



The Benefice of Upper Wensleydale

News Sheet: Jan 17th – 23rd



From The Vicarage

Uniquely made

1Sam3:1-10, Psalm 139, Jn.1:43-51

'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' says Nathaniel. I used to say the same thing about the former mining town of Normanton in West Yorkshire as I travelled through its grim and dilapidated Victorian station platforms on the pay train to Leeds as an undergraduate student. God has a sense of humour: the town became my home for over 30 years, the parish church where Sarah and I worshipped was at the centre of a national movement of the Holy Spirit in worship and over 15 people were called and sent into full time ministry during our time there. What on the face of it appeared forgotten, worn out and insignificant was used (and continues to be used) in a very deep and significant way. We can often think of ourselves in a similar way. What use am I? What do I have to offer? Others are far more capable than I am. I remember hearing the wonderful Bible teacher Joyce Meyer saying *'Compare if you dare'* it's an activity that wastes precious energy and frequently leads us into either arrogance or self-pity.

The amazing truth is that we have no need of comparison as we are utterly and completely unique. There never *has been* anyone in all creation like you and there never *will be*. How astonishing is that? Scripture teaches us that God created us and gave us a unique identity. He alone sees us as we truly are and knows what potential there is within us. Jesus knew who Nathaniel *really* was before he met him. God made us and King David rejoices in this wonderful truth in the words of psalm 139; *'Lord you have searched me out and know me' ... 'I am marvellously (fearfully and wonderfully) made.'* We all have something perfectly unique to offer to the world. It doesn't matter how old or how young we are or what our background is, God calls us to be totally, authentically and divinely who He made us to be. In these challenging days of living with the virus, I believe that we are redefining and rediscovering what is truly important to us as humanity is drawn to looking afresh at the value and meaning of life; but I also believe that we shall never truly know what that is until we get to know Him.

Last week I spoke of the blessing there is in spending time with God and getting to know and to hear His voice. As with any other relationship, this can take time and often needs the help of others along the way. Samuel didn't immediately recognise God's voice and needed Eli to help him in responding to it and to grow in that relationship. I wonder what God might be saying to you at the moment. Is there something specific on your heart? Are you listening for prompts or do you think that this would never happen to you? The psalm reminds us that God's presence is all around us and that he lays his hand upon us. We can all benefit from taking time to listen for and to the voice of Christ within us. God invites every one of us into a relationship with Him for He has a wonderful plan for you and just for you and as long as we're still here, then we still have something to contribute. It's an exciting realisation isn't it?

I encourage all of us to take time this week to listen for the voice of God who knows *you* perfectly, calling your name and inviting you to know *Him* more.

Rev Dave.

Information on Services

To ensure everyone's safety in this lockdown period, there will be no physical services in any of our church buildings until the situation improves but last week we began a new alternative service via the telephone.

Evening Prayer every Sunday at 4pm offered through a conference telephone facility.
To access the conference service you simply telephone this number at 4pm on Sundays:

Tel: 03330 164757

you will be prompted to enter the

Room Number: 89327700# and PIN: 2772#

The Evening Prayer Service sheet and Readings for **January 17th** are attached for you to follow along with. You will be able to listen to the service and join in the responses which everyone will hear. Calls to 03 numbers should be free as they are included in most UK landline or mobile minute packages.

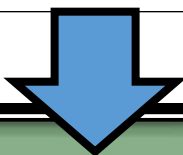
We will keep you informed of other events taking place as and when it becomes clearer as to how as a church we need to respond during this 3rd lockdown. Dave will use the church Facebook page and You Tube channel to publish video messages at regular intervals (one this weekend to reinforce the decision about the closure of the buildings) and we also anticipate there being an online event for our families this month.

To view this weeks online Message click [here](#)

We hope that many of you will engage with the opportunity to share in our service of Evening Prayer this Sunday whilst staying safe in your own homes.

These details are also available on our website <http://upperwensleydalechurch.org/services-2/>

**A Post Christmas Question
that is probably
troubling you**



How many boxes
of these Thin Mints
do I have to eat
before I start
seeing results?

Enjoy the beauty of the snow
in Wensleydale

