**DRYSDALE UNITING CHURCH – SUNDAY 17 JUNE 2018 – EARLY WORD**

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**THEME: God's Role for Me**

**LECTIONARY: I Samuel 15: 34 – 16: 13**

God ensures the future of Israel by anointing a child shepherd to be the ruler, and like David, we are called to play our part in God's Kingdom.  God doesn't look at the outside - He sees into our hearts and knows our strengths and weaknesses, even if we don't recognise them ourselves.

Sometimes we might not agree with God. In David's place I might have been tempted to argue a bit, or at least state my case....."Hey God, don't you think one of my brothers might be more suitable? After all there's plenty to choose from. I mean I'm really just a kid, and am quite happy minding the sheep and playing my harp. Perhaps you could review the situation before you make your final decision."

God knew David was the ideal candidate and so he was anointed.

Sometimes we might feel we have no particular talent compared with our friends. We can't play the keyboard. We are far too shy to speak in public, and would rather be left in peace. For those of us who are really shy - when jobs are being allocated - we might hide behind the door and try to look like a vacuum cleaner, and hope no one notices us; but even if our friends and colleagues leave us off their lists - God doesn't.

Others of us might wish we could be chosen for a more active role, but because we are so quiet, no one seems to consider us when nominating leaders. It is all very confusing. Perhaps we might take notice of other people's special gifts and nominate them when volunteers are being called for.

You've possibly heard the story of the disabled boy who came home from school very excited because the following day the teacher was going to allocate parts in the upcoming school play. The little boy was convinced he would get a part, which almost broke his mother’s heart. She couldn't bring herself to tell him he wouldn't be chosen, although she did warn him not to be too disappointed if he wasn't picked as there were lots of children in the class, and not everyone could be in the cast. Nothing could shake her son's belief that he would have a starring role. After a sleepless night it was with a heavy heart the mother waited by the school gate the following afternoon. When her son ran to meet her, waving his arms and with a face full of joy she could hardly believe her eyes.  "Guess what mum" he cried as he hurled himself into her arms. "I did get a part - I've been chosen to clap and cheer" God, through the help of a very wise teacher heard and answered the mother's prayer.

God chose David to be the anointed leader of Israel, in spite of the fact that traditionally the honour should have gone to one of his older brothers, but I'll bet there were lots of other Israelites that God chose for other roles - they just weren't in the public eye. There would have been people to take care of the horses, army cooks, logistical experts to organize tents and supplies for the army as well as people to look after the flocks on the home front, and staff for the royal palace. Not everyone can be a leader. Not everyone wants to be a leader, but their role in the kingdom is just as important, if unsung.

The opera singer who trains and practices for years is never going to be a success if no one turns up to be in the audience. The brilliant professor will never be a great teacher if he has no students. The inspired preacher will never encourage anyone to know God if there is no congregation.

God has chosen each of us to grow His Kingdom in the best possible way. We might sing like an angel. We might serve in the OP shop and be a ray of sunshine to a depressed person who walks in the door. Perhaps we can visit others who are unable to get out or listen to another's trouble, and walk with them in their pain. Maybe our role is to pray for those on the prayer list, or smile and say G'day to a stranger. God has given each of us very special gifts, so let's be sure and open them. We need to listen to that small voice [which is really God's voice] saying "You can do this". And if God has chosen us to clap and cheer, that is a very important gift, so let's clap and cheer for all we're worth!