Make Room

for Hope

John 1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1

² He was with God in the beginning.

John 1

³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

John 1

4 In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.

John 1

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

John 1

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John.

John 1

7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe.

John 1

8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

John 1

⁹ The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

John 1

10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

John 1

11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

John 1

12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God —

John 1

— **13** children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

John 1

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Advent begins in darkness

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"Darkness—night—these are always symbols for the God-forsakenness of the world . . . and for the lostness of men and women. In the darkness we see nothing, and no longer know where we are."

- Jurgen Moltmann

Isaiah 9

2 The people walking in darkness
  have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
  a light has dawned.

What is hope?

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- Hope exists in the temporal gap between now and then
- Christian hope is ultimately anchored to
  - the faithfulness of God
  - the promised return of Christ.

"In the meantime, which is the only time the church has ever known, we live as those who know something about the fate of the world that the world does not yet know."

• Will Willimon *Conversation in the Wesleyan Tradition*

What is hope?

- Hope exists in a temporal gap between now and then
- Hope involves a longing for a deficit to be met

What is hope?

- Hope is a (theological) virtue

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  - Mean between two vices
    - Presumption and despair

What is hope?

- Hope is an act of the will that produces a frame of mind.
  - One chooses to be hopeful

"Though we can't change the external conditions that limit, oppress, or frighten us, we can choose our response. This ability to choose is how we respond to whatever life throws our way is the basis of our freedom."
- Edith Eger

"Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances. . . " – Victor Frankl

"The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason for hope."

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Pandemic Despair

According to the CDC in June of 2020

- 41% of adults experienced symptoms of anxiety, depression, trauma, stress, or substance abuse.

- Over 25% of 18-24 year-olds contemplated suicide.

The Need for Hope is Enormous

How do we make room for hope?

- Pray

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- Pray
- Commit to doing the work. (make)

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- Commit to doing the work. (make)
- Create Space

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- Commit to doing the work. (make)
- Create Space
  - Get a sweater, give a sweater

How do we make room for hope?

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- Commit to doing the work. (make)
- Create Space
  - Get a sweater, give a sweater
  - Remove distractors to hope

How do we make room for hope?

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  - Get a sweater, give a sweater
  - Remove distractors to hope
  - Pick 1 thing to give up this week to make room for more hope.

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- Create Space
- Prayerfully consider 1 act of defiance

How do we make room for hope?

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- Prayerfully consider 1 act of defiance
  - What is 1 act of internal defiance that you can do to resist the many ways that the you are invited to dispair?

How do we make room for hope?

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- Prayerfully consider 1 act of defiance
- Do not hope for anything

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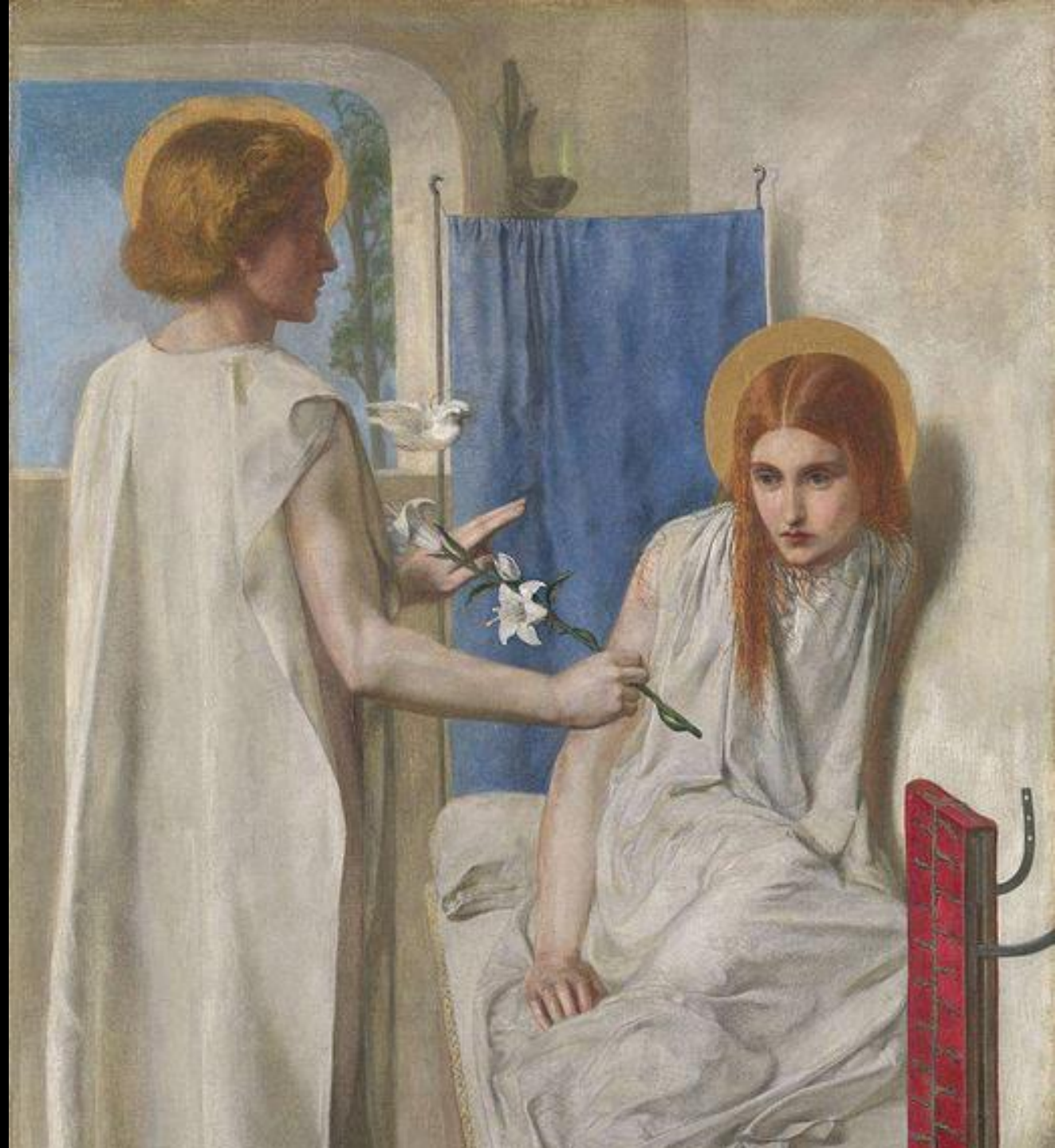- Do not hope for any thing
  - Rather put your hope IN Christ

Real hope arises in the midst of fear.

G.K. Chesterton, *Signs of the Times*

"Hope means hoping when things are hopeless, or it is no virtue at all . . . . As long as matters are really hopeful, hope is mere flattery or platitude; it is only when everything is hopeless that hope begins to be a strength."

W. H. Auden

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Make Room

for Promises Fulfilled