



# The Shepherd's Voice

September 5, 2012

By Fr. Joe Rees

## “Ephphatha”

“And taking the deaf man aside from the crowd privately, Jesus put His fingers into the man’s ears, and after spitting touched his tongue. And looking up to heaven, He sighed and said to him, **“Ephphatha”**, that is, **“Be opened.”** And the man’s ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.” Mark 7: 31-37 (this Sunday’s Gospel).

Jesus’ voice is a commanding voice. He speaks and His creation responds. Just as it was in creation at the beginning of Genesis 1, God does miraculous work that brings life. The Lord knows that a lot of things became broken since The Fall. There was no disease or broken parts of bodies in the Garden of Eden. Disease and inoperable organs, genetic anomalies or improper development of the child within the womb, were not God’s original plan. No, these awful circumstances for many are extending from that fateful departure from God’s intended and perfect plan for His creation. This man was deaf and because he couldn’t hear he never knew how to pronounce words. Jesus not only opens His ears to hear but loosens his tongue so he could speak. It is truly a marvel!

One word. One simple word. “Open!” Notice this word is a word of powerful hope. We open our eyes each day and begin to live out the purpose of God for our lives. We open a shop for business and begin the day’s work. We open a book as a student and learn in order to make something come true that we dream of doing for our livelihood. We open the door to greet a friend or neighbor and pass on God’s love. This is a very different approach than to “close down” or to “close out”. We, like Jesus, need to be people who are “open-ers” not “closers”.

We begin to be like Jesus and do what Jesus did when we respond to the Holy Spirit’s nudging to

“open” our minds to the possibilities. And with God all things are possible! Jesus is saying much more here to all of us. He’s giving us the example that we are to look for the opportunities to help ‘open’ up someone to the presence of the Lord. People brought this man to Jesus and wanted Him to lay His hands on the man to heal him. Jesus speaks the word and the man is healed. We need to bring people to Jesus so they can hear His Word and know His voice to open their minds up to His incredible potential for their lives. We need to open up new conversations with new folks in our circles of influence and prayerfully ask the Lord to open their hearts and minds to what we have to say, to show, and to be for the other person. We need to be open to going the extra distance for a person, perhaps in need of a ride, or groceries, or helping them out in some way to get a job. Perhaps it’s bringing them to the healing service (tonight at 7pm)! Most of all, we need to be open to the Holy Spirit’s word for us.

Listening to the Lord’s voice with an open mind and heart is one of the great goals of any life lived here on earth. It takes time. It takes patience. It takes persistence. And it takes faith. We know that if we ask the Lord’s Spirit to guide our thoughts, open our minds to the voice of Jesus, then, we will hear His voice and know His intentions for us. Let’s practice that especially this week as we enter into all the “business” of the September ‘start-ups’. Yes, all kinds of things will demand our attention and active responses. Kids will need to go to school, be picked up from school, helped with their homework, and schedule for sports and drama, etc. etc. But, carve out that time to spend with the Lord. Open your schedule up and give the Lord at least a half hour if not more during the day. Being open, having ‘Ephphatha’ in our lives, we’ll have our ears opened too to the voice that matters more than any of the others. Being open we’ll accomplish more than we could ever desire or pray for to advance

God's Kingdom on earth. Being open, we will be His healing agents and do our part to in some caring way to 'reverse the fall'. Jesus' compassion and mercy showed forth a new era of relationship with His people. He became 'open' to continuing a dynamic relationship with each and every one of us. All we have to do is open our ears to the Lord and listen.

May the Lord give us that kind of 'Ephphatha' life of being open to His constant presence and purpose for us.

With Love in Christ Jesus,  
Fr. Joe

**Sunday Servers this week...**

September 9, 2012	Proper 18	9:00 a.m. Service	
First Reader	Isaiah 35:4-7	Stephen Painter	
Psalm Reader	Psalm 146	Choir	
Second Reader	James 1:17-27	Trish Snider	
Intercessors		Acolyte	
Lay Euch. Ministers		Cline Handy, Joy Rosendale	
Acolytes		Chris Kilby (C) ; David Archer (T1); Zachary Jensen (T2)	
Welcomers		Maureen Green, Chris Corey	
Ushers		Dink Nash, Ted Vallas, Jackie Lansing, David Green	
Vestry Person of Day		William Culbreth	
Healing Ministers		Kari Campbell, Sarah Fuller, JR Fox	
Announcer		Trish Snider	

**Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**One Service at 9:00 a.m.**  
 Followed by a Salad Bar fellowship lunch. Bring your favorite salad ingredient to share.

**Fellowship this Sunday**  
**Salad Bar**  
**The church will provide the greens and the dressings. You bring your favorite topping or salad ingredient to share. Or bring some bread to go with the salad.**

Get ready for the  
**Ministry Faire on Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>.**

Ministry leaders, it's time to make posters to put up around the church to let people know about your ministry. Call the church office if you have any questions.

**Tuesday Evenings at Grace**  
**It's the place to be!**

Beginning at 6:30 p.m. on September 11<sup>th</sup> Potluck fellowship dinner in the fellowship room.

7:15 p.m. – Fr. Joe will lead a group for newcomers interested in understanding more about the church.

7:15 p.m. – Fr. Richard will lead a class on the book of Philippians followed by lively discussion.

Both groups will finish by 8:30 p.m.  
Both classes will run through October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## Sunday at Grace

8:00 a.m. – Traditional Service  
9:30 a.m. – Fellowship  
10:15 a.m. – Family Service with  
Worship Team

## Fund Raiser for Grace at Chick-fil-A

September 13, 2012

From 4 to 7 p.m.

Pick up a coupon at church  
and plan to have your dinner at  
Chick-fil-A that evening.

## Readings for Sunday

Isaiah 35:4-7  
Psalm 146  
James 1:17-27  
Mark 7:31-37

We are using the English Standard  
Version of the Bible and the Lectionary  
from the Book of Common Prayer (Year B)

### This Week at Grace –Sept. 4 – Sept. 11

#### Tues. September 4

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study – Revelation  
4:30 p.m. Healing Eucharist at the Oasis

#### Wed September 5

8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer  
9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting  
7:00 p.m. Healing Service at Grace

#### Thurs. September 6

7:00 a.m. – Bible Study  
8:00 a.m. Clergy Meeting  
10-Noon Play Group  
11:30 a.m. Healing Eucharist – Oasis  
6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

#### Fri. September 7

Fr. Joe's Day Off  
6:00 p.m. Evening Prayer and Healing

#### Sat. September 8

8:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study  
9:30 a.m. Prayers & Squares

#### Sun. September 9

9:00 a.m. One Service  
10:30 a.m. Fellowship – Salad Bar.  
Bring your favorite salad ingredient  
to share.

#### Mon. September 10

6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer

#### Tues. September 11

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study at Grace  
4:30 p.m. Healing Eucharist at the Oasis  
6:30 p.m. Potluck fellowship dinner  
7:15 p.m. Philippians class  
7:15 p.m. Newcomer's Orientation class.

**Weekly** – There are over 25 small groups meeting during the week. Check our newsletter for a list of all the groups or you can find the list on our website: [www.graceanglicanchurch.com](http://www.graceanglicanchurch.com).

## Rector's Bible Study

Tuesdays

11:30 a.m.

Fr. Joe is leading the group through a study of the Book of Revelation. Everyone is welcome.  
B.Y.O.L. (Bring your own lunch)

## Healing Prayer Service at Grace

7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 5, 2012

Soaking Prayer at 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>

## Save the date!

Sept. 5 Healing Prayer Service  
Sept. 9 Register for Sunday School  
Sept. 12 Soaking Prayer Service  
Sept. 13 Chick-fil-A church fund raiser  
Sept. 15 Diocesan Convention  
Sept. 16 Ministry Faire at Grace  
Sept. 16 Sunday School starts  
Sept. 19 Vestry meeting  
Sept. 20-23 Men's Cursillo  
Sept. 27-30 Women's Cursillo  
Oct. 3 Healing Prayer  
Oct. 6 Sharon Pappas Memorial Service  
Oct. 10 Soaking Prayer  
Oct. 17 Vestry meeting  
Nov. 10 2:00 p.m. – Helen Fritz Memorial Service  
Nov. 12 Mike Endicott – OSL Healing Conference  
at Grace Anglican Church

## Did you know?

There's a service of Evening Prayer and Healing on Friday evenings at 6:00 p.m. Stop by on your way home from work and decompress for the weekend.