

Meditation/monologue

Here at the well – a call to united mission

This meditation/monologue was specially written for a united service for the opening of [Churches Together in Britain and Ireland's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#) to complement their existing resources. In keeping with the national focus of 2015's week, it is inspired by bringing to life the woman at the well's voice (John 4) and shared here for wider use on any occasion this topic or passage is in focus. (You'll find a full index of the Sanctuary's songs and prayer resources about church unity listed together at www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-search)

Here at the well

I wanted to bring you all here. So you'd understand. Because everything changed here.

Here – at the well.

That day began the same as any other. I walked the dusty road towards the water source weighed down by the heavy emptiness inside me. For I carried a load of shame back then.

I was an outsider – used to being on the wrong side of withering stares, rolled eyes, cold shoulders and whispers. Often excluded, marginalised and judged. And that was by *my own* people.

And so when *he* showed up at the well – one of *them* – those superior Jews who think they're so perfect and chosen because they worship at the temple and are sure the Messiah will come from them – I knew I was in for another round of the same scathing power-trip they always seem to put my people through.

But then he spoke to me. And he looked at me. And we talked. I mean, we really talked. As if it was the most natural thing for a Samaritan woman and a Jewish rabbi to talk; as if...

Well, as if we were both insiders on something bigger than any of those barriers.

And then he seemed to be inviting me into this something huge. He said he could give me living water – water that would mean I would never be thirsty again. I didn't understand what he meant, but I wanted it. I was thirsty to drink my fill of something different – something more than disappointments and broken relationships. Something different to being written off by other people again and again...

It wasn't comfortable though. Oh, anything but. This man knew everything there was to know about me without being told... and the things he knew, they were the stuff of scandal and rumour; justifiable reasons for people to exclude me.

But he was inviting me in anyway! He said a time was coming when it wouldn't be important any more if you went to the mountain or the temple – that you'd be able to worship the *Father* in spirit and in truth *anywhere*. That the same Lord could unite everyone.

And then he said that Lord was *him*. He said he was *Messiah*. And I knew he was right. I knew it was true! Because I could feel the lightness inside.

I was an outsider no longer. Now I was gathered up and welcomed in and filled up to overflowing. And I couldn't help but brim over and pour out until I became worshipper and messenger too. For I had to tell everyone.

I brought them all here. To the well. And to *him*. The living water that never runs out. The one we had *all* been waiting for.

I looked people in the eye who had shunned me; I invited those who had intimidated, judged and excluded me. I spoke up without fear to those who had lied and whispered behind my back. How? The divisions and barriers seemed only like faint scars now – the people I brought were the ones that had hurt me but the old heavy pain was feather light next to the hugeness of his promised life to all of us. What was more appealing? Holding on to my heavy buckets of emptiness? Or dropping them and running, shouting – dancing even – till everyone came back with me and experienced their fill from *this well; this water; this Lord?*

I wanted to bring you all here too. So you'd understand. Because it's here that everything changes.

Here – at the well – we can remember the hugeness of who unites us. Jesus Christ – our same life-giving Lord.

Here – at the well – we can leave behind our outsider selves and our excluder selves and simply come. We can *all* come to our same life-giving Lord.

Here – at the well – we can admit we are tired and thirsty and drink deeply from the same forgiveness and freedom he offers to us all.

Here – at the well – we can all know again that in Christ – we are all 'insiders', 'worshippers' and 'messengers'.

Here – at the well – we can resolve to leave behind our hurt, emptiness and judgement and go out together – full of him.

Here – at the well – we can tell our stories and listen and find new ways to run, shout and dance through our actual and virtual streets together until everyone in our community finds him and drinks their fill from *this well; this water; this Lord*.

So will you come join me here? Will you come to the well?

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