

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
 "David"

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:1-13, Psalm 51:10-14

Opening/Closing Hymns: We praise you, O God 425, Just as I am, without one plea 682 (1-4)

Choruses: Blessed be your name, Create in me a clean heart, Oh how he loves you and me/Oh, the blood of Jesus

May 6, 2018

Rev. Steve Filyk

Most of us know what it is like to be overlooked
 Or excluded. [WALK DOWN AMONG THE CONGREGATION]

Have you ever had to sit at the kids table?
 (ask someone older and then someone younger)

How many of you were made to sit
 At the kids table? (ask congregation)

Whenever there was a big gathering at my grandparents
 A card table was set up in the kitchen.
 That's where me and my cousins ate
 While the older people, sat at the fancy table
 In the dining room.

I was happy to be with my cousins.
 Yet I still had this feeling
 That I was missing out on something important
 Just because I was young.

Now for all the young people that are listening—
 Let me tell you a secret:
 Sometimes adults still have to sit at the kids table.

It's not that we are forced to sit at some card table in some kitchen.

It's that as adults we aren't always invited
 To the big table, the important table, the cool table,
 where others have gathered.

Adults also get excluded.

Maybe because we aren't wealthy enough,
 Or successful enough,
 Or judged pretty enough,
 Or seen as being important enough,
 Or deemed connected enough.

Some people get excluded not because they are too young
 But because others think they are too old! [WALK TO PULPIT]

In today's Bible story we are told that God is looking
 For a new king for Israel
 And that God has sent his prophet Samuel
 To find this new king.

Now this isn't the first time
 That Samuel has gone looking for a king.

Earlier in the story
 Saul was chosen to be king.

It is easy to see why Saul was chosen.

The Bible says that Saul was
 "as handsome a young man as could be found anywhere in Israel,
 and he was a head taller than anyone else."ⁱ
 Saul stood out in the crowd!

But when Saul won't listen to God
And refuses to carry out all of God's instructions,
God decides that Saul's days in office are numbered.ⁱⁱ

And God starts looking for a new king.

This time God is searching for a king
Whose heart beats to the rhythm of God's own heart,
Someone who will do what God tells him.ⁱⁱⁱ

God, who knows everyone's heart
Knows exactly who this person is.
And so God sends Samuel to a man named Jesse
Who lives in Bethlehem:
The future king is one of Jesse's sons.

Now Samuel is a little worried about this task.
Selecting a new king while the old king is in power
Can get you into a lot of trouble.

So it is decided that Samuel will go to Bethlehem to make a sacrifice
(something that no-one will see as unusual).

When he arrives,
Samuel will invite Jesse and his sons to join him in worship.
And the new king will be chosen there.

When Samuel arrives in Bethlehem
The elders are anxious to have such an important person with them
And they wonder why he's come.

Samuel tells them he's come in peace, to sacrifice.
And he invites them and Jesse's family to join him.

Now think about this for a moment.
[WALK BACK DOWN AMONG THE CONGREGATION]

An important person comes to your village
And invites you and your family to attend.

Imagine the excitement if may Justin Trudeau
or LeBron James, or Jennifer Lawrence
visited Kamloops and then out of all the families in this city
Invited your family to join him or her.

Would you be excited?
Would you be excited to have a meal with the Prime Minister?
Or a famous basketball player or actress?
Certainly!

Now imagine how you'd feel if your dad told you
To stay home and do the dishes.
How would you feel about that?

Well just imagine that Jesse brings seven of his sons
To that gathering with Samuel.
But his youngest son David, is told to stay home,
And take care of the sheep.

Imagine all the excitement.
And imagine how David must have felt. [BACK TO THE PULPIT]

When Jesse's family assembled before Samuel,
Samuel was pretty sure he knew whom God has chosen.
I mean there was Eliab.

The tallest, the strongest, the best looking of the bunch.

As an aside "A 2004 study... found that every inch of height
amounts to a salary increase of about \$789 per year...
...someone who is 6 feet tall earns \$5,525 more annually
than someone who is 5 feet, 6 inches.^{iv}

Being tall can certainly contribute to success!

When Samuel sees Eliab
he is pretty sure whom God has chosen.
Eliab was the tallest, the strongest,
the best looking of the bunch.

But God tells him Samuel,
"Looks aren't everything.
Don't be impressed with his looks and stature.
I've already eliminated him.

God judges persons differently than humans do.
Men and women look at the face; God looks into the heart."^v

God had not chosen Eliab.

Jesse then introduces the rest of his boys.
Abinadab? No, not him.
Shammah? Not, him either.

One by one the sons are introduced.

One by one Samuel declares that the Lord has not chosen them.

When all the men have passed before Samuel,

No-one has been chosen.

So Samuel asks Jesse:

“Is this it?

Are there no more sons?”^{vi}

Jesse admits that there is one more.

The runt, the youngest,

Is out in the fields tending to the sheep.

Samuel tells Jesse to call for him.

And when he arrives the Lord says to Samuel:

“Up on your feet! Anoint him! This is the one.”^{vii}

David is not the one most would have chosen.

David is not the one that Samuel would have chosen.

But David is God’s choice.

You see God doesn’t want an ordinary king.

Someone who will build up military power,

cultivate international relationships

and support a huge court...

God wants someone special.

Someone who will read regularly from God’s law

and learn to obey God.^{viii}

God want a king whose heart
Beats to the rhythm of God's heart.

And God finds this person in David.

This is what most of us would call a Cinderella story.
The overlooked child, the neglected son,
Is the one who is chosen above all others,
The one who is chosen to be King.

We like stories like this.
Especially when we are smarting from the rejection of others.
Especially when we have been hurt by being overlooked
For not meeting some external standard:

Not being smart enough or strong enough
or old enough
Or young enough...

It is nice to know that at some times, in some places
People are chosen, not because of how they look on the outside,
But because of what is on the inside.
Because of their character, their heart.

Well here's something for all of us to consider:
We too are chosen.

In the letter to the Ephesians we hear that God
"chose us in [Christ] before the creation of the world
to be holy and blameless in his sight.

[That] In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship
in accordance with [God's] pleasure and will...".^{ix}

We are also chosen.

We are chosen to be God's beloved children
 And conformed to likeness of his son.

We aren't chosen

Because we've met some external standard.

What does Paul say to the church at Corinth?

"Not many of you were wise by human standards;
 not many were influential; not many were of noble birth..."^x

We aren't chosen (I'll dare to say),

because we have especially pure hearts:
 that we've got stronger convictions
 Or clearer consciences than our neighbors.

For Paul reminds us that:

"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God".^{xi}

So why then are we chosen?

We are chosen because God has set his heart on us;
 Because God has determined to make our hearts
 Beat according to his rhythm of his heart.

Out of all the people in the world

God has chosen us to be God's own people.
 We aren't overlooked.

No we are very, very special.
Amen. Thanks be to God.

ⁱ 1 Samuel 9:2 NIV

ⁱⁱ See 1 Samuel 15

ⁱⁱⁱ See Acts 13:22

^{iv} Meg Donahue "Why tall people make more money" February 2, 2007 www.cnn.com/2007/US/Careers/02/02/cb.tall.people/

^v 1 Samuel 16:7 MSG

^{vi} 1 Samuel 16:11 MSG

^{vii} 1 Samuel 16:12 MSG

^{viii} Referring to Moses "law of the king" as found in Deuteronomy 17:14-20. Frank Anthony Spina "1 Samuel 16:1-13" *The Lectionary Commentary: the Old Testament and Acts* 184,185

^{ix} See Ephesians 1:3-6 NIV

^x 1 Corinthians 1:26-27

^{xi} Romans 3:23 NIV