

Our hero

Gillian Cooper *reflects on* 1 Samuel 17:[1a 4-11. 19-23] 32-49

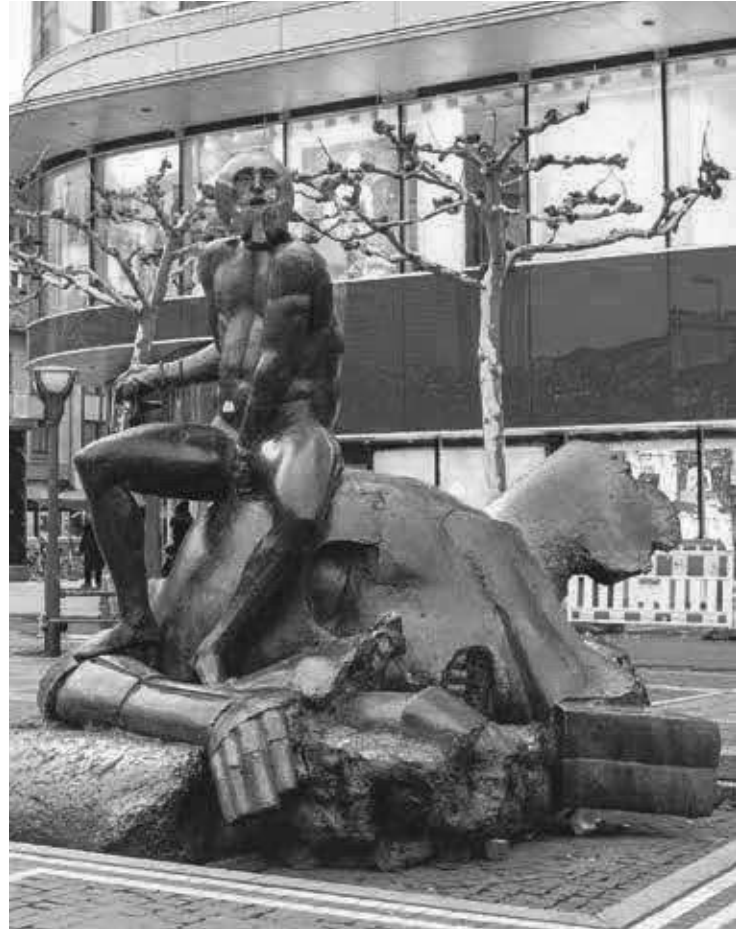
“David and Goliath”. We hear the familiar phrase and we know that a little person has taken on someone rich and powerful and won the day. We can picture the shepherd boy with his stone and sling, bravely facing the huge warrior in all his armour with his vast spear at the ready.

We have met this boy before in the Old Testament story, twice. We have witnessed him being chosen in secret ultimately to replace King Saul, who now cowers in his tent before the Philistine threat. And we have met him as the court musician, playing to soothe the king. We know he has a heart that pleases God. We know he is handsome and talented. Now we see him in a different situation. This boy also has courage, and faith.

Poor Saul. He has tried so hard to measure up as king, and he has failed. His successor is everything he is not – talented, brave and blessed. It is only a matter of time. Our hero takes his stance in the name of the God of Israel, and throws his stone. As Goliath hits the ground, Saul’s reign is effectively over. Even Saul’s own son Jonathan has fallen for David’s charms.

Saul cowers, but David stands up in the face of the threat on behalf of his people, with faith in victory but knowing the cost of defeat. His descendant will stand against an even greater enemy, and will emerge the victor by a harder and darker way. ☹️

Turn our hearts, O Lord, to you, and give us faithfulness and courage, that we may discern your will and defend your truth, and know your blessing in our lives now and in all eternity. Amen.



David and Goliath by Richard Hess, Frankfurt, Germany

The General Synod

Part 4 – What does General Synod do?

by Becky Mynett

There are four types of business on the General Synod agenda:

- *Presentations* are updates on the work of various Church bodies. They are followed by questions but no debate.
- *Debates* on motions might concern Church issues or those facing society in general. Recent examples are “Living in Love and Faith”, Climate Action and Racial Equality. Motions are prepared calling on Church institutions (or sometimes the government) to do something. This is debated and sometimes amended before the vote. Voting is either by show

of hands (for uncontroversial topics) or using electronic devices.

- *Legislative debates* are required for changes to Church law. Legislation is prepared and revised in committees and comes to Synod several times before final approval.
- *Question time* is an opportunity to get information from national Church institutions, boards and bodies. Initial questions are submitted and answered in writing; during question time, members ask supplementary questions in light of the answer given. There are usually a lot of questions! ☹️

Finding God on the smallholding

by Jeni Parsons

Hatching chicks and ducklings using an incubator sounds the simple method but it really isn’t. I’d be much happier putting eggs under a broody hen, letting her sit for three weeks for chicks or four weeks for ducklings and then have her rear them. Hens are amazing at hatching,

teaching the young what to eat, keeping them warm and dry, and protecting them from anyone who even looks in their direction. So why don’t I do this? Well, hens go broody when it suits them and in places that aren’t always suitable and then refuse to be moved to a better, safer spot. They know what they want and will put up with nothing less.

When Jesus compares himself to a mother hen he chooses a feisty tough image! So I’m left hatching eggs in an incubator, which is less successful than the real thing but is more manageable. ☹️

“David was the last one we would have chosen to fight the giant, but he was chosen of God.”

Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899), American evangelist and publisher