

NE MN Synod Lay Leader Network
Year Three Annual Gathering: Dwelling in the Word
February 26, 2022

Introduction: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me . . . to bring good news”

Luke 4:16-30 articulates an “arc of transcendence”

Carried by Word and Holy Spirit

Reaching from Isaiah 61/58

To Jesus (Luke 4:16-30)

From Jesus to all people (Luke 24)

From all people to us

From us to all people

Content of the transcendence: the good news

Hermeneutics: the science of interpretation

1. Comparative midrash: how a text passes the “immense barrier” from a 1st telling to a 2nd telling (identity/lifestyle)
 - a. Discern meaning in original setting (Isaiah)
 - b. How is that meaning expressed in 2nd setting? (Luke)
 - c. How does that meaning come to us today?

2. *Lectio Divina* (read / meditate / pray / live)

Complexity of “meaning” emerges

In context

In syntax

In words

Luke 4:16-30: Setting of Luke

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. [Isaiah 61:1]

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free, [Isaiah 58:6]

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” [Isaiah 61:2]

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” ²³ He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’ “ ²⁴ And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown. ²⁵ But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶ yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷ There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” ²⁸ When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰ But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way. (NRSV)

Isaiah 61:1-4: Setting of 3 Isaiah

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;

² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

³ to provide for those who mourn in Zion-- to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

⁴ They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

Isaiah 58:1-14: Setting of 3 Isaiah

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins.

² Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God.

³ "Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?"

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers.

⁴ Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high.

⁵ Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast, a day **acceptable** to the LORD?

⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke,

to let the **oppressed** go free, and to break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,

then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.

¹¹ The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places,

and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail.

¹² Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

¹³ If you refrain from trampling the sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day;

if you call the sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable;

if you honor it, not going your own ways, serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs;

¹⁴ then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth;

I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Context: Alpha (1-2) and Omega (24) of Luke

Luke 2:9-11

2:9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

I am bringing you good news
Great joy
All the people
Savior
Christ

Luke 24:44-49

24:44 Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you-- that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled."⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures,⁴⁶ and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day,⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Christ
Suffer
Rise
Repentance/forgiveness of sins proclaimed to all nation

Elements of Transcendence: Word and Spirit

"Word" in Luke

Citations from Isaiah

Luke 3:2-6 (Isaiah 40:3-5)

3:2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'⁵ Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth;⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

Luke 4:18-19 (Isaiah 61: 1-2; 58:6)

4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free,¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke

1.54-55	He has helped his servant Israel . . . according to the promise he made to our ancestors (Mary)
1.70	as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets (Zechariah)
1.72	he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors; and remembered his holy covenant (Zechariah)
2.30-32	your salvation, prepared in the presence of all peoples, light to Gentiles, glory to Israel (Simeon)
3.3	as written in book of words of prophet Isaiah: all flesh shall see salvation of God
3.22	voice from heaven: Son (Ps 110), beloved (Gen 22), well pleased (Is 42)
4.4	It is written, one does not live by bread alone (Dt 8.3)
4.8	Worship the Lord your God, serve only him (Dt 6.13)
4.12	Do not put Lord your God to the test (Dt 6.16)
6.47, 49	hears my words and does/does not do them
8.11-15	Soils: hear and bear fruit (or not)
9.35	Voice: This is my Son, my Chosen, listen to him
10.27-28	Eternal life: love Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbor
10:39	Mary chose better part: sat at Lord's feet and listened
24.6	Remember how he told you
24.8	They remembered his words
24.32	our hearts were burning while he was opening the scriptures to us
24.44	Everything written about me in law, prophets and psalms must be fulfilled
24.45	then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures
24.46-47	Christ is to suffer, rise repentance and forgiveness proclaimed to all nations

Summary: Word in Luke

Fulfilled
Listen and do
Remember
Understand
Proclaim

Transcendence: Spirit

Lk 4.18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me

Spirit (*pneuma*) in Luke (106x!)

- 1.35 HS will come upon you
- 1.41 Elizabeth filled with
- 1.67 Zechariah filled with
- 2.25 HS upon Simeon
- 2.26 revealed to Simeon by HS
- 2.27 Simeon moved by HS
- 3.16 He (Jesus) will baptize you with HS
- 3.22 HS descended upon Jesus in his baptism
- 4.1 Jesus, full of the HS, returned
- 4:1 Jesus, led by HS in wilderness
- 4.18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me

24.49 Stay until clothed with power

Acts

- 1.8 You will receive power when the HS has come upon you
- 2.4 All of them were filled with HS
- 2.17 In the last days I will pour out my Spirit (Joel 3)
- 6.5 Stephen, full of HS
- 7.51 Like your fathers, you resist the HS
- 10.19 HS said to Peter
- 10.38 told how God anointed Jesus with HS
- 10.44 HS came upon all who heard
- 10.45 the gift of the HS has been poured out even on Gentiles
- 10.47 Who can withhold water? They have received HS just as we did
- 11.12 HS told me to have no hesitation about going with them
- 11.15 HS came upon them just as on us
- 11.16 I remembered: You will be baptized with the HS
- 13.2 While worshiping and fasting, HS said, set apart Barnabas and Saul
- 13.4 sent by HS, they went

Spirit in Isaiah (*ruach*)

- Is 42.1 I have put my spirit upon him (1st Servant Song)
- 44.3 I will pour my spirit on your descendants
- 61.1 The spirit of the Lord is upon me . . .

Lk 4.18 He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor

Anointed (*chrío*) root verb of *Christos*: anointed one

- 2.11 born to you a savior, X.
- 9.22 who do you say that I am? X. (definition follows!)
- 23.35 let him save himself if he is the X.
- 23.39 insults: if you are X., save yourself and us
- 24.26 X. had to suffer, then enter glory
- 2446 X. will suffer, rise, be proclaimed

Bring good news (*euaggelizo*)

- 2:10 angel to shepherds “I bring you good news . . .”
- 3:18 John “proclaimed good news” to the people
- 4:18 Jesus eu. to the poor
- 4:43 I must eu. to other cities
- 7:22! Go tell John, the blind, lame, lepers, deaf, dead, and poor are eu.
- 16:16 good news of the kingdom is eu.
- Luke describes action, recipients, content of the proclamation!
- What is “good news” for the poor? Fruit of repentance: a dynamic process begun with repentance

Isaiah “bear tidings” (*basar*)

BDB Hebrew Lexicon “to herald as glad tidings the salvation of God (chiefly exilic usage); to preach the advent of YHWH in salvation”

(Root of NT “gospel, evangel”)

- 40.9 Zion, herald of good tidings . . .
- 40.9 Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, say to the cities of Judah, “Here is your God!” (return from exile!)
- 52.7 How beautiful the feet of one who brings good news
- 52.7 who announces salvation “Your God reigns!”
- 60.7 the one who proclaims the praises of YHWH
- 61.1!!

Note also:

Ps 40.9 I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation (context of “new song”)

Ps 96.2 New song: I tell of his salvation from day to day

“to the poor” (*ptochos* = not self-sufficient)

4:18 Jesus proclaims good news to

6:20 blessed are you p.

7:22 the one who is to come: good news to the p.

14:13 invite the p.

14:21 bring the p.

16:20 blind p. man named Lazarus lying at gate of rich man

16:22 died

18:22 eternal life: sell all and give to the p.

19:8 Zaccheus: I give half to the p.

21:3 p. widow put in more (her *bios*)

LK 4:18 He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind

Proclaim (*kerusso*)

3.3 John: proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins

4.18 Jesus sent to proclaim release

4.19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor

24.47 repentance/forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in his name to all nations

Release (*aphesis*: lifting)

1.77 knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of sins (Zechariah to John)

3.3 word came to John, went proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins

4.18 He has sent me to proclaim release

4.18 to release the oppressed

24.47 repentance/forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in his name to all nations

Blind (*tuphlos*)

- 4:18 proclaim recovery of sight to the b.
- 7:21,22 b. receive sight
- 14:13 Invite b. to banquet
- 14:21 bring in
- 18:35 b. man sitting, begging

Lk 4.18 to let the oppressed go free (release the oppressed)

Isaiah 58.6 Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the **oppressed** go free,
and to break every yoke?

Lk 4.19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor

"To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor"

Leviticus 25: Year of Jubilee

Day of Atonement in year 49 hallows year 50

"rest" for the land

Release from debt slavery

Theological economics: LORD is owner

Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40-66*, p. 214

"There is no doubt that a vision of jubilee -- that is, a profound hope for the disadvantaged -- is shockingly devastating to those who value and benefit from the status quo. Sharon Ringe . . . has forcefully suggested that this announcement is a clue and signal for the entire ministry of Jesus, a radical undertaking of the reordering of human community."

"Acceptable" (*dektos*)

- Lk 4:19 Jesus proclaims acceptable year
- Lk 4:24 no prophet is acceptable in the prophet's hometown
- Ac 10:35 in every nation anyone who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to God

Acts 10:34-48

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows **no partiality**,³⁵ but in **every nation** anyone who fears him and does what is right is **acceptable** to him.³⁶ You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ-- he is Lord of all.³⁷ That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced:³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.³⁹ We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree;⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear,⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead.⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that **everyone** who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking, the **Holy Spirit** fell upon all who heard the word.⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that **the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles**,⁴⁶ for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said,⁴⁷ "**Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?**"⁴⁸ So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

"Acceptable" (Hebrew: *ratzon*, from verb *ratza*, "be pleased with, accept")

Isaiah

- 40.2 Comfort my people, speak tenderly to Jerusalem, cry to her that her iniquity is *pardoned*
- 42.1 Here is my servant, my chosen in whom my soul *delights* (1st Servant Song)
- 49.8 in a time of *favor* I have answered you (following 2nd Servant Song)
- 56.6-8 Foreigners . . . who keep the sabbath . . . I will bring to my holy mountain
Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be *accepted* on my altar;
For my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples
- 58.5 Will you call this fast a day *acceptable* to the LORD? (serve your own interest/oppress your workers)
- No! The fast I choose:
- Loose bonds of injustice
 - Let oppressed go free
 - Break every yoke
 - Share your bread with the hungry
 - Bring homeless poor into your house
 - Cover the naked
- Then your light shall break forth
The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard
You shall call, the LORD will answer, Here I am

- 60.7 Arabian flocks and rams shall be *acceptable* on my altar
60.10 In my *favor* I have had mercy on you
61.2 To proclaim the *acceptable* year of the LORD

Micah

6.6-8

With what shall I come before the LORD?
Will the LORD *be pleased* with thousands of rams?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgressions?
He has told you what is good; what does the LORD require of you, but to
Do justice
Love kindness
Walk humbly with your God

Psalms

- 85.2 You *were favorable* to your land
Restore us again
Surely his salvation is at hand
Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

Babette's Feast!

- 51.16 You have no delight in sacrifice;
If I were to give a burnt offering, you would not *be pleased*
51.17 The sacrifice *acceptable* to God is a spirit of brokenness (*sabar*);
a broken (*sabar*) and contrite heart you will not despise.

Conclusion and beginning of heart creation:

You are the man!
I have sinned
Have mercy
Create in me a clean heart
Then I will teach
Open my lips

Isaiah 61.1: Spirit of LORD is upon me . . . to bring good news . . . to bind up *brokenhearted*

Lk 4.24 No prophet is *accepted* in the prophet's *hometown*.

Many widows *in Israel* Elijah sent to widow at Zarephath (1 Kings 17)

Many lepers *in Israel* Elisha cleansed Naaman the Syrian (2 Kings 5)

Patris loyalty!

From “amazed at words of grace” to “filled with rage!”

James Sanders, “Isaiah in Luke,” in *Luke and Scripture*, 1993.

- p. 21 “The central concept of Jubilee was periodic release or liberty: letting the land periodically lie fallow, releasing debts, freeing slaves, and repatriating property. . . . The matter of greatest interest to the congregation in Nazareth who heard Jesus read the Isaiah passage was release from the burden of Roman oppression.”
- p. 22 “They would have identified, in their turn, with the poor (for they were poor), the captives (for they felt themselves to be captive to the Romans), the blind (for they felt like dungeon inmates who were blind), and the oppressed (for they surely were oppressed). They had every right to feel that the blessings of Jubilee would devolve on them when the eschaton arrived, and when Messiah, or Elijah, the herald of the eschaton, came.”
- p. 24 “The freedom of the God of grace is perhaps the most difficult concept for any generation of believers to grasp. Jesus interpreted Scripture (Isaiah 61) by Scripture (1 Kings 17 and 2 Kings 5) using the hermeneutic of the freedom of the God of grace – free even at the eschaton, in the great Jubilee, to bestow the blessings of Isaiah 61 on other than those who felt they were elect.”
- p. 24 “If in reading Luke 4 one identifies with the congregation, one can move with them from the feeling of hope and elation, after Jesus had read the Isaianic passage, to the feeling of intense anger which they understandably would feel at hearing the favorite passage (something like John 3:16 for Christians) interpreted in such a way as to indicate that at the eschaton, when the curtain of ultimate truth was lifted, God might freely bestow favors and blessings on folk outside the in-group of true believers.”
“The real prophetic offense in Jesus’ sermon was theological: it was serious and ultimate. Jesus told the congregation that God was not Jewish. This was comparable to a preacher saying that God is not Christian. Of course God is not Muslim, Buddhist, Communist, or any other faith. . . . Whenever we feel we have a corner on truth or a commanding grip on reality, then, if we are fortunate, a prophet will appear to shock us into realizing that God is God. It is not that God is not our Redeemer. Thank God, God is! But God is also the Creator of all peoples. God is both committed in promises and free to surprise and even re-create us. God is free to bestow grace anywhere. Grace is a form of divine injustice – undeserved when God first bestowed it on Israel, and undeserved when God bestows it on Phoenecian widows and Syrian lepers.”
- p. 25 “Luke’s Jesus brings Isaiah forward to the first-century, and to the twentieth century.” (Twenty-first century also!)

Isaiah 49:1-6 (2nd Servant Song)

1 Listen to me, O coastlands, pay attention, you peoples from far away!
The LORD called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me.
2 He made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me;
he made me a polished arrow, in his quiver he hid me away.
3 And he said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified."
4 But I said, "I have labored in vain,
I have spent my strength for nothing and vanity;
yet surely my cause is with the LORD, and my reward with my God."

5 And now the LORD says, who formed me in the womb to be his servant,
to bring Jacob back to him, and that Israel might be gathered to him,
for I am honored in the sight of the LORD,
and my God has become my strength—
6 he says, "It is too light a thing that you should be my servant
to raise up the tribes of Jacob
and to restore the survivors of Israel;
I will give you as a light to the nations,
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

James Sanders, "Isaiah in Luke," in *Luke and Scripture*, 1993.

p. 20 "Isaiah 49:6, which is explicitly cited in Acts 13:47 and is reflected in Luke 1:79 and 24:47 as well as in Acts 1:8 and 26:20, apparently influenced the shape of Luke's entire work."

Summary

Use the terms of the Isaiah / Luke / NE MN “arc of transcendence” to answer Brueggemann’s question: Is there a good-news answer to the pervasive ideology of our culture? How is it being lived out in your community of faith?

Walter Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40-66*, 1998.

p. 14 *Yahweh – Babylon – Judah* hermeneutical expressions

Yahweh	God
Judah	Contemporary community of faith
Babylon	?

“The term *Babylon* has become a code word for any rapacious social system. . . . I suggest a powerful – though not precise – equivalence of Babylon in the ideology of *free-market consumerism* and its required ally, *unbridled militarism*. I refer not to particular players, parties, or leaders, but to the unexamined, dominant ideology that encompasses everyone, liberal and conservative, and that sets the limits of what is possible and what is good, what is to be feared and what is to be trusted.

There is no doubt that this powerful ideology is such that it robs the human community of its humanness and reduces all of life to commodity. The gospel question in our time, as it was for those ancient exiles, is whether there is or can be life outside the ideology and whether there is a good-news offer of such an option. The announcement of life emancipated from the endless demands of this ideology is indeed gospel news that the ultimate claims of the ideology are not credible and have been nullified. It is not easy to speak or hear or trust such a gospel, because the ideology is seemingly all pervasive. But it was not easy when this gospel of life beyond rapacious ideology was uttered in that ancient sixth century.”