

March 9, 2016
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Lenten Midweek Worship
Coming to Our Senses: Hearing

Beloved of God, grace to you and peace in the name of Jesus.

God is still speaking. This is a tagline that the United Church of Christ uses that is profoundly true.

God is still speaking.

The voice of God, the same voice that spoke creation into being, the same voice that called Lazarus out of the town, is still speaking today.

We tend to think of creation as something that happened long ago and this miracle of the raising of Lazarus as something just amazing and but the scriptures give us a picture of a God who continues to create, each new day, and a God who continues to call us into life both now and in the age to come.

God is still speaking to us through scripture, prayer, worship, music, poetry, literature, other people, and creation. The Psalm says that the heavens declare the glory of God
Yet how we do listen for God's voice and how do we discern what is God's voice?

There are so many other voices out there, so many voices within and without that lead us away from the full, abundant life God desires for us, so many voices that tell us that our purpose is to consume and compete rather than to love and be in community.

How can we hear the voice of God speaking in our own lives each day?

An ancient discernment practice called the examen, developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola, is a wonderful gift to aid us in discernment.

The examen is a simple practice that involves looking back over a day, (or a week or a meeting with others), looking back and reviewing everything that has happened. It involves paying attention to what has happened and noticing first: where you felt alive, where you felt connected to God and others. Then: you reflect on where you felt drained, depleted and disconnected.

God's voice calls us into life so the wisdom we gain from looking at our days and noticing what brought life and what depleted life can help us to discern invitations from God, it can help us to hear God's voice speaking to us.

The information we get from paying attention to our days can help us ask:

Is God inviting me to move away from something that drains me or to approach it differently or to ask for help? Is God inviting me to move more fully into something that is bringing life?

Tonight we are invited to do a simple examen of our day, to spend time reviewing the events of the day and asking: what made me feel alive and what depleted me? Are there any invitations here?