p>Feel free to add your own choice of voices. Who do you feel might be speaking to our self indulgent world about generosity?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen to the <b>poet</b>. Look at the generous spirit of a mother and wife. Interesting song entitled '<a href="#">No Charge</a>'. A song of a mother speaking to her kid who is looking for more pocket money.</li> <li>2. Listen to the <b>pastor</b>. Happiness is not found in possessions or being popular and greedy for the applause of human beings. Instead happiness is found in being fruitful and generous. Like fruit trees the generous share their fruit.</li> <li>3. Listen to the <b>people</b>. The people don't always want to hear the truth - preaching can be a dangerous occupation. Look what happened to Martin Luther King Jr.</li> <li>4. Listen to the <b>prophet</b>. Sometime the prophet feels sorry for herself. She speaks of generosity and gratitude no one listens. But it is in our own act of generosity that we encounter the blessing.</li> <li>5. Listen to the <b>peacemakers</b>. How wondrous this verse anticipating the response of the harvest that comes from sowing seeds of peace.</li> <li>6. Listen to the <b>people</b>. So often we are afraid to ask the important questions because we are afraid. Afraid of what? Surely never the truth about God and our faith?</li> <li>7. Listen to the <b>politicians</b>. Like the disciples so many of our leaders, secular and church, find it hard to see their own weakness. 'Each one is greater than the other,' although no one quite says it that way. Jesus sees true greatness in the attitude of the servant.</li> </ol>