

“Quite a turn of Events”

Isaiah 61:1-2, Luke 1:46-55  
Samuel 2:1-10

[This sermon is short. It is short because the scripture itself is the sermon. The scripture was read and sung twice. ]

Before we begin we note that Mary’s Song is not the first time we have heard this song of devotion, delight and God’s love of the lowly and bringing change to the world. Mary’s song is a very close refrain of Hannah’s song (1 Samuel 2:1-10)

We turn to Mary’s Song at a particularly provocative time. Arab Spring, Russian Winter, and the Occupy movement all raise questions of the rich and the poor, the tyrants and the powerful. In this equation there is no question on whose side God leans. God loves the lowly. “The weak are lifted from the dust. The poor are raised from the ash heap to wit with princes!” (Hannah’s song) But Hannah’s song then states the paradigm for Advent: “For God is a God who knows; God evaluates what people do.” WE ARE MEASURED. WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE.

If you are looking for an example of the way the high and mighty are “scattered in the imagination of their heart”, look at the story of the fellow in Texas with his \$1,000,000.00 Lamborghini who drove it into the bay when he was startled by a pelican. God bless you pelican!

We have choices. We can be entranced by Las Vegas or we can be concerned that half the world has to walk a mile to get potable water. We can be enthralled by “runway style”, or thrilled that orphans in Romania get clothes.

This week clergy in Amelia met to discuss the plight of the homeless. [On any given night 100 people are homeless in our county (at least). We have shelter for 47. Last year, Saul’s Shelter housed 484 people but turned away 800.] The homeless man who addressed the clergy spoke of being spit upon, and being called a drunk and drug addict by people who project their fears onto the powerless. We have a choice of how we understand and how we respond to the needy and the powerless.

While retailers chant their Christmas refrain of “buy, buy and buy, you’ll be happy, sale sale!” (it works very roughly to the tune “Joy to the World”) Mary and Hannah present us with God’s question of what is important. And God’s answer: your neighbor is important. (As John the Baptist said last week – If you have two coats and your neighbor has none – give him one, and the same for food!)

God’s turning things around presents us with questions and answers which are nothing less than the question of our faith and how we will live faithfully! May you be blessed by their songs in this season.

**My soul cries out  
with a joyful shout  
that the God of my heart  
is great.**

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

**Though I am small,  
my God, my all,**

**you work great things in me.**

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

**Let the King be ware**

**for your justice tears**

**every tyrant from his throne.**

**The hungry poor shall weep no more**

**for the food they can never earn;**

**there are tables spread,**

**every mouth be fed**

**for the world is about to turn.**

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn .

“Canticle of the Turning” by Rory Cooney

Copyright 1990 by GIA

CCLI LICENSE