

Luke 1: 46 – 55

'Song of Revolution'

Introduction ...

'I have a dream' - the famous words of the 1963 speech by Martin Luther King ...

Inspiring ... enduring

And this dream of his ... was not how many of us might use the word 'dream'.

His dream incorporated:

vision

expectation

manifesto

revolution

It led to hope – manifested by celebrations, songs, mass protests for change.

Mary's song ...

'I have a dream' ... and Martin Luther King in the final sermon before he was killed quoted the protest song: **We will overcome** – which is a Gospel song with God's justice and love at its centre.

Expectation ... revolution ...

I wonder if you associate those words, those concepts with Mary, the mother of Jesus?

The words of the Magnificat suggest that there can be a real ... almost an automatic link.

Tom Wright in his commentary comments:

The Magnificat is the Gospel before the Gospel – a fierce bright shout of triumph 30 years before Calvary and Easter.

It's all about God

It's all about revolution

And it's all about Jesus

Why did Mary launch into a song like this? What has the news of her son got to do with God's strong action overthrowing the power structures of the world – demolishing the mighty and exalting the humble?

Well – Mary and Elizabeth – whose own baby, John – has just leapt in her womb – Mary and Elizabeth shared **a dream ...** and like Martin Luther King's dream this dream incorporated: vision, expectation, manifesto, revolution ...

This is the ancient dream of Israel – the dream that one day all that the true prophets had said would come true – would be brought about by the Messiah.

The words in the Magnificat are drawn from those prophets ... and later in Luke's Gospel – Jesus confirms that this dream finds its fulfilment in him.

'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.'

Jesus' work ...

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, we know that love is more powerful than hatred, that forgiveness of sin and freedom from sin is possible, that injustice cannot and will not prevail eventually ...

And yet – 1900 years later ... there was still a need for Martin Luther King's dream and speech.

And in our day too, there remains much to be done – in the name of ... and in the power of Christ.

There are still those who are enslaved, abused, bullied, deprived of basic human needs. There are still those who are not regarded as precious, as made in God's image.

There is still work for us to do – in the strength of Christ ... work in prayer, work in support, work in lobbying.

What dream, what vision is God giving to you ... to us as a church ... *(let's remain in silence to listen, reflect, respond)*

Amen.