



Texas District

Mission Moment

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Helping Others Answer the Call

It's been said that the greatest days in your life are the day you were born and the day you figured out why. Indeed, one of the most significant discoveries you can make is discovering what God has created you for.

I was reminded of this recently as we studied the first reading for the second Sunday after Epiphany. In 1 Samuel 3 we read of how Samuel discovered his calling. Three times the boy Samuel heard the voice of God calling and three times the boy ran to his master Eli as he assumed it was Eli who was calling him. When it happened a third time, Eli realized the voice calling the boy must be God's. So he instructed Samuel to go back and when he heard the voice call to him again, simply say "Speak, for your servant is listening."

This lesson serves as an excellent reminder that not only are we to seek to discover our own calling from God, but also help others to hear and answer their calls too. As Eli mentored Samuel in the faith and helped him to hear and recognize the call of God, all God's faithful are called to help mentor and guide others, especially those who are younger, to discover how God is calling them to live and to serve.

All across the Texas District congregation members are concerned about the future of the church. And there is good reason for concern as they look around and see aging pastors and congregations, dwindling youth and children's programs, and little movement among young people in preparation for Christian ministry. But instead of wringing our hands there is something that each of us can and should be doing. Maybe a significant part of our own calling is helping others discover theirs. Maybe we are called to be Elis to invest in young Samuels... or Pauls to invest in young Timothys.

Inevitably the question will be asked: How? How does an older person meaningfully engage in the faith development of a younger person? The key is to get back to the basics of living out our faith in community. The Christian faith compels us to engage with others around us no matter what age, race, or socio-economic status they are. Let's join Jesus on his mission and get to know our neighbors again, especially those who are younger or different. Love them like Jesus would, without judgement or shame, but pure, grace-filled kindness and love that can communicate across every social barrier we think might be there. And most of all, when the time is right and one comes to you seeking guidance, like Eli you can point him or her to God and teach him or her to say with an open heart, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."

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