



**An Invitation to Hope**  
**Songs & Stories for the Weary, Wary, & Waiting**

December 17, 2023  
 -Pastor Cheryl-

**Luke 1:46-55 (NIV) Mary's Song**

<sup>46</sup> And Mary said:  
 "My soul glorifies the Lord  
<sup>47</sup> and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup> for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.  
 From now on all generations will call me blessed,  
<sup>49</sup> for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.  
<sup>50</sup> His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to  
 generation.  
<sup>51</sup> He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;  
 he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts  
<sup>52</sup> He has brought down rulers from their thrones  
 but has lifted up the humble.  
<sup>53</sup> He has filled the hungry with good things  
 but has sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

<sup>55</sup> to Abraham and his descendants forever,  
 just as he promised our ancestors."

**Luke 1:67-80 (NIV) Zechariah's Song**

<sup>67</sup> His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:  
<sup>68</sup> "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,  
 because he has come to his people and redeemed them.  
<sup>69</sup> He has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
 in the house of his servant David  
<sup>70</sup> (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),  
<sup>71</sup> salvation from our enemies  
 and from the hand of all who hate us—  
<sup>72</sup> to show mercy to our ancestors  
 and to remember his holy covenant,  
<sup>73</sup> the oath he swore to our father Abraham:  
<sup>74</sup> to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,  
 and to enable us to serve him without fear  
<sup>75</sup> in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.  
<sup>76</sup> And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;  
 for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,  
<sup>77</sup> to give his people the knowledge of salvation  
 through the forgiveness of their sins,  
<sup>78</sup> because of the tender mercy of our God,  
 by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven  
<sup>79</sup> to shine on those living in darkness  
 and in the shadow of death,  
 to guide our feet into the path of peace."  
<sup>80</sup> And the child grew and became strong in spirit<sup>[b]</sup>; and he lived in the  
 wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel.

**We're invited to respond with HOPE to:**

1. God's \_\_\_\_\_
2. God's \_\_\_\_\_
3. God's \_\_\_\_\_

Reflection questions:

1. Recall a memory when a song or storytelling was part of a meaningful event (funeral, baptism, birthday, routine part of day, etc.) that gave you/others hope? How did you see God working in your thought, actions, or attitudes?
2. You could say Mary's song, the *Magnificat*, addresses injustice, then and now. What particular people, places, causes, or circumstances are captive to injustice, that you know of? What comes to mind as you read Mary's song of hope?
3. What are carrying now that causes you to be weary, wary, or waiting? What brings you a "thrill of hope" during this Advent season? Write your own song/poem/story of hope as you wait on God for answers.