

Imagine God Speaking

Worship for personal or corporate use reflecting on
God's communication with his people based on the hymn
"Lord you sometimes speak in wonders"
(Singing the Faith (StF) Hymn 158)

Introduction

Sometimes in our devotions and worship we sing familiar hymns and worship songs by "rote" and perhaps the words don't always speak to us. I find often when I have prepared worship and chosen hymns carefully, nonetheless, as a hymn is being sung that words suddenly reveal a significance for that moment. Sometimes, perhaps, too we shy away from new hymns, especially set to unfamiliar tunes, and so lose an opportunity to be blessed by them. This service was written to introduce one of the newer hymns in Singing the Faith by gradually approaching it verse by verse – take time to ponder each verse and so experience the wonderful variety of ways that the "word become flesh" can enrich our lives today. For the hymns I have noted You Tube links – but there are others. You may wish to find videos before entering into worship, or just have a copy of "Singing the Faith" and read them – whatever works for you!

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Introduction to Genesis 1 (from "The Voice"):

Out of nowhere, time, space, and all the living whirl forth as God speaks the universe into existence. With the utterance of His voice, creation takes form, chaos yields to order, light eclipses darkness, and emptiness fills with life.

Read or Listen to Singing the Faith 44 – Come on and Celebrate

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kog4QkDT4Ho>

Prayers of Adoration – take a moment to think what it is to adore the God of all creation, as one who speaks to us personally and corporately. Use your own thoughts or find a suitable prayer in a book.

Read through StF 158 v 1 – Lord, you sometimes speak in wonders

All in a day's work.

In Genesis 1

Work was begun

God made the stars and the moon and the sun.

No 'time and motion' inspectors around

Time and motion had only just been invented.

In Genesis 1

Labour was born

God gave creation shape and form.

With no line manager around

God 'self-appraised' and saw that it was good.

In Genesis 1

Elements were divided

God demarcated water and land.

With no arbitration services around

God negotiated the boundaries of wet and dry.

In Genesis 1

Eco-systems came into being

God made the earth the cradle of life.

With systems analysts not yet analysing

God drew no distinctions but thrilled in life run amuck.

In Genesis 1

Teamwork was conceived

God needed help.

With human resources not being ready

God created a workforce and gave them a job description.

In Genesis 1

The working week was invented

God understood the value of production.

With no contracts necessary

God gave the command to 'go forth and multiply'.

In Genesis 2

Maximum working hours were initiated

God took a day off.

With no guilt at missed deadlines

God blessed, hallowed and rested from all the work of creation.

By Rev Michaela Youngson.

(from Making the Colours Sing ©Michaela Youngson 2005)

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Record your thoughts about how God speaks to you in the wonders of the created order, and how you respond to that voice:

You might want to think too of other wonders, love of family, in friendships etc.

Read through StF 158v2 - Lord, you sometimes speak in whispers

Read 1 Kings 19: 11 – 12

Record your thoughts about how God speaks in whispers (or the still small voice):

Read through StF 158 v3 - Lord, you sometimes speak in silence

Hear the music to “Be still and know that I am God” (StF 18):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ceisQ5cBEA>

*let the music wash over you, call to mind words that are familiar –
but keep your silence!*

Record your thoughts about how God speaks in silence:

StF 20 – Be still for the presence of the Lord

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZugvUQ4m90U>

Pause in stillness (for at least a couple of minutes – longer if you are able to)

StF 158 v 4 - Lord, you sometimes speak in scripture

Read: Isaiah 55: 6-13 and 2 Timothy 3: 10, 14 -16

Record your thoughts about how God speaks in scripture, what verses
particularly resonate with you, and why?:

StF 158 v 5 - Lord, you always speak in Jesus

Read: Luke 4: 16 - 21

Record your thoughts about how God speaks in Jesus:

Read through the whole hymn, or better still if you have the music listen to it being sung, or join in.

Singing the Faith 158 – Lord, you sometimes speak.....

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxNTw3h5iW8>

Take time to praise God for his taking the initiative in communicating with us, and pray for those for whom that voice of God might feel silenced or muffled; through isolation, anxiety or pain.

Read or Sing StF 363 - My Jesus, my Saviour,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mqSQvoinDE4>

Blessing: May the God who through the prophet Isaiah promised that his word would not return to him without accomplishing his purpose, bless you with the knowledge that his word still dwells richly in you and in the world, and will in his good time draw all of his creation back to himself. Amen