

**Sermon Outline - Sun, Oct.4th, 2020 – Discerning Our Path**  
(1 Samuel 3:1-14; Esther 4:12-16)

Overview – This month we have studying discernment using the formula LLC – Love, Listen & Confirm. We began by talking about getting into a posture of love that makes us more open. Then we discussed the importance of listening. In the story of Samuel we were reminded that we need to Make the Time, Quiet the other voices and be Open to tough messages. Now we go deeper into the exploration of how we confirm the messages we are hearing.

Exegesis

- Samuel's story begins with his mother who committed him to God.
- Samuel comes to the temple to learn from Eli (a chief priest who had lost his way) in a time where God's voice was a rare thing in the community
- He is not familiar with God's voice so Eli is the first to confirm that God is speaking to him
- As in all prophecy, the biggest confirmation is that what you hear comes to pass but it will take some years for that to happen how do we confirm in the moment
- Samuel almost missed the message but it ends up being the beginning of a lifelong conversation with God. How do we really learn to recognize God's voice?

Key Points –

1. **Ask God to confirm** – Nothing wrong with asking God to be crystal clear. This seems obvious but so many of us don't do it. Samuel simply says – Speak, I am listening.
2. **Lean into messages that you don't like, scrutinize messages you like** – When you don't like it, that is highly likely to be God moving you to uncomfortable but necessary place. When you like the message it is more likely to be you trying to influence the outcome.
3. **Pay attention to the signs of confirmation** – Confirmation can come in lots of places. Dreams, conversations with familiar and unfamiliar people. God usually speaks in multiple ways so that you can be clear. You have to be looking!
4. **Pay attention to opening and closing doors** – Often God will lay out the path and shut off other options so that we know which way to walk. Sometimes there are multiple open and closed doors so it is not always
5. **Connect with wise council** – Seek out folks have wise perspective. There are prayer warriors who really lean into conversation w/ God and they are worth seeking out.

On this our 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary, the vibrancy of this congregation is a clear confirmation of the seed that God planted in my heart, all along God has sent people and resources to confirm we are on the right path.

Core Questions –

1. Have you asked God to confirm clearly? What would confirmation look like, feel like to you? Are their past experiences that offer guidance?
2. Are there any doors that have opened or closed lately? Any other signs that you might have been ignoring?
3. Who is your wise council? Have you sought them out? If you don't have anyone or want more council, what can you do to cultivate that?