

Toward Perfect Health

(On Reading Acts 3:1-16)

Walter Brueggemann
Cincinnati, Ohio

You God who raises the dead;
You God who gives life;
You God who heals,
Dear Sir:

Here we are in the waiting room of your presence, hoping for an appointment. We come with our several diseases and disabilities,

diseases of feet and arms and legs and digestive tracks,
disabilities of body and of spirit,
lame in a thousand ways.

Here we sit and wait, with great expectation.

We expect and hope for healing from you,
for transformation,
for forgiveness,
for emancipation.

We expect...because we have heard tales of your healing capacity,
old stories of lepers healed and women with bad backs,
new reports of beggars who ask for alms and receive healing.

Here we are, waiting for you:

But we do not wait alone:

We bring as our companions in suffering,
the folk in this congregation who wait in need and in hope.

We bring as our companions the wretched who wait,
diseased by economic disadvantage,
disabled by political exclusionary power,
immobilized by a thousand slaveries
and a dozen anxieties,

alienated by failures and other open sores.

We bring as our companions the complacent
who discover too late that they have grown numb in indifference,
and cannot move their hands to help,
or their hearts to connect.

We bring as our companions
the nations of the world that are not healed,
the frightened nations armed to their teeth,
the old colonial powers that still want to control oil and markets,
the erstwhile colonies that still lack viability,
and our own nation-state with pathologies of greed and hate and violence.

We are all here before you,
not doubting your capacity,
waiting for your readiness,

open to your prescriptions,
ready immediately to leap and run in health,
to dance and sing in restoration,
to praise to you in our newness.

Dear Doctor: deal with us soon,
bring your best arts of newness,
and make all things new,
even here,
even now,
even for us. Amen.