

## DEVOTIONAL: 4 – 10 February 2024

### *A Future of Hope in Jeremiah 29:11*

Read: Jeremiah 12

Adapted from: [walkingwithpurpose.com/a-future-of-hope-in-jeremiah-2911/](http://walkingwithpurpose.com/a-future-of-hope-in-jeremiah-2911/)

In the midst of uncertainty, when we do not know which path to take; during the seasons of our life when the seas are stormy, and Jesus appears to be sleeping in the boat; in times of darkness, when grief has a stronghold on our heart, there can be the temptation to doubt God's goodness and love. Suffering, it seems, has the power to draw people more fully to God or to make individuals question His very existence.

When we find ourselves in these situations, to what do we turn? In my life, I have often turned to Scripture to be reminded of the truth. In particular, I have returned to the words found in the book of Jeremiah: "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11).

While this verse has been popularized, it remains one of my favorites and anchors me whenever I begin to doubt God's goodness or presence.

Rarely do the plans we devise turn out exactly as we'd envisioned. Yet, here is God promising us that God holds the plans for our life. We no longer need to spend energy worrying about every moment of the future. These plans God has for our life are meant to ensure we have a life full of prosperity and hope.

Does that mean that life will be easy? That we will never face hardship or evil? Or that in the face of suffering, God will immediately swoop in and rescue us?

No. Unfortunately, because of original sin and the brokenness of humanity, pain, and evil will always be part of our story on earth. Jesus, Himself, warned us of this: "In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world" (John 16:33). But it does mean that God's plan for our lives goes beyond the circumstances we find ourselves in because Jesus has conquered sin and death. Though we might not see or comprehend how God will use our cross for good, we know we can trust God because God is a loving Father who always keeps God's promises.

In fact, we can understand this truth more clearly when we look at the context surrounding Jeremiah 29:11. The Israelites had been taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. Amid their hardship, they began listening to the voices of false prophets, who assured the Israelites they would have lives of prosperity and that their time in exile would not last long. Knowing the false prophets' voices were loud and persuasive, God encourages God's people through Jeremiah to stay faithful to God, for God has great plans for their life. Still, God goes on to say that they must remain in this condition of exile for another seventy years, meaning that not every Israelite would live to see the fulfillment of God's promises in their life on earth.

Isn't this relatable? Like the Israelites, we are sojourners journeying toward the promised land of the heavenly Jerusalem. How tempting it can be to listen to the world's false prophets. To listen to the voices that say if only we had \_\_\_\_\_, we would be happy. Or the voices that say to only focus on what makes you happy, to walk away from anything or anyone who doesn't immediately gratify you.

Yet, we know this is not the way of God. Of course, we hope to see the promises of God's plan for us, and our loved ones fulfilled in our time on earth. But even if we do not, we can rest in the hope of the resurrection and the truth that God always brings good out of evil and that He promises us a future of hope. Amen.

### YOU'RE NOT ALONE, LET US PRAY WITH YOU & FOR YOU

- Ms. Dina Roberts, daughter of **Mr. Wallace (Wally) and Mrs. Geraldine (Gerry) Ritterbusch**, prayerfully and hopefully ask that we shower her dad, Mr. Wally, with 100 birthday cards in Celebration of his **100<sup>th</sup> birthday**, (Mr. Wally's Birthday is February 29<sup>th</sup>), **during the week of February 22<sup>nd</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>**. Please mail Birthday and Celebration cards to: **Mr. Wallace (Wally) and Mrs. Geraldine (Gerry) Ritterbusch**, 524 Tamarack Court, West Bend WI 53095.

- **Mr. Gerald Wallace "Jerry" Loebe's** Celebration of Life Service will take place on Friday, February 2nd at Living Hope Presbyterian Church, (Dickson Hollow) W156 N4881 Pilgrim Rd from 10:00 AM until the time of memorial service at 11:00 a.m. In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial in memory of Mr. Jerry to Milwaukee Rescue Mission.
- Losing a beloved sister-in-law is one of life's greatest tragedies. We extend our heartfelt sympathies and love to Mrs. Betty Clement and her brother-in-law, Mr. Donald L. Wachuta for their loss of **Mrs. Pattie C. Wachuta**. Please know that we are always here for you, Ms. Betty, and Mr. Donald during this difficult time. Whatever you need, we're here to help in any way that we can. Gracious God, source of all life, we come before You in somber hearts. We grieve the death of our Ms. Pattien and entrust her soul unto Your divine hands. Give us, O Loving God, strength to accept this loss and remember her life fondly. May our prayers guide her on the journey to Your heavenly kingdom where she may find eternal peace. As written in Psalm 23:1 "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." Be our comfort, blessed Provider, in this time of sorrow. Amen. Cards of condolences can be mailed to: **Mrs. Betty Clement, 6822 Enge Drive, West Bend, WI 53090, and Mr. Donald Wachuta, 7180 N. River Road, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- We extend our condolences to Mrs. MaryLou on the passing of her brother, **Mr. Ralph Gelhar**, on January 20th. Our thoughts prayers and love are showered on Ms. MaryLou during this season of grief and loss. Please send cards and notes of care and love to **Mrs. MaryLou Himes, 1800 Annie St. #, WB 53090.**
- With sincerest heartfelt sadness and condolences to Mrs. Marge Pok, Mr. Dean Pok, Mrs. Carol Pok, and the Pok Family, we share the passing of their patriarch, **Mr. Jerry Pok** who God whispered his name on January 23, 2024, and lovingly welcomed Mr. Jerry to his eternal home. Let us pray: Jesus, I feel such absence, please be present. I feel such loss, please be here. I feel such sadness, please be my sanctuary. I feel such pain, please be with me. Jesus, I feel such loneliness, please be beside me. I feel such heartache, please be close. I feel such doubt, please be faithfulness. I feel such guilt, please lead me home. The loss has consumed me. I come as I am. Please be my everything. I just take your hand. Amen. Cards and notes of condolences can be mailed to **Mrs. Marge Pok, C/O Mr. Dean and Mrs. Carol Pok, 1915 Hwy 28 E., Kewaskum, WI 53040.**
- Due to health concerns, **Mrs. Marge Pok** is in Hospice. We send our support and care to Mr. Dean, Mrs. Carol Pok and the Pok Family. We pray to our Caring God - Sustain us for the journey of walking Ms. Marge home to you Creator God. Give us the graces you gave those who walked with your Son in his final moments on Earth. Steady our hands, gentle our hearts, and sustain our spirits that seeing your face in Ms. Marge, we may also see you in us. Card and prayers of love and support can be mailed to: **Mr. Dean and Mrs. Carol Pok, 1915 Hwy 28 E., Kewaskum, WI 53040.**
- **Mrs. Nancy Whitson** has moved to ARIA of Brookfield. Ms. Nancy is doing well but does have some memory concerns and is still having multiple days of dialysis. Cards and notes of encouragement and support would be greatly appreciated. **Mrs. Nancy Whitson, 18740 West Bluemound Road, Room 103, Brookfield, WI 53045.**
- We continue our prayer vigil for **Mr. Dennis Liepert** on his extensive journey of recovery. Creator God, your children humbly come as intercessory for Bro. Dennis and Ms. Tammy to ask that You would work a full recovery in Bro. Dennis' body - whatever is causing this persistent problem. We believe and look forward to better times for them. Give Bro. Dennis strength and encouragement; he can endure anything with You by his side. We pray that You would, in Your mercy, give him back the health and strength he needs. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Cards and notes of love and support can be mailed to: **Mr. Dennis and Mrs. Tammy Liepert, 7361 Tower Drive, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- Healing and supporting prayers for **Mr. Robert (Bob) and Mrs. Joy Kuhaupt**. Both Mr. Bob and Ms. Joy are experiencing significant health challenges and ask for your caring and supportive prayers. Card and notes can be mailed to: **Mr. Robert and Mrs. Joy Kuhaupt, Sussex Mills Apts., W240 N6345 Maple Ave., #116, Sussex, WI 53089.**
- **Mrs. MaryLou Himes** is still recovering from eye surgery but 50% of her eyesight has returned; the ophthalmologist feels more of her eyesight may return as healing continues. Ms. MaryLou will still have to have another eye surgery soon. We beseech You, Lord, to touch the body and eyes of the Ms. MaryLou with Your healing hand. Guide the process of recovery, restoring vision and optimal health. Lord, during this period, we ask that you grant Ms. MaryLou the gift of peace that calms worries, and the patience to wait for Your perfect timing. Holding on to this faith, we offer up this prayer in the powerful name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Cards and notes of encouragement can be mailed to: **Mrs. MaryLou Himes, 1800 Annie Street, #4, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- **Ms. Mary Rogge** continues healing from Rotator cuff surgery. Ms. Mary is appreciative for your cards and notes of encouragement and love. We give God thanks for Mr. Roger and the Family, who are supporting and caring for Ms. Mary. Cards and notes of love and encouragement can be mailed to: **Mr. Roger and Mrs. Mary Rogge, 4436 Magna Vista Drive, Jackson, WI 53037.**

- **Ms. Sandy Wamser** is grateful for your continued prayers for healing, restoration, and strength. She is very appreciative for your love, prayers, and support. Ms. Sandy is also grateful for prayers for Mr. Pat and the Family as they care and support her through this season of treatments and healing. Cards and notes can be sent to: **Mr. Pat and Mrs. Sandy Wamser, 3742 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Bro. Bob Krell** is rooted in our hearts and prayers as we shower him and the Family with our love, care, and support. It was a marvelous blessing to have Bro. Bob with us in worship last Sunday; “I’m doing well and slowly getting my strength back”. We continue to pray for Bro. Bob’s healing, restoration, and strength. Thank you, God, for hearing and answering our prayer. Cards and notes of love and encouragement can be mailed to: **Bro. Bob and Mrs. Jean Krell, 804 Lenora Drive, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- **Mr. Michael Cahoon**, son of Mr. Jim and Mrs. Sandy Cahoon, has been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and is still on a journey of treatments. We pray that You will bless the means used for Mr. Michael’s recovery and those who administer them. Grant that his sickness may be to his spiritual benefit and that he may live the rest of his life more faithfully according to Your will. For You are the source of life and healing and to You we give praise and glory, now and forever. Amen. Cards and notes filled with prayers encouragement can be sent to: **Mr. Michael Cahoon, C/O: Mr. Jim and Mrs. Sandy Cahoon, 1615 Beverly Lane, WI 53090.**
- Prayers of strength and courage for **Mr. Tom Damp**. Dear God, please give Mr. Tom strength when he is weak, love when he feel forsaken, courage when he’s am afraid, wisdom when he feel unwise, comfort when he feels all alone, hope when he feel rejected, and peace when Mr. Tom is in turmoil. Amen. Card and noted can be mailed to: **Mr. Tom Damp, 1707 Sunset Ridge Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- We give thanks and praise that **Mr. Ben Barth**, husband of Ms. Heather Wolf, granddaughter of Mr. Roger and Mrs. Mary Rogge. recipient of a new heart and new lungs- give thanks for your continued prayers and support. O God, You have told me in your Word to “be strong and of a good courage” and to “fear not”. You have said that “I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.” In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen. Please overwhelm Mr. Ben with cards and notes for continued healing, strength, and restoration. Correspondence can be mailed to: **Mr. Ben and Mrs. Heather Barth, 223 South 11<sup>th</sup> Ave., West Bend, WI 53095.**
- We remain in prayer and support for **Mrs. Ann Cording**. Thank You, Provider God, for giving me all that I need. Thank You for inviting me to come to You any time with all my needs and requests. Thank You for your Word to lead, guide, and direct me. Loving God, I come to You now asking for wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit for the decisions I have to make in my life. You have told me in your Word that if I lack wisdom I should ask because You give to all who ask for wisdom generously. Thank You for being true to your Word. In the name of Jesus, Amen. Cards and notes of love and care can be mailed to: **Mrs. Ann Cording, 1416 S. Silverbrook Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Chuck Rogge** is still on a journey of healing. He is grateful for the cards and notes of support. Please continue to flood the mailbox with love and support to: **Mr. Chuck and Mrs. Sue Rogge, 5011 Hwy. P, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf**, appreciates your continued prayers for healing and strength as she continues to struggle with illness. You can send emails of prayers and support to: [alankempf33@gmail.com](mailto:alankempf33@gmail.com); or cards and notes to **Mr. Allan and Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf, 414B. South Pleasantview Road, Plymouth, WI 53073; phone number: 920.838.1830.**

*We continue to celebrate our 175<sup>th</sup> year of service, commitment and Methodism in West Bend, Wisconsin.*

*“Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Anticipating Our Future”*

Prayer: Being salt for taste and light for truth is part of our mission as Christians disciples. We do not do this for our own glory, just so that we can be seen by others as good people. The Christian life is not a self-improvement program (although we do grow in holiness as a result). The goal is to give glory to God. We want people to see us living our faith in word and speech as well as in deed and truth (cf. 1 John 3:18) in order that they may recognize Christ in us. We do not have to rely on ourselves for our salt and light, because Jesus is our source for these. By the grace of the sacraments and our encounters with him, Jesus Christ dwells in us. It is his grace and light, not our own, that radiates to others (cf. Galatians 2:20). The sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit make it possible to be salt and light in the world: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, fear of the Lord, and piety. These all work together to help us bring Christ’s salt and light into our homes, churches, workplaces, and societies. The world is a better place to live because of Christians who live out this call to glorify God in all that they do. In Christian love, **Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martin**