

# SERMON NOTES Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2023

## sunnysidechurch

Theme: **Called to tell: Telling God's Story**

Passages: **Isaiah 43.1-13, Luke 24.1-12.**

**Some of the main themes from the sermon**

### **What makes a great story?**

Here are some characteristics of a really good story: Resonance, reach, resolution and redemption.

### **What is God's story?**

In one sense, everything that is and ever can be is God's story. In another sense the Bible taken as a whole, is God's story, beginning with creation moving through the fall to redemption through Jesus and on to the final act at the end of time when 'there will be no more death and no more pain' In a different way, as God's people, we are also part of God's story. Finally, we can see that within the God's unfolding story in the bible there are many smaller stories like the accounts of Abraham and Sarah, and Moses and David and Esther and Paul. These are people, like us whose lives have been changed by meeting God. Their stories, like ours are important episodes in God's story. And we can immerse ourselves in their stories and meet God there.

### **A gripping fragment of God's story: Luke 24.1-12**

Cold and exhausted the women in mourning go to anoint Jesus' body, in preparation for burial. What they see and hear doesn't make sense. How can it be? Maybe, just maybe Jesus actually did what he said he would do. Maybe there was no need to be sad....

### **What makes this a great story?**

- It **resonates** with you. You feel for the women because they seem like you in important ways.
- It has **reach**; what happens is important to them but also it has wider significance.
- It has a **resolution**. The women are changed by the things that happen to them.
- There is **redemption** in the resolution.
- Most importantly, the account has a **ring of truth** about it.

**Stories like this, the best stories, change us.**

**We all know that God's story is life changing.**

We are here today and not in bed or on our way to the shops because something about God's story has chimed with us. It's changed us; given us a new set of priorities.

**Stories with resonance...**

Like the account of Joseph and his brothers, Abraham and Sarah, Eve and the serpent.

**Stories with reach...**

Like the story of the flight of God's people from Egypt and our reading from Isaiah.

**Stories with a resolution...**

Like Jesus saying on the cross as he dies, 'It is finished' and like our reading from Luke.

**Stories of redemption**

So many individual stories in the Bible are stories of redemption. Supremely, the whole sweep of the Bible is a story of God redeeming his creation through Jesus. We are part of that story as actors and narrators.

### ***Some questions for thought and discussion this week:***

1. *If you had to take one story or novel on your desert island, what would it be and why?*
2. *Think of stories from the Old Testament. Is there one that particularly resonates with you? Are there characters in it that you feel for and identify with? Why?*
3. *Think of a story from the life of Jesus. Is there one that speaks particularly to you? Why?*
4. *Think of the Psalms. Do you have a favourite Psalm? What about it speaks to your condition?*
5. *Apart from Jesus, who is your favourite character in the New Testament? Why?*
6. *I wonder if it's worth becoming more familiar with a bible story, character or psalm that you already like, so you can talk about it and why it matters to you. Which would you choose and how would you talk about it?*