

Dear People of God: I have been thinking a lot about hope. I have spent a great deal of time with Paul's letter to the Romans and have been reassured there by "hope does not disappoint". In that letter we learn from the epistle writer that hope is kindled by character which comes from endurance which comes from suffering. God knows we have moved backward and forward through that sequence too many times over the last few weeks!

Hope is also found in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the prophets, albeit in less lovely language but no less creatively?! And so I have been wondering a lot about the hope in exile, the hope in famine, the hope in floods? This morning in my Lenten meditation from Brueggemann some interesting ideas on hope were offered:

Hope might come from memory!

That makes some sense to me in these dark times. I have noticed we cull our memories for better times; we cull our photograph drawers for signs of love and beauty. We are buoyed by smiles and cakes and family laughter. We are en-lightened by oceans and rivers and lakes and mountains as well as by fires and living rooms and backyard grills. We remember gatherings. And for me, yesterday as I sat in the incredible light of Christ Church colored by the windows and the wood and vestments and the flowers I remembered salvation history. I remembered Christ came and healed and taught and suffered and died and Rose. I remembered or was reminded that Christ will come again...is coming again! Memories carry us from the past into the present and help us reconstitute the future, at least how we respond to it! We are transported really!

Just as we are in our suspended Eucharistic prayers!

The power of the memory of the content of the prayers does not go away! Communion continues...in new re-remembered ways!

As Brueggemann says: "The alternative (to fearfulness and destruction) is an act of imagination seeded by memory, uttered by the poet that draws the health-giving memory into the present, so that the present is radically reconstituted....The poet stakes a claim against such present reality. This act of imagination subverts our status quo and invites us to an alternative."

May memory fuel and inspire our prayers this day and everyday. May it transport us to new realities and especially to renewed communion and compassion. "May faithful remembering lead to compassionate reimagining." Rest in hope. Amen

Rev. Dr. Martha Tucker

"And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and walk humbly with your God"

--Micah 6:8

"We seldom notice how each day is a holy place Where the eucharist of the ordinary happens, Transforming our broken fragments Into an eternal continuity that keeps us."

— John O'Donohue, To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Invocations and Blessings

I would love to live like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding.

— John O'Donohue