

“Listen” - A Service in the style of Taizé –

At Holy Trinity Church, HA3 5QX – Sunday 15 November 6.00 pm

About the theme for this service

Listen - God is seeking you far more than you are seeking him.

In our busy, noisy lives, how often do we stop to **listen** to God?

In the biblical context, "listen" refers to the act of hearing with intention and obedience. It is more than just the physical act of hearing; it involves understanding, heeding, and responding to God's word and commands. Listening is a critical component of faith and discipleship, as it reflects a heart that is open to God's guidance and wisdom.

The Hebrew word often translated as "listen" is "שמע" (shama), which implies hearing with attention and obedience. In Deuteronomy 6:4, the Shema begins with "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One." This foundational command underscores the importance of listening as a means of acknowledging and responding to God's sovereignty.

Biblical Examples:

“**Listen**, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD alone” Deut 6:4 *NLT*. ““Then the Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ And Samuel said, ‘Speak, for your servant is **listening**.’” 1 Sam 3:10 *NIV*; **Listen** you who have ears - *Matthew 11:15*; While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. Behold, a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **Listen** to him." - *Matthew 17:5*

Listening to God involves engaging with Scripture, prayer, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In John 10:27, Jesus says, "My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me." This indicates that true followers of Christ are those who recognize and respond to His voice.

1 Kings 19:11-13, ICB – ICB: Then a very strong wind blew... But the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind, there was an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake, there was a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire. After the fire, there was a quiet, gentle voice.

Proverbs 3:6, MSG: Listen for God’s voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he’s the one who will keep you on track.

Deuteronomy 30:20, NIV : Love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to Him.

Isaiah 30:21, NIV: Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”

Psalms 32:8, NIV: I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.”

Listen - A Listening Heart Transforms Us

One of the Fathers of the Church said that, in the end, it is the three disciples who are transformed on the mountain—perhaps because they discover, in a particular way, the importance of listening, above all to Jesus.

Listening is an act of love, at the heart of any relationship of trust. Without it, little can grow. When we listen to the other selflessly, we give them space to be, to express even what cannot be said through words.

And at the heart of listening is silence. Elijah meets God in the gentle breeze, not in the earthquake, wind or fire (*1 Kings 19:11-13*). Today we often think whoever shouts loudest succeeds, and violence seems to be everywhere. But God is never the author of violence and never imposes. "Let me hear what the Lord will speak, for God will speak peace to his people" [*Psalms 85:8*].

Is not the way forward to try to listen and understand the other? Far from making us docile, a "listening heart" (*1 Kings 3:9*) enables us to make courageous, creative decisions rooted in our deepest convictions, where God is closer to us than we dare hope.

This service will provide an opportunity to take time out, be quiet, and listen.