

Contemporary Reading: *On Hope* by Walter Brueggemann

Hope in gospel faith is not just a vague feeling that things will work out,

for it is evident that things will not just work out.

Rather, hope is the conviction, against a great deal of data,

that God is tenacious and persistent in overcoming the deathliness of the world,

that God intends joy and peace.

Christians find compelling evidence, in the story of Jesus,

that Jesus, with great persistence and great vulnerability,

everywhere he went, turned the enmity of society toward a new possibility,

turned the sadness of the world toward joy,

introduced a new regime where the dead are raised,

the lost are found, and the displaced are brought home again.

For hope and love in contemporary expression

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: A reading from the Gospel of Luke 1:39-45

Within a few days Mary set out and hurried to the hill country to a town of Judah, where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth.

As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why am I so favoured, that the mother of the Messiah should come to me? The moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who believed that what our God said to her would be accomplished!"

For the word of God birthed among us

Thanks be to God.