

SONGS OF EARTH

The Rev. Geoff Parker to Foreside Community Church - Falmouth, ME

Friday, December 20, 2019

Scripture: [Luke 1:46–55](#)

Through Advent this year, we have been talking about how we might reflect on the story of Jesus's birth... and thus how what we have called "the with a capital 't'" incarnation, might help us learn about incarnation in general... what that might mean that God has come to dwell in and with everything.

When it comes to incarnation, we cannot help but end with singing... because it's in singing that take in the breath of creation, and sustain our bodies, and through breath and body exhale something that might be as close as we can get to Spirit.

In our traditions, we have called this response of Mary a song... magnificat.

Told that she will be the bearer of God, Mary breathes in, and breathes out this song of transformation.

Richard Rohr says in, *The Universal Christ*:

Every time you take in a breath, you are repeating the pattern of taking spirit into matter, and thus repeating the first creation of Adam. And every time you breathe out, you are repeating the pattern of returning spirit to the material universe. ^[1]

How much more might we be changing the world around us when that exhale of spirit is a song?

"Change is compromise..."

"The life Christ gave us is all change."

It is *all* change.

It's what breathing is, what singing therefore must be:

The angel comes to tell Mary that God will come to dwell in her and through her God will come to dwell in each of us and all of us in Christ... she takes all that news in... in her something imperceptible changes to a yes... and she exhales this...

It is a metabolism of good news of God into new life... and hence, new song, through her very being and body.

This is a season of traditions... we sing songs like joy to the world to remind us of our connections to generations before who have sung and celebrated. but we also sing these songs because the very notes and words of them change us and the world around us even as we change air to breath to sound.

Mary sings to remind us that her (and our) response to the good news of God's incarnation is supposed to be bodily... full of breath, and a beating heart or two, full of the reality... like Mary, that following the way of God to the reality of Jesus will mean transformation, mean change... We should believe it from Mary, who literally made room within herself, her life, her breath to host the coming of Jesus.

Even more, her song reminds us that we share the divine spark and good news with all that breathes, and all who sing... and that the coming of God's song will call in the voices of those who have been so often told that they should have no voice... that music and spirit in all its joy and richness is not for them. The Magnificat asks us to imagine the world upside down, so that we might finally see it as God sees it:

An invitation to know love here, now, and then be carried beyond ourselves, until all creation finds its harmony.

So you: right now. Breathe in. Breath out. Don't ever be afraid to sing. How else will we change this world?

1. Rohr, Richard. The Universal Christ (p. 99). The Crown Publishing Group. Kindle Edition. [↩](#)