

## Listening to God and reflection

Preston Baptist Church

5<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> February 2022

### **Prayer**

God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we love you and give you this time. We worship you and make space for you to speak. We give you PBC, our community and ourselves as an offering and ask that you continue to bind us and build us as your temple for you to dwell with your world.

### **Bible verses for this time – 1 Peter 2:4-9**

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says: “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” and, “A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

### **Thank you! God is excited to be speaking with you!**

Thank you for patiently engaging with this process over the last few months, which at times may have felt a little long.

Although some of the length of this time has been about settling in, coming back together and assessing what is possible to do with Covid restrictions, the main aim of this time has been to encourage us all in the process of listening for our future.

We aim to excite and empower you into remembering or realising that God loves you and values you and so do all at PBC. God wants to speak to, in and through you and as Baptists we aspire to embody the idea of a Priesthood of all believers. This means your faith is valuable to God, but also to us all as one body. Therefore, if you are able to engage in any way with this process, it would be much appreciated. You can fill out all, some or only one of the questions. It is completely up to you and totally fine. Please don’t worry about leaving blank areas if you don’t feel you can or want to write anything in that section.

### **Why are we doing this listening time?**

We feel it’s imperative to go to God for guidance especially at this unique time for our church; post lockdown, whilst still in a pandemic, with an additional minister and with new members of the leadership team. The aim is also:

- To empower all of us to be encouraged to value our own senses to hear God. To energise each other in our role as the Priesthood of all believers and to value the prophetic voice.
- To see what God is already doing in mission in the Bay and local area and see how that might guide our activities.
- To encourage us all as a church and as individuals to be more intentional about our faith stories and our responsibilities to others.
- To encourage others in the Gospel by being empowered by listening to God’s voice.
- To highlight the diversity of church and its existence as a ‘shared space’ and that space is shared with God, for God, with each other and for each other.

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- To promote healthy spirituality and good communications as a church and to embody that within the church and out into the community.

### **Listening is about creating a shared space – with God first and then with others**

Our focus is to listen to God to ensure we let God lead and guide this process and this next season. However, we are also acknowledging that we all have a vital role in partnering with God to walk this out together. Church is a shared space. A shared space with God and then with those that are in the church body and in the community.

### **Listening already - Previous vision days**

Some of the points raised from the previous vision days are a move towards a more balanced fellowship regarding demographics, especially age. Therefore, looking to encourage younger people into church. Also looking out to the community to engage more with our community and welcome them into church.

### **Process**

Please submit your questionnaires to Marion Harper either by email ([marion.harper@prestonbaptistchurch.com](mailto:marion.harper@prestonbaptistchurch.com)), in person or place your questionnaires in the boxes provided at church by Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> February.

Please name your questionnaires, but an anonymised numbered system will allow for them to be prayerfully reflected on by the leadership, without names being present.

Please be assured this has already been and will continue to be a prayerful time of discernment, regarding reflecting things back to the fellowship. Everything will be read and prayed over, not all things will be reflected back. Tricia and James, with support from the leadership team, will in faith, attempt to discern God's voice from the responses. The initial part of reflecting the listening back to you will be during the service on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February. This will be repeated and explored further after church on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March.

Please know that the intention of this process is not to bring about changes from any agenda, but it is a process focused on worshipping God with our every being. We are though, excited about the future and are faithfully anticipating God to speak about what God is calling us all to in the future, and what this could mean for our story here at PBC.

### **Resources that may help you in this process and God's ongoing call for us to listen**

Web resources - [The Baptist Union of Great Britain : Listening to God](#) -  
[https://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/349796/Listening\\_to\\_God.aspx](https://www.baptist.org.uk/Groups/349796/Listening_to_God.aspx)

Web resource - [How to hear God's voice: A practical guide to hearing God's voice \(activechristianity.org\)](#) -  
<https://activechristianity.org/how-can-i-hear-gods-voice>

Web resource - [Revelation: Faithfulness in Testing Times | Seeing and Hearing | LICC](#) -  
<https://licc.org.uk/resources/revelation-faithfulness-in-testing-times-seeing-and-hearing/>

Song – I am Listening - [I Am Listening \(Spontaneous\) – Will Reagan - YouTube](#) -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3vVE6fLnIM>

Song – I am listening - [Chris McClarney – I'm Listening \(ft. Hollyn\) \(Live\) - YouTube](#) -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uC1xT3idGqs>

Song – Speak Lord, I'm listening - [Speak Lord I'm Listening - John B. Miller - YouTube](#) -  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87QoP21iM6A>