

## Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2022

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God is love, let us adore God by sharing God's love.  
God is ever present, around us and within us,  
we worship together in God.

**Story** - Josh and the WooWoo ([Listen here](#))

**Reading**                      2 Kings 2:1-2 & 6-14 ([The Message](#))  
   Luke 9:51-62 ([The Living Bible](#))

### Reflection

Elisha travels with Elijah as he makes his final journey on earth. Elijah knows what is happening and we sense that Elisha has an inkling through his insistence in accompanying Elijah. He has travelled with Elijah; he has witnessed the power Elijah has used to make a difference and deep down he senses it is about to become his time, but still he has doubts. Elijah asks him what he needs, and Elisha asks for a portion of Elijah's power, Elijah's faith, Elijah's skill. Elijah's answer can be interpreted in many ways, are you sure that is what you want/ it is not mine to give but if you see me ascend then it will be yours, leaving it in God's power to grant. Then in a whirlwind of Spirit and activity Elijah is whisked away and what is Elisha left with, Elijah's cloak. But this is not any old cloak, this is the cloak we are told Elijah used to part the sea. Elisha takes the cloak and turning to the sea does what he saw Elijah do, and the sea parts.

Sometimes we need proof we can before we try and do things, we need something tangible to believe in. For Elisha it was a cloak. Sometimes a lack of belief in ourselves, belief in being a part of God prevents us from being an answer to prayer. What do you need?

Our reading from Luke marks a turning point in the story, from now on the emphasis is the journey to Jerusalem. It is a wandering story rather than a direct journey with twists and turns but that is a bit like our own journeys and life itself, but the end point is fixed. It will not be an easy journey and Luke reminds his readers that the message of Jesus is not always welcomed but they should not respond negatively, simply keep on moving forwards.

Discipleship means journeying and here Jesus reminds those who follow that this is a nomadic journey, no homeland, no den, no nest, sleeping where you can and living in tents ready to move onwards. Tom Wright comments that those who would follow Jesus in this story seem to want to attach conditions, but Jesus answers no conditions you are in this or you are not. This is a journey of commitment; it is a new exodus.

When you are on a journey you look forward or you stand still. A farmer can plough beautiful straight lines focussed ahead but the minute he turns to look back the lines become wobbly and all over the place. If you sing a song you focus on the note you are singing and where you are going next, the moment the mind focuses on how wonderfully you sang the last line you are lost. When we travel we often need a map to discern where we are turning next, we will not move forward if we use the map to see where we have been.

These words from Jesus may seem harsh but Luke was reminding those reading that discipleship is not for the faint hearted and requires a commitment. At its very basic this passage reminds us that we are very good at making excuses for why we should put off journeying forward. Elisha's excuse was that he did not have Elijah's power but then he discovers he does and get on with the task of being a prophet. Many of us, myself included, make excuses about why we cannot answer the call to ministry of some kind until something happens and you can no longer deny the call. It took a relocation and a stranger to open my eyes to the reality of my excuses, a move from the familiar and an encounter along the way.

We can get very comfy in the familiar and reluctant to leave it behind for uncertainty, but we are on a journey and that means moving forward, exploring the unfamiliar and risking those chance encounters. It is alright to be apprehensive, just like Josh, but if we are not open to possibilities we may miss the biggest adventure of our lives, one which will change everything. God is always making all things new, we need to be ready to see the new horizon and to experience a new beginning, not stay hidden away looking backwards to what has been.

**We have forgotten to see.**

In the quiet of the storm of life there is a peace.

It is a peace that comes from knowing the nearness, the strength and the love that breathes within creation.

We see it in the bird soaring on the thermal wave.

We see it in the child enchanted by a butterfly as it flutters between flowers.

We see it in the reflections in a still lake,

and we feel it as we sit and wait for the breath of God to ripple around us and fill us with courage for the future.

Except, often we don't sit and wait,  
too busy with everything we think is important,  
everything that keeps our familiar life going.

We think we are travelling forward  
but really we are hovering,  
maintaining something that in our hearts we know  
is no longer where we should be.

We walk past signs and turnings  
believing we are following the way  
and ignoring the niggling reality that we missed the way.

We long to be amazed, to be stunned into silence  
and yet the invitations are all around,  
but we have become immune to revelation  
as we hurry through familiar territory, feeling safe and secure.

We have furled our wings  
and forgotten our freedom and the joy of flying,  
the excitement of exploring and discovering something new.

So, let us lift our eyes to the sky,  
let us rest secure in love  
and let us breath in the inspiration and invitation to journey,  
allowing ourselves the freedom to explore the path unknown  
which beckons us onward  
into the life that is God.

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