

Reflection Wednesday 10th June

Isaiah 6:1-8 A Vision of God in the Temple

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ²Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³And one called to another and said:

'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory.'

⁴The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵And I said: 'Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!'

⁶ Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. ⁷The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: 'Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.' ⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'

In the year of

There are some years that are remembered for significant events and acts, either by a few or the majority. Some years are of such significance in a country or even further afield that they are taught in school or passed from one generation to another.

I give you 13 dates to think about - 1066, 1215, 1662, 1666, 1901, 1914, 1918, 1919, 1939, 1945, 1948, 1952, 1966.

King Uzziah (2 Ch 26 was also called Azariah 2 Kings 15:1) reigned in Judah for 52 years, so the year of his death (around 740 BC) would have been a significant marker and date in Jewish history. Some of the Jewish Kings were not longstanding. That Uzziah lasted a long time marks him out as a Godly and powerful king, (2 Kings 15, 2 Ch 28) though even as a Godly King he gave into power and pride (2 Ch 26:16-21)

There will be a significant date in British history at the passing of Queen Elizabeth II whenever that may be after so many years as Monarch.

2020 is a significant date for world history with the global pandemic we are living through

The year of Uzziah's death was a year that Isaiah could date his vision too. Isaiah's vision had a marked impression on him and he experienced the presence of God, reacted with a feeling of total inadequacy, experienced the grace of God, heard the call of God and responded 'Here am I; send me!'

In this year 2020 when we have been living under very different conditions have you made more space for encounter with God? Have you recognized his holiness? Have you fallen in front of God in unworthiness? Have you experienced the grace of God in forgiveness? Have you heard the call of God to service? Have you responded, 'Here am I; send me!' ?

Many years ago I went to a flower festival where all the arrangements had biblical texts attached, amongst the fantastic displays was one which was very simple, a single rose in a vase with the text, 'Here am I; send me!' The simple had a profound impact on people who saw it.

If you are called you may, like Isaiah feel unworthy, but if you are called God will change you, transform you and equip you. As I will be saying Sunday evening at the end of Matthew's Gospel all those gathered with Jesus were commissioned, even those who doubted. If Jesus has called you to follow and you have said yes do not think that you are so special he has nothing for you to do.

With Thanks to Jill Baker, a former Vices-President of the Methodist Conference for this question, **If you were to look back from a point in the future and remember 'In the year of the Coronavirus ...', what transformative encounter with God might you recall?**