

Bible Engagement

Year B, Pentecost 3

By Beth Barnett

This is a bible engagement for 1 Samuel 8 and Mark 3:2-35, exploring the theme of Intervention.

This resource can be used in Early Word or Bible Reading times.

<p>You will need:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of text on screen or printed (powerpoint is included in the Visions and Voices Resource Zip) • Image (included in the powerpoint) on the screen, or large print out poster of Chris Booth's Art image 'The People Ask for a King' • Blue wool strands • Black felt board • Cards • Markers
<p>Time required:</p>	<p>5-7 minutes</p>

Introduction

Here's a picture of one of our Bible readings today. I wonder if we can work out which one it is?



Let's start by describing what we can see in the picture.
Who would like to name something they can see?

Welcome and affirm all contributions - connecting the description to the picture without naming any characters.

Thank you for naming all of that - what great eyes you have!

Now let's see which of our stories the picture fits.

As we hear each of the reading - keep an eye on the picture and see if it fits what's happening.

Here's reading number one

*Read 1 Sam 8:1-6, dividing your group into 2 sections, and allocating one section to join in on the words beginning with **S in orange**, and the other section to join in on the words beginning with the letters **J and G in blue**.*

When **Samuel** became old, he made his **sons judges** over Israel.
The name of his firstborn **son** was **Joel**, and the name of his **second**, Abijah; they were **judges** in Beer-sheba.
Yet his **sons** did not follow in his ways, but turned aside after **gain**; they took bribes and perverted **justice**.
Then all the elders of Israel **gathered** together and came to **Samuel** at Ramah, and said to him, "You are old and your **sons** do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to **govern** us, like other nations."
But the thing displeased **Samuel** when they said, "Give us a king to **govern** us."
Samuel prayed to the LORD,

And reading number two

Read Mark 3:20-35

And the crowd came together again, **so** that they could not even eat.
When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were **saying**, "He has **gone** out of his mind."
And the **scribes** who came down from **Jerusalem** said, "He has Beelzebul, and by the ruler of the demons he casts out demons."
And he called them to him, and **spoke** to them in parables, "How can **Satan** cast out **Satan**?
If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot **stand**.
And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to **stand**.
And if **Satan** has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot **stand**, but his end has come.
But no one can enter a **strong** man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the **strong** man; then indeed the house can be plundered.
"Truly I tell you, people will be forgiven for their **sins** and whatever blasphemies they utter;



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but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”—

for they had said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him.

A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.”

And he replied, “Who are my mother and my brothers?”

And looking at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers!

Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.”

Story number one - is in the reading from the Old Testament, from 1 Samuel. Twelve elders or leaders of the tribes of Israel come to the prophet Samuel and they stage an intervention in the way Israel is being run. Up to this point there were a bunch of tribes who all had their own leaders. A bit like a set of clans that trace their ancestry back to one family. Sometimes they behaved like brothers, and looked out for one another, defended one another, worked together. And sometimes they behaved like brothers, and picked fights with each other, complained about each other, ganged up on each other. Brothers right?

And each had their own local chief, and the prophet Samuel was there to keep pointing all of the people to God, and remind them to live in God’s good ways. But the tribes have seen that all around them are nations with Kings - big strong powerful rich kings. And the tribes want that too. They have forgotten how they once were slaves under a big strong powerful rich King - the Pharaoh of Egypt, and how God had rescued them - proving to be more powerful and more generous and more loving than any King.

They have forgotten this and although Samuel listens to the Voice of the Lord, who reminds them what kings are like, the Voice of the people still protest - and demand a King.

That’s story number one - Could it possibly be the story in our picture?

Who saw some things in the picture that match Story one?

Invite responses, welcoming and affirming all contributions.

Story number two, is from the gospel of Mark, in the New Testament - a thousand years later.

Jesus has been living in the power of the Spirit, teaching and healing and living in God’s good ways in Israel. Israel haven’t had their own king for hundreds of years now - they have been taken over and ruled by other nations and their powerful kings. Jesus speaks of the kingdom of God - he says that no matter who the king in charge of the country is, when we live God’s good ways things are put right - fair for everyone, those who need are cared for, and those with extra lovingly share with others.



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In the story, as Jesus teaches this and lives this, but this causes protest from lots of people. The local leaders come and protest that he isn't following God's law properly; some were protesting that Jesus was working for evil. Some said that he was crazy. Some said that he had a messed up spirit. His family are there, trying to tell him what to do and there are crowds of people who have been comparing Jesus to the best King they've ever heard of.

So that's story number two - Could it possibly be the story in our picture?
Who saw some things in the picture that match story two?

Invite responses, welcoming and affirming all contributions.

It seems our picture might fit both stories.

I wonder why that might be?

In both stories, we hear the Voice of the People - God's people are struggling with the way things are and are protesting.

In both stories, we hear the voice of God's Spirit - God's Spirit is present, but not everyone is quiet enough or willing enough to listen.

In both stories - the Voice of the people misses what God is doing and is focused on something else

In both stories, there is still one person who is listening for the Voice of the Lord in a different way to everybody else.

I wonder if there is a third story - Story three that looks the same as this picture, but we are in the story.

Perhaps the Voice of the Lord is speaking to us, but we're missing it.

Perhaps the voice of the people protesting about something is missing what God is really about?

Let's take a few minutes to think about that.

Give each person a piece of blue wool, and a piece of card.

In this time of quiet, take the piece of blue wool in your hands.

This wool matches the blue lines in the Art that we've been looking at - the blue squiggles like the wind are the way the artist Chris Booth has chosen to show the voice of the Lord.

As you hold the wool in your hand, as the Spirit of God if there are things God has been saying that we've missed as God's people.

Or maybe there is something specific that the Voice of the Lord wants you to hear today.

Maybe there won't be anything - just enjoy the quiet peace of the Spirit of God.

If there is something that you hear from God, you are welcome to keep that to yourself, or to share it with someone in our community you trust.



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Perhaps colour and shape and movement help you listen.
If you want to bring your wool to the black felt board and make a design or word or swirl with the blue wool you are welcome to do that in this time too.

This will be a reminder to us all that even if nothing is said aloud, the Spirit of God is with us and the Voice of the Lord is amongst us.

