

Fourth Sunday of Advent

“Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.”

People Look East, vs. 4 by Eleanor Farjeon

“And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.’ -Luke 1:46-49

From Bethlehem came a blessing for the entire world... Mary and Joseph were offered a cave as a place to stay. Jesus came into the world in a time and a place where people needed a new hope and a new love. Mary was chosen to bare such a hope and love for all the world. Today, we still need hope and love, walking with Palestinian Christians in this land has taught me of steadfast hope. In Bethlehem today by the separation wall near checkpoint 300 is an icon of a pregnant Mary, over the years, thousands of Christians have joined on Fridays to walk along the wall and pray. How do we remember Mary? Perhaps we can remember her obedience and imagination as she walked in humbleness. As we prepare for the Holy One, let us take a moment to show hope and love in the world where there is much division.

As we light the candle of love, let us pray, for the Christian communities of Bethlehem and in the world who continue to live in places of division, may we open our eyes to reality in the world and learn to love beyond our imagination. Amen.

Rev. Kristen L. Brown
GBGM Methodist Liaison
In Palestine and Israel