

ADVENT WEEK ONE

December 5, 2019

Hope in the Imagining

Psalm 72:1-7; 18-19

Give the king your justice, O God... May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor. Psalm 72:1a, 4

As I read this psalm, I think of how often I fall short of expectations I set for myself. Like the psalmist, I possess what some may call lofty ideals. I feel the challenge to avoid complacency within an unjust system while being reminded of a faith tradition bigger than myself and a force mightier than any institution.

This psalm is more than a prayer for one time and place. It challenges and inspires communities of faith to continue the vision described in their actions and imagining. As it names possibilities and responsibilities that accompany power, the psalm reflects an understanding of the Divine that cares for the needy and oppressed. It describes a type of power that values and empowers those in one's care.

Our ability to imagine enables us to be co-creators with the Divine—the Spirit of Life not bound to what those in power say must be, but the Spirit of Life that inspires unconditional compassion, improbable peace, and radical love.

Perhaps hope can be found in the expression of these ideals, not in whether their communities of origin experienced them or whether they reflect our current reality. Hope stirs in the very existence of these words and endures, despite the lineage of tyrants and injustices.

We come from an ancient line of brave souls who refused to accept an oppressive and damaging status quo. While one may take in a deep breath with the magnitude of the work that remains, the ability to breathe itself means we are not done yet and capable of more.

Hope persists in the prayers of those who came before and dwells within the gift of being co-creators with the Source that does wondrous things. May we keep such hope alive, Dear Ones. May we continue to imagine and create.

Alexis Engelbrecht

Master of Divinity Student, Student Senate Member, Persistent Imaginer