

## April 1, 2020 Devotion "God In The Messiness"

Jeremiah 29:11-13 New International Version (NIV)

"<sup>11</sup>For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. <sup>12</sup>Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup>You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

Remember Psalm 126:2 from yesterday? I wrote about shared laughter as a Holy Antidote. I mentioned that the Psalm was about the People of God being released from 70 years of captivity in Babylon. Today our scripture is in Jeremiah and it is about the People of God receiving word from God through Jeremiah about what will happen after 70 years; we have gone from laughter to messiness in 1 day! Messiness, my goodness, we are in quite a bit of messiness, aren't we? It's nothing similar to what was happening in Jeremiah's time, however we probably share some of the same feelings that God's People had in captivity; feeling lost because our lives have changed suddenly; fear, we don't know what is going to happen; and living in a state of messiness, and I am not referring to how clean the house is!

Messiness, our lives no matter what our age has messiness in it. Family squabbles over financial concerns, sickness, jobs having conflict and concerns, friends have disagreements, and church is not immune to messiness.

As I read these few verses this morning, I heard certain words loudly beginning with the 10<sup>th</sup> verse which is not part of our reading.

"This is what the LORD says..."

"Plans I have for you"

"Plans to give you **HOPE** and a future"

The messiness of life can send us into a tailspin making things messier. We see it happening today all over the world. ***BUT!*** God has plans for giving us HOPE, actually, our hope has already been given to us; our HOPE is in Jesus Christ, our LORD and Saviour! We can laugh, sing hymns of praise, hymns that speak of hope! "It Is Well With My Soul" comes to mind. I am not trying to be a "Pollyanna", I am being your Pastor. Reminding myself and you that "help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth..." Psalm 121:1

It is ok to lament, a passionate expression of grief or sorrow, it's in the Psalms. Whining may take us to feeling sorry for ourselves; we won't be together for Palm Sunday or Easter. The traditions we hold so close to our hearts, not being together in our sanctuary and sitting in our pews, may cause us to feel sad. The original Palm Sunday was outside! The original Easter morning started at daybreak not 10:00am, and it was outside a tomb! We are still together, we will participate in a wonderful joint Palm Sunday online service with music, with praise to God!

Holy Week is going to happen, and Easter will be celebrated. Regarding the empty pews, forget about them and think about the EMPTY TOMB! Hang in there, “for this is what the LORD says ... For I know the plans I have for you ... plans to give you hope.” And the LORD did just that! He sent Jesus to live, die and rise from the dead and THAT is not the messiness of life, it’s the TRUTH and HOPE we have!

See you soon!

We, who are baptized into Christ, adopted, and now live under God’s rule. Consider how God has welcomed us and loved us all. Live each day proclaiming the good news that everyone is accepted, and we have hope because we will soon celebrate Easter Sunday, the Resurrection of our LORD Jesus! May this hope calm you and bless you and give you peace. Amen

*Pastor Linda*